

REPORT TO:		Cabinet	
DATE:		03 December 2025	
PORTFOLIO:		Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP - Leader of the Council	
REPORT AUTHOR:		Adam Birkett, Head of Planning and Transportation	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Planning Enforcement Plan	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	Select: Y/N	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:	

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 Planning enforcement is a key responsibility of the Planning and Transportation Service, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recommends that local authorities have an enforcement plan in place.
- 1.2 Although the Council currently has an enforcement protocol, it is now out of date and does not reflect the priorities set out in the NPPF. The proposed Planning Enforcement Plan updates the existing protocol to reflect current national guidance and sets out to manage the expectations of complainants regarding the scope of the Council's resources and planning enforcement powers.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves and adopts the new Planning Enforcement Plan for the Borough, as attached at Appendix 1 to this report, for use from 1 January 2026.

3. **Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

- 3.1 The NPPF recommends that local planning authorities publish a local enforcement plan to proactively manage enforcement in a way that is appropriate to their area.
- 3.2 The attached Planning Enforcement Plan sets out how enforcement complaints will be prioritised and managed by the Planning Service. The updated Plan makes clear that at the heart of assessing an enforcement case is the degree of harm caused by the alleged breach of planning control and whether formal enforcement action would be expedient.

- 3.3 Adopting the Local Planning Enforcement Plan would ensure compliance with national guidance and support the Local Planning Authority in carrying out future enforcement actions in line with established best practice.

4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 While an enforcement plan is not mandatory, it is considered best practice to have one in place. An enforcement plan enables members of the public to understand how their complaint will be managed and assists the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) in understanding the Council's approach to enforcement should a complaint be made.
- 4.2 The Planning Enforcement Plan is principally a reactive document, setting out the way complaints relating to breaches of planning control will be investigated.
- 4.3 Planning enforcement is delivered by two officers within the Planning Service. The Planning Enforcement Plan therefore seeks to manage complainant expectations in line with available resources.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 The Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee have been consulted on the Planning Enforcement Plan and have endorsed the document.

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	An up-to-date Planning Enforcement Plan may assist the Council in defending LGO investigations and reduce the risk of compensation awards.
Legal and human rights implications	These are addressed within the Planning Enforcement Plan where relevant.
Assessment of risk	Having an up-to-date Planning Enforcement Plan reduces the likelihood of complaints being upheld by the LGO, provided that enforcement complaints are investigated in accordance with the processes set out within the Plan.
Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	A Customer First Analysis has been completed and is attached as an appendix to this report.

7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:

List of Background Papers

- 7.1 National Planning Policy Framework
Planning Practice Guidance

8. Freedom of Information

- 8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.