The Principles of Good Enforcement: Policy and Procedures

This document sets out what business and others being regulated can expect from enforcement officers. It commits us to good enforcement policies and procedures. It may be supplemented by additional statements of enforcement policy.

The primary function of central and local government enforcement work is to protect the public, the environment and groups such as consumers and workers. At the same time, we are committed to these aims and to promoting a thriving national and local economy.

We are committed to these aims and to maintaining a fair and safe trading environment.

We believe prevention is better than cure and that our role therefore involves actively working with business, especially small and medium-sized businesses, to advise on and assist with compliance. We will provide a courteous and efficient service and operators will identify themselves by name. We will provide a contact point and telephone number for further dealings with us and we will encourage business to seek advice/information from us. Applications for advice and information to show that we are observing them. We will provide publicised, effective and well-distinguished from best practice advice.

Before formal enforcement action is taken, officers will provide an opportunity to discuss the circumstances of the case and, if possible, resolve points of difference, unless immediate action is required (for example, in the interests of health and safety or environmental protection or to prevent evidence being destroyed).

Where immediate action is considered necessary, an explanation of why such action was required will be given at the time and confirmed in writing in most cases within 5 working days and, in all cases, within 10 working days.

Where there are rights of appeal against formal action, advice on the appeal mechanism will be given at the time and confirmed in writing.

We will encourage businesses and voluntary and community organisations so that they can meet their legal obligations without unnecessary expense, where practicable.

We will take particular cases to work with small businesses and voluntary and community organisations so that they can meet their legal obligations without unnecessary expense, where practicable.

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