

 <b>Executive</b>		<b>Agenda Item No.</b>  <b>8</b>
<b>Title</b>	Adoption of a Business Charter	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Marianne Rolfe, Head of Health and Community Protection. Tel: 01926 456700 Email: <a href="mailto:marianne.rolfe@warwickdc.gov.uk">marianne.rolfe@warwickdc.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	All	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No If yes state why	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>		
<b>Background Papers</b>	Executive papers 31st October 2018: Revised Enforcement policy adoption	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	Yes/No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	Yes/No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes/No
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	Yes/No-958
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken</b>	Yes/No (If No state why below)

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	04/12/18	Chris Elliot, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones
Head of Service	04/12/18	Marianne Rolfe, Lisa Barker, Robert Hoof, Dave Barber
CMT	04/12/18	Chris Elliot, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	04/12/18	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	04/12/18	Andrew Jones
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)	04/12/18	Andrew Thompson, Peter Philips, Moria Ann Grainger, Alan Rhead
<b>Consultation &amp; Community Engagement</b>		
Consultation undertaken with Business Support Organisations and Groups.		
<b>Final Decision?</b>	Yes/No	
<b>Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)</b>		

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 To seek the Council's adoption of a business charter covering a range of the Council's regulatory services.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Executive recommends to Council the adoption of the Business Charter as set out in appendix 1.

## 3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1 The Business Charter seeks to outline how the Council's Enforcement Officers work with local businesses in order to support economic growth which is both a local and national priority and a statutory duty on Council's and their Enforcement Officers.

- 3.2 Business Support Organisations have been consulted regarding the policy. These include:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- BID Leamington
- Leamington Chamber of Trade
- Warwick Chamber of Trade
- Kenilworth Chamber of Trade

- 3.3 The following Business Support Organisations have indicated their willingness to sign up to the Business Charter with the council.

- Warwick Chamber of Trade
- Leamington Chamber of Trade
- Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

The other local Business Support Organisations are still in the process of signing up to the Charter. None of our partners have declined.

## 4. Policy Framework

### 4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment

<p><u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities</p>	<p><u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB</p>	<p><u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels</p>
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		
<p>The Business Charter clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities for both regulators and the business community in order to provide a regulatory environment that promotes success in business whilst continuing to provide public protection.</p>	<p>The Business Charter clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities for both regulators and the business community in order to provide a regulatory environment that promotes success in business whilst continuing to provide public protection.</p>	<p>The Business Charter clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities for both regulators and the business community in order to provide a regulatory environment that promotes success in business whilst continuing to provide public protection.</p>
<b>Internal</b>		
<b>Effective Staff</b>	<b>Maintain or Improve Services</b>	<b>Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term</b>
<p><u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours</p>	<p><u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers' needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services</p>	<p><u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money</p>
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		
None	<p>Promotes consistency: Allows the authority to demonstrate its commitment and compliance with the Regulators Code and Better Business For All. The Charter highlights the work the council's regulators do in relation to business support.</p>	None

## 4.2 **Supporting Strategies**

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies and the relevant ones for this proposal are explained in the Enforcement Policy and associated appendix. This report seeks to introduce Business Charter to promote the business support activities undertaken by the Council's enforcement officers.

## 4.3 **Changes to Existing Policies**

There are no changes to the existing policies.

4.4 **Impact Assessments** – There are no negative impacts associated with this report.

## 5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1 There are no budgetary implications associated with this report.

## 6. **Risks**

6.1 Local Authorities have statutory duties to:

- Have regard to the Regulators' Code in developing the principles and policies which guide their regulatory activities.
- Support business growth

6.2 The Local Government Ombudsman uses the Code as a point of reference when examining complaints about local regulatory services. Adopting this Business Charter demonstrates the commitment of the Council's regulators to business support in line with the Regulators Code and the Better Business for All Programme.

## 7. **Alternative Option(s) considered**

7.1 The Council does not adopt the proposed Business Charter.

7.2 If the Business Charter is not adopted we may be indirectly integrated into compliance with the proposed West Midlands Combined Authority Business Charter which may not fully represent the voice of the businesses within our district.

## 8. **Background**

### 8.1 **Regulators Code**

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills introduced the Regulators' Code which came into force on 6 April 2014. Its aim is to provide a regulatory framework that supports compliance and growth while enabling resources to be focussed where they are most needed. It sets out a framework for proportionate and accountable regulatory delivery and establishes principles of how local authorities should engage with businesses to avoid imposing unnecessary regulatory burdens.

## 8.2 **Better Business for All**

Better Business for All (BBfA) is a Government-backed programme designed to help regulators from across a region develop a co-ordinated approach to deliver greater consistency of advice, make it simpler for businesses to understand regulatory support available, improve communication with business, and demonstrate how good regulation is good for business.

8.3 BBfA was initially developed in 2011-2012 by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) which is now part of the Department of Business Enterprise Innovation and Skills, working with two pathfinder Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) – and is backed by the British Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

8.4 BBfA brings together businesses and regulators (including Environmental Health, Fire Safety, Licensing and Trading Standards) and involves the creation of local partnerships to identify the issues facing local businesses, and to then shape the provision of effective support by local regulators. Typically, this is done with the support of the LEPs, who can choose to adopt the BBfA programme as part of their work.

8.5 Coventry and Warwickshire BBfA Partnership was subsequently set up as a pilot and run for over five years before merging with other regional BBfA groups within the midlands. The Council's internal officer group has been working to progress both its own identified actions and those of the regional group.

## 8.6 **Key Objectives and Benefits**

The key objectives of BBfA are:

- to provide advice and support to business
- increase business awareness of regulatory support
- ensure effective co-ordination across regulatory services
- simplify the local regulatory system and processes
- reduce the regulatory burden on businesses
- establish partnerships between regulatory services and local businesses.

8.7 By removing regulatory barriers to growth, BBfA helps local areas to be recognised as good places to do business, and in turn helps to create more prosperous and competitive local economies. As increasing numbers of businesses become compliant, regulatory services can target more resources at non-compliant and rogue businesses.

8.8 Local authority regulatory officers are essential enablers to business and have more contact with local businesses than perhaps any other local authority services and, although they are there to ensure the protection of residents, workers and the environment, they also have a key role to play in business support. How officers interact with a business may determine whether it decides to grow, and many smaller local businesses welcome advice and guidance on how to meet their legal obligations. When regulators understand the needs of businesses and are solution-focused in providing support, they can encourage growth and boost the local economy, as well as continuing to protect residents.

## 8.9 **Business Charter**

Although regulations cannot be changed at a local level the approach to their delivery can be. Regulatory services are becoming increasingly outcome-focussed rather than output-focussed. Quantitative details of enforcement actions, notices, prosecutions etc are meaningless to businesses unless there is a significant benefit (e.g. ensuring a level playing field and fair trading conditions) and are backed up by a positive and broad provision of business advice and support. The Business Charter highlights the work that the regulators undertake to ensure this level of support and engagement.

8.10 Business Support Organisations have been consulted regarding the policy. These include:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- BID Leamington
- Leamington Chamber of Trade
- Warwick Chamber of Trade
- Kenilworth Chamber of Trade

8.11 Comments received from the organisations are outlined in Appendix 2.

8.12 All comments received have been given due consideration and incorporated into the Business Charter where suitable. Those comments which are better suited for inclusion in other relevant documents or upon the website have been forwarded for consideration in those publication reviews. For example those relevant to the Enforcement Policy were included in the Enforcement Policy Review.