

1. The Planning Enforcement Service will:

- Investigate alleged breaches of planning control which are brought to light by Members, other departments within the Authority, other organisations or members of the public in writing. Any anonymous complaints will only be registered where the breach is extremely serious and/or can be readily detected.
- Promptly register such cases and acknowledge their receipt as well as regularly updating complainants of the progress of the case.
- Seek to control breaches of planning control which cause demonstrable harm to amenity.
- Advise other departments/organisations (e.g. Environmental Health, Building Control and County Highways) when appropriate.

2. This service will be undertaken by:

- Prioritising cases in accordance with published criteria.
- Being helpful, courteous and open in our service and advising transgressors, particularly small businesses and individuals, of methods of remedying the breach prior to any formal action being taken; by allocating a named case officer as a contact point; and responding promptly to all contacts in "Plain English".
- Pursuing any breach of planning control to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Taking immediate action to resolve simple breaches of control such as flyposting.
- Taking "Direct action" where breaches of control have not been resolved by action in the Courts, i.e. clearance of untidy sites.
- Retaining the confidentiality of complainants where possible.

3. Rochford District Council has formulated this policy to guide the provision of its Planning Enforcement Service. It has been devised by taking into account:

- National Policy in Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 18, "Enforcing Planning Control".
- Various provisions of the Rochford District Local Plan and the Essex & Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan.
- The need to protect and maintain the Metropolitan Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Conservation areas.
- The need to achieve a balance between protecting amenity and other interests of acknowledged importance throughout the district, enabling acceptable development to take place.

Further information can be found on the Planning Service pages of the Council's website at www.rochford.gov.uk, by telephoning 01702-318191, or by visiting the Planning Office from 8.30 am-5.00 pm daily (4.30 pm on Fridays).

