

REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: 24th JULY, 2018

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UNIVERSAL ENFORCEMENT TEAM

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To consider the bringing together of members of staff with enforcement responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the scope of the review be confirmed
- (2) That a report on the outcome of the review be submitted to the Committee in the autumn.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To seek to produce more effective and stronger enforcement across the Council.

1. At the request of the new Council leadership this initial report considers the scope to bring together staff in various services with the intention of producing more effective and stronger enforcement.
2. Subject to the Committee agreeing this in principle a further report following a detailed review will be brought forward in the autumn.
3. From discussions with members of the Administration it is not the intention to include Planning enforcement in the exercise. For the avoidance of doubt it is suggested that this extends to Building Control and Tree Preservation enforcement activity.
4. On street and Off street Parking enforcement is the subject of discussions at political level with the County Council and may be brought into the scope in due course.
5. The main scope for establishing such a team would appear to be in Environmental Services and indeed there has recently been a move in that direction. A review of management responsibilities has brought the Environmental Crime Team (enforcement of dog fouling and litter, and the dog warden service) and staff responsible for waste, bins and abandoned vehicle problems together under one line manager.

6. A separate additional move could be to bring together in one team staff in Planning, Building Control and Licensing who undertake taxi and alcohol/entertainments enforcement though it may be more realistic to widen this to the full licensing functions rather than just the enforcement aspect.
7. The review will need to take full account of the following:
 - The outcome and timescale of the impending Council wide organisational review and associated accommodation review.
 - The need for synergy and sound business reasons for putting staff together; relatively few staff are in posts solely dedicated to enforcement – most undertake such activity to varying degrees as part of wider service delivery responsibilities.
 - The desirability of increasing capacity for enforcement work.
 - The need to generate savings and increase income in view of the Council's financial position.
 - Members of staff who take on a wider range of enforcement activities will inevitably need training on relevant legislation, practice etc.
 - Enforcement is a wide term and includes prevention and education as well as formal action.
 - The need to exploit fully IDOX – the Council's recently installed Document Management System which streamlines administrative processes across a number of services
8. Whilst all enforcement is currently undertaken by the Council's own staff, the Committee may wish to consider including in the review exploration of the possibility of outsourcing. Members may be aware that nearby councils such as Burnley and Blackburn have recently moved in this direction.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: Whilst there is no significant policy issue this would represent a change in the current approach of aligning enforcement and service delivery.

Financial: The potential savings will be identified in the detailed review.

Legal: None arising directly from the report.

Risk Management: None arising directly from the report.

Health and Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Sustainability: None arising directly from the report.

Community Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Equality and Diversity: None arising directly from the report.