

## **REGULATION AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Regulation and Planning Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council held on Tuesday 21 June 2022 at 10am.**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors: F Ellis (Chairman), B Duffin, P Hardy, W Kemp, J Savage, T Spruce and V Thomson

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors: J Halls and S Nuri-Nixon

**Officers in Attendance:** The Assistant Director for Regulatory (N Howard), the Environment Protection Manager (A Grimley) and the Democratic Services Officer (J Hammond)

### **100 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr J Halls and Cllr S Nuri-Nixon.

### **101 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **102 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Regulation and Planning Policy Committee held on Wednesday 30 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **103 REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

The Assistant Director for Regulatory introduced the report and outlined the key principles for the new overarching Enforcement Policy, the aim of which was to cover all the key areas to ensure legislation was followed for all general enforcement issues. Specific areas of legislation individual to each area, for example planning or food hygiene, would then be dealt with by specific, thematic, detailed policies.

The Environmental Protection Manager advised members that officers had gathered good practice from a wide range of places when drafting the policy and explained that the advantages of separating the overarching enforcement policy and the thematic enforcement policies into separate documents were as follows:

- It was simpler to administer and update each policy without adverse effect on the others.
- It encouraged a helpful focus on the key considerations applicable to a particular area when enforcement policy questions arose and
- During challenges and legal proceedings, technicalities could focus on policy wording, and it was therefore helpful to keep policy documents tightly focussed.

Members were advised that over the last 12 months the Environment Enforcement Service had received:

- 1650 service requests, of which 80% were resolved using early intervention methods
- 23 warnings had been served
- 3 notices served
- 5 follow-up notices served
- 4 fly tipping prosecutions made

Members noted that it was proposed that South Norfolk Council and Broadland District Council shared a common set of enforcement policy provisions, and it was queried whether there were any reasons why this could not or should not be achieved. The Environmental Protection Manager explained that a shared enforcement policy was recommended by officers because, from a regulatory and enforcement services perspective, both districts shared similar characteristics, profiles of regulatory non-compliance and offending, and enforcement requirements. Additionally, no significant enforcement policy distinctions or special requirements had been identified that would affect the adoption of the proposed overarching enforcement policy. He then stressed that it was for each of the Councils to decide whether the new regulatory enforcement policy should be adopted.

A number of members expressed the belief that a common policy shared with Broadland District Council would greatly benefit both the residents and businesses within the district and officers.

After concerns were raised over the possibility of the overarching policy and thematic sub-policies conflicting each other, the Assistant Director for Regulatory assured the Committee that this would not be the case, he explained that the overarching policy would outline the broad enforcement policy framework and set out the Council's broad policy statements for investigation and robust enforcement. Whilst the individual thematic sub-

policies would contain detailed considerations in individual area regulation, including decision-making thresholds, criteria for specific powers and areas of legislation.

After further detailed discussion, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet recommends that Council agrees the adoption of the proposed overarching Enforcement Policy at Appendix 2 to replace the existing enforcement policy.

(The meeting concluded at 10:35am)

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Chairman