Report of the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel

Enforcement Review Inquiry

August - September 2009

PANEL MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Fitzgerald (Chair)
Councillor Beckett
Councillor Capozzoli (Vice Chair)
Councillor McEwing
Councillor Odgers
Councillor Parnell
Councillor Thomas

Scrutiny Co-ordinator

Mark Pirnie
mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk
023 8083 3886

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL ®

Enforcement Review Inquiry

Introduction

1. Southampton City Council is currently undertaking a review of cross council enforcement. The review, commissioned by the Cabinet and the Chief Executive, is examining the multiplicity of enforcement functions carried out by the City Council, including activities carried out by both uniformed and non-uniformed staff.

2. Stage 1 of the Enforcement Review has been completed and a number of recommendations, which will be developed during Stage 2 of the Review, have emerged.

3. At its meeting on 18th June 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee approved the terms of reference for a scrutiny inquiry examining the Enforcement Review, and requested that the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel conduct the inquiry and report back their findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. The full terms of reference for the inquiry are shown in Appendix A.

Consultation

4. The Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel undertook the inquiry over 3 meetings. The Scrutiny Panel consulted the following members and officers to develop the inquiry:

Date	Meeting Theme	Information Provided by
25/08/09	Objectives of the Enforcement Review, progress to date, emerging outcomes, further work to be undertaken	• Lorraine Brown, Executive Director of Environment • Liz Marsh, Head of Environmental Health and Consumer Protection • Linda Haitana, Safer Communities Manager
09/09/09	Strategic Vision outlined Developing Stage 2 of the Enforcement Review	• Cllr Smith, Cabinet Member for Economic Development • Liz Marsh, Head of Environmental Health and Consumer Protection • Linda Haitana, Safer Communities Manager • Ken Byng, Parking Services Manager
30/09/09	Agree final report	

Background to the Enforcement Review

5. A review of cross council enforcement was commissioned by the Cabinet and Chief Executive of the Council in 2008. The objectives of the review are to improve cross council enforcement by:

- delivering consistent effective, prioritised and focused enforcement;
- exploring where savings and efficiencies can be made by exploring changes to the way in which enforcement is delivered and where working with other agencies can be improved as well as the use of tools such as mobile working flexible practices to enable a significant change in culture;
- promoting a clear message about its enforcement approach and reinforces this regularly by publicising examples of practice;
- improving the way that the council protects individuals and the community by more targeted enforcement activity.

6. The review team, led by the Head of Environmental Health & Consumer Protection, have, during Stage 1 of the Review, examined the multiplicity of enforcement activities carried out by the Authority and have sought to identify, and compare the City Council's performance against best practice.

7. The following enforcement services were reviewed:

- City Patrol
- ASB Investigators
- Parking Enforcement
- Highways enforcement
- Cleansing enforcement
- Waste enforcement
- Building Control
- Planning enforcement
- Environmental Health
- Private Sector Housing including HMO Licensing
- Trading Standards
- Licensing – alcohol, gambling, public entertainment, street trading and taxis.

8. In addition the following teams that support enforcement activity were also reviewed:

- Neighbourhood wardens
- CCTV Control Room
- Concierge Service.

Meeting 1 - Enforcement Review Inquiry

9. At the meeting of the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel on 25th August the Panel were informed about the objectives of the City Council's Enforcement Review, progress to date, emerging outcomes and further work to be undertaken. The presentation delivered by the City Council's Head of Environmental Health and Consumer Protection is shown in Appendix B.

10. Southampton City Council's Head of Environmental Health and Consumer Protection informed the Scrutiny Panel that the assessment of current enforcement activity undertaken during the Enforcement Review identified that:

'*Working in a different way and changes to organisational structures, could help enforcement teams to better understand and prioritise solutions; co-ordinate and implement actions and evaluate their impact. Despite the Review Team identifying examples of good practice, there is an impression that, overall, enforcement is disjointed and disorganised and it is difficult to assess what impact is being made by the council's investment in enforcement.*'

11. This resulted in the following recommendations being generated from Stage 1 of the Enforcement Review:

- Form an integrated multi-disciplinary street enforcement team by amalgamating Parking Enforcement and officers from City Patrol
- Set up an operational lead for business enforcement and street enforcement consolidated within the Environment Directorate. The business plan to take account of the resources needed for training, team development and any public consultation.
- Produce an enforcement business plan supported by overarching strategies and policies that covers all of the council's enforcement activity
- Introduce improved reporting and data sharing mechanisms
- A single Portfolio Member with overarching responsibility for council-wide enforcement activity.

12. Members of the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel posed a series of questions to the officers about the recommendations generated during Stage 1 of the Enforcement Review and there followed a discussion about the review.

Meeting 2 - Enforcement Review Inquiry: 9th September

13. At the meeting of the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel on 9th September the Panel were provided with details by Southampton City Council's Head of Environmental Health & Consumer Protection about the issues that need to be addressed at Stage 2 of the Enforcement Review. The Cabinet Member for Economic Development attended this Panel meeting and gave his vision for enforcement.

