



Subject:	Enforcement Customer Charter
Date:	16 th February 2016
Reporting Officer:	Lisa Walshe
Contact Officer:	Lisa Walshe

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Background
1.1	The Enforcement function of the Planning Service is delegated to the Director who will provide regular updates to Committee on significant enforcement issues, trends and significant cases.
1.2	Following local government reform, Belfast City Council has the opportunity to develop its own Enforcement Charter to deal with Belfast specific priorities and replace the DoE Enforcement Strategy. At the 16 th June 2015 Committee meeting, members were asked to agree to development of same.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to endorse the Planning Service Enforcement Customer Charter.
3.0	Main report
3.1	The Enforcement function of the Planning Service is a key means in assisting the council in protecting our communities and their environment from inappropriate or damaging development. It is essential that the integrity and credibility of our planning system is not undermined by wilful breaches and that the council can react quickly, proportionately and effectively where issues arise. Responses can be either informally via negotiation, or formally with possible recourse to the courts.
3.2	The Enforcement Charter aims to inform and reassure members of the public who have come into contact with actual or potential breaches of planning control. The document includes information regarding the procedures and processes of dealing with an enforcement case as well as information on what to expect from our enforcement team and the service we aim to provide.

3.3	A number of useful links are provided such as links to our complaints procedure, the legislation which governs planning and a method of registering a breach online.
3.4	In line with other councils in Northern Ireland as well as those across the water, the Strategy informs customers that we will not be accepting anonymous complaints. It is essential that enforcement is not used as a means of harassment and equally, it is often crucial to have contact details of a complainant in order to obtain further information or where a witness is required for legal proceedings.
3.5	Upon receiving committee endorsement, the document will be reviewed for design and layout with the Corporate Communications team.
4.0	Financial & Resource Implications
4.1	None