

Briefing Note to Parishes Liaison Meeting

17th October 2012

The Planning Department's intentions with regard to the future of Planning Enforcement.

Following the appointment in May and July of two qualified Planning professionals who will bring experience to the Enforcement Section of the Planning Department there has been a state of flux!

The Policies relating to Enforcement are currently being examined and the processes are being transformed to improve the efficiency and approachability of the Section.

The Section is spearheading the Customer Service 'Programme for Change' programme within the Planning Department.

Our vision is to transform perceptions and create a service that uses negotiation in combination with legal powers whilst explaining the reality of what can be achieved under Planning Legislation to benefit the wider environment of Bath and North East Somerset.

At present we have a Planning qualified Team Leader, a Planning qualified Principal Officer, a Planning qualified Senior Officer and two Enforcement Officers. Whilst it is acknowledged that it is impossible to police the entire District with such a small team, (and indeed this is not the role of a planning enforcement team) it will be possible to sift complaints through better use of electronic systems so that effective use is made of the Officers. This will mean that those issues raised which are of a high priority can be actioned quickly whilst others that do not fall within the remit of Planning can be redirected. It is going to be necessary to create a hierarchy of priorities to achieve this goal and there will need to be liaison with Parish and Town Councils who as always are the 'eyes and ears' of any good Council!

We welcome the help Parish and Town Councils can give us as an extra resource with their local knowledge and we will continue to work to improve the information that we are able to provide them in terms of feedback.