The Cabinet Member's vision

- **An integrated street enforcement team formed by amalgamating Parking Enforcement and City Patrol**. Enforcement officers would be able to deal with a range of problems and issues working in a more efficient and effective way. To achieve this, it is acknowledged that staff will need training in order to take on new areas of work. This team would wear a single uniform which would be less confusing to the public than the current situation where Parking Enforcement and City Patrol officers wear different uniforms.
- **A single enforcement business plan covering the council's regulatory and enforcement activity**. The plan will set out the council's priorities and what we want to achieve and be led by a single operational lead.
- **A single political steer for enforcement**.
- **A better and clearer reporting system for the public and better data**

sharing between officers and others.

There was then an opportunity for the Scrutiny Panel to question both the Cabinet Member and officers.

14. The Panel were informed that Stage 2 of the Enforcement Review would seek to progress the following activity:

- The production of an appropriate management structure and identify the level of funding required to fund the new integrated enforcement team. Resources to be identified to ensure that officers are adequately trained on their widened role
- Meeting the savings of the July Council mini budget and ensure that there are appropriate management arrangements in place to progress the organisational arrangements necessary
- Identifying better reporting mechanisms and how they may be implemented
- Identifying the balance of work of the new team and agreeing specific objectives and performance targets
- Resolving accommodation issues
- Developing effective working practices, metrics and performance indicators that will demonstrate service delivery, value for money and customer satisfaction
- Identifying any future trends that can be predicted at this stage
- Examining the operation of the CCTV Control Centre in order to make recommendations about where it should sit in the organisation.

15. The Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel was then, through a facilitated discussion, encouraged to contribute to the development of Stage 2 of the Enforcement Review.

16. Members of the Panel recognised that a number of the issues that need to be addressed at Stage 2 are operational in nature and were for officers to determine. The four areas where the Panel sought to contribute were:

- Identifying better reporting mechanisms and how they may be implemented
- Identifying the balance of work of the new team and agreeing specific objectives and performance targets
- Developing effective working practices, metrics and performance indicators that will demonstrate service delivery, value for money and customer satisfaction
- Identifying any future trends that can be predicted at this stage.

17. At the conclusion of the 2 meetings, the discussions, question and answer sessions and the Cabinet Member's vision statement, led to a consensus of the

Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel. There was agreement that, given the assessment of the current enforcement activity, identified in Appendix B (Para 17-20), and the impact on the City Patrol Service of the changes in Police policy and practice when responding to Anti-Social Behaviour, the recommendations generated by Stage 1 of the Enforcement Review were both necessary and logical.

Recommendations

18. Following discussions at the meeting of the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel on 9th September the Scrutiny Panel request that the Project Board set up to undertake Stage 2 of the Enforcement Review takes into consideration the recommendations identified below during the development of the Enforcement Review.

19. The Scrutiny Panel made the following recommendations with regards to the issue of **identifying better reporting mechanisms and how they may be implemented**.

    a) To consider the use of a standardised system to enable the integrated multi-disciplinary street enforcement team to report and record information

    b) To consider the expansion of Action Line to include enforcement activity

    c) To ensure that the public are aware of how to report enforcement problems to the city council e.g. by organising a publicity campaign

    d) To consider how refuse collectors and other council staff can more easily report problems on the street e.g. fly tipped rubbish, bins on the pavement, illegal parking, graffiti and similar issues.

20. The Scrutiny Panel made the following recommendations with regards to the issue of **identifying the balance of work of the new team and agreeing specific objectives and performance targets**.

    e) Parking enforcement should remain a high priority of the integrated multi-disciplinary street enforcement team

    f) Account should be taken of the differing needs of different areas of the city and therefore the priorities of the integrated multi-disciplinary street enforcement team should be informed by the needs of the local community

    g) The new team should take an intelligence led approach to enforcement activity and should be informed by and share information with officers, Members, Safer Neighbourhood Panels and others

    h) The integrated multi-disciplinary street enforcement team should be highly visible and recognisable.

21. The Scrutiny Panel made the following recommendations with regards to the issue of **developing effective working practices, metrics and performance indicators that will demonstrate service delivery, value for money and customer satisfaction.**

i) The City Council should produce an Enforcement Action Plan that sets out the agreed priorities, objectives and performance standards of enforcement services delivered by the Authority

j) The Enforcement Action Plan should be updated annually and should be considered by the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel

k) The City Council should work with residents to promote the service standards and to manage expectations about what the enforcement services can achieve. This may include consultation activity with the public

l) Effective channels of communication should be developed between the Police and Enforcement services, and the responsible Cabinet Member.

22. The Scrutiny Panel made the following recommendations with regards to the issue of **identifying any future trends that can be predicted at this stage**.

m) The Enforcement Review Project Board takes into consideration when planning the new structure the decision of the Police to relinquish responsibility for special events

n) The Enforcement Review Project Board takes into consideration when planning the new structure any proposals to expand the hospital, universities or the port.

23. In addition the Scrutiny Panel made the following general recommendation.

o) There is a need for the Street Enforcement Team to have the appropriate level of resources to undertake the training, education and public consultation recommended by the Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel.