

**Eastbourne Borough Council**

**What you can expect from our Customer First teams who deliver Environmental Health and Licensing services**

This document explains what you can expect from the Customer First teams who deliver the Environmental Health and Licensing services at Eastbourne Borough Council. Whether you run a business, are an employee or a member of the public, we are committed to providing you with an efficient, courteous and helpful service and this document tells you how we aim to do that and what standards we will meet.

**What does Environmental Health and Licensing cover?**

Environmental Health and Licensing includes a range of services:

<p><b>Food Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hygiene standards</li> <li>• Food safety</li> <li>• Imported foods</li> <li>• Food related illnesses</li> <li>• Food Hygiene Rating scheme</li> <li>• Eat Out Eat Well</li> </ul>	<p><b>Health and Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accident investigation</li> <li>• Safe working practices</li> <li>• Skin piercing registrations</li> <li>• H &amp; S advice, complaints &amp; interventions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Private Sector Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving standards in the private rented sector and houses in multiple occupation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental Protection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air quality</li> <li>• Contaminated land</li> <li>• Drainage</li> <li>• Noise</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infectious diseases</li> <li>• Filthy and verminous premises</li> </ul>	<p><b>Licensing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Taxis and private hire vehicles</li> <li>• Gambling premises</li> <li>• Animal Welfare</li> <li>• Sex encounter venues</li> </ul>

We make a fundamental contribution to the maintenance and improvement of public health, quality of life and wellbeing. Our priorities are to:

- Protect the public, businesses and the environment from harm
- Support the local economy to grow and prosper

We determine our activities each year by assessing the needs of local people and our local business community, and considering the risks that require addressing. We do this by using data and other information available to us and our partners to ensure our resources are targeted appropriately, in the light of these local needs, and national priorities.

## **How we work**

We carry out all our activities in a way that supports those we regulate to comply and grow.

We ensure that information and guidance is available to help those we regulate to meet their statutory obligations. Where you need advice that is tailored to your particular needs and circumstances we will provide this. We welcome the opportunity to discuss with you being a primary authority for your business. For further information see

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/396388/pa-overview.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396388/pa-overview.pdf)

We use a risk based approach to target our resources, including planning how we monitor and check compliance with statutory requirements.

We deal proportionately with breaches of the law as set out in our Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy, available at [add link], including taking enforcement action when necessary and appropriate.

Our service will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Regulators' Code, see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code>

## **Working with businesses and others we regulate**

In your dealings with us you can expect, and will receive, an efficient and professional service. Our Customer First staff will:

- Be courteous and polite;
- Always identify themselves by name in dealings with you, and provide you with contact details;
- Seek to gain an understanding of how your business operates and the pressures you face;
- Provide details of how to discuss any concerns you may have;

- Agree timescales, expectations and preferred methods of communication with you;
- Ensure that you are kept informed of progress on any outstanding issues.

We recognise that your business will receive advice and inspections from other organisations, and we will do our best to work with them to ensure that you receive the best service.

### **Helping you to get it right**

We want to work with you to help your business to be a success, and it is important to us that you feel able to approach us for advice when you need it. We won't take enforcement action just because you tell us that you have a problem, unless there is a risk to public health or safety.

We make information and guidance on meeting statutory obligations available, please see our website for details, and for;

Food safety information, go to -

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/businesses/health-and-safety/food-safety-and-hygiene>

Health and safety information go to -

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/businesses/health-and-safety/>

Pollution and public health information go to -

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/residents/pests-food-hygiene-and-pollution/pollution>

Private housing information go to -

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/residents/housing/private-housing/>

Licensing information go to -

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/businesses/licences-and-registrations>

Where you need advice to help you to meet your legal obligations we will;

- Provide advice that supports compliance and that can be relied on;
- Provide advice that is appropriate for your circumstances and is not overly burdensome;
- Provide clear advice that can be easily understood and implemented;
- Distinguish legal requirements from suggested good practice;
- Ensure that any verbal advice you receive is confirmed in writing if requested;

- Acknowledge good practice and compliance;

## **Inspections and other compliance visits**

We monitor and support compliance in a number of different ways including inspections, sampling visits, advisory visits and complaint investigations. These visits will usually be based on an assessment of risk. We will give you notice that we intend to visit unless we have specific reason to believe that an unannounced visit is more appropriate.

When we visit you our officers will:

- Explain the reason and purpose of the visit;
- Carry their identification card at all times, and present it on request;
- Exercise discretion in front of your customers and staff;
- Have regard to how you approach compliance within your business, and use this information to inform future interactions with you;
- Provide advice to support you in meeting your statutory obligations;
- Provide a written record of the visit.

## **Responding to non-compliance**

Where we identify any failure to meet legal obligations, we will respond proportionately, taking account of the circumstances, in line with our Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy [*add link*].

Where we require you to take action to remedy any failings we will:

- Explain the nature of the non-compliance;
- Discuss what is required to achieve compliance, taking into account your circumstances;
- Clearly explain any advice, actions required or decisions that we have taken;
- Agree timescales that are acceptable to both you and us, in relation to any actions required;
- Provide in writing details of how to appeal against any advice provided, actions required or decisions taken, including any statutory rights to appeal;
- Explain what will happen next, including any timescales;
- Keep in touch with you, where required, until the matter is resolved.

## **Requests for our service**

We respond to requests for assistance, including requests for advice and complaints about breaches of the law. We will:

- Acknowledge your request within 5 working days;
- Tell you when you can expect a substantive response;
- Seek to fully understand the nature of your request;
- Explain what we may or may not be able to do, so that you know what to expect;
- Keep you informed of progress throughout our involvement;
- Provide clear advice where appropriate;
- Inform you of the outcome as appropriate;

## **How to contact us**

Our Customer Contact team in our Customer Contact Centre are the first point of contact for all enquiries.

The centre at 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 4TW and is open from 9am until 5pm from Monday to Friday for personal callers.

You can also call us on **01323 410000** between 8.30a.m. to 5.30 p.m. - Monday to Friday.

You can use our on-line contact form to contact us, at

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/contact-us>

We will seek to work with you in the most appropriate way to meet your individual needs. We can make information available in different formats, and have access to translation and interpretation services.

If you contact us we will ask you for your name and contact details to enable us to keep in touch with you as the matter progresses. We treat all contact with the service in confidence unless you have given us permission to share your details with others as part of the matter we are dealing with on your behalf, or there is an operational reason why we need to do so.

We will not usually respond to anonymous complaints and enquiries.

Personal data will be managed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

## **Our Customer First Team**

Customer First is a team of council staff working together to provide joined up, efficient services for our customers. It also describes how we want the teams to work - putting the customer first at all times.

Customer First consists of four teams:

- A Customer First contact team to deal with all enquiries, face to face, over the phone and online;
- A Customer First caseworker team to provide a joined up and integrated service for all applications and cases you have;
- A Neighbourhood First team based in your area to help you quickly resolve issues and improve standards
- A team of Specialist Advisors to manage complex cases and provide expert input on Environmental Health and Licensing matters where required.

## **What's different about Customer First?**

Customer First means;

- One point of contact - fewer transfers between traditional council departments;
- More staff on the ground where you live;
- More opportunity to self-serve 24/7 via our new website, including tracking service requests online;
- A new [Report It app](#) for your smartphone.

## **Working with others**

Our Environmental Health, Licensing, and Planning services are all within Customer First, and our aim is to provide a streamlined service to you.

We have good working relationships with other regulators such as the Fire Service, East Sussex County Council Trading Standards, the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency, and this enables us to deliver a more joined up and consistent service. This includes sharing information and data on compliance and risk, where the law allows, targeting regulatory resources effectively.

Our officers are familiar with the work of our partners and can signpost you to the advice and guidance you need.

## **Feedback and complaints**

We value input from you to help us ensure our service is meeting your needs. We would like to hear from you whether your experience of us has been good or could be better. This helps us to ensure we keep doing the right things and make changes where we need to, and we welcome your

feedback at any time. Any feedback that we receive will be acknowledged, considered and responded to.

If you would like to give feedback or make a complaint there are several ways you can do this:

**Online Form** - complete the online [Contact Us](#) form

**Email** - send us an email via [customerfirst@eastbourne.gov.uk](mailto:customerfirst@eastbourne.gov.uk)

**Phone** - call us on 01323 410000

**Letter** - write to us or download, print and complete the Share Your Views form [Share Your Views \[pdf / 193KB\]](#)

Please write the following address on your envelope - Eastbourne Borough Council, 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW

### **What Happens Next?**

Complaints will normally be handled by the manager of the relevant service, and we will reply to you within ten working days of receiving your complaint. Most complaints will receive a full response within this time although some may take longer to investigate. If this is the case we will inform you within ten working days and explain the reasons for the delay.

### **Developing our service with you**

We currently work and consult with several groups to ensure that we are delivering our service to meet your needs. If you are interested in finding out more about the work of these group, or participating please contact them on the details below.

Eastbourne Hospitality Association [www.eastbournehotels.org.uk](http://www.eastbournehotels.org.uk)

Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce [www.eastbourneunltd.co.uk](http://www.eastbourneunltd.co.uk)

Eastbourne, Lewes & Wealden branch of the Federation of Small Businesses <http://www.fsb.org.uk/elw-branch-contacts>

National Landlords' Association <http://www.landlords.org.uk/events/nla-eastbourne>

**Dated:** July 2015

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