NORTHWOOD
HOUSE & PARK



IOW Planning Enforcement Partnership

Date: 28th October 2026
Author: Cllr Barney.
Declaration: No declaration of interest
Presented: In person

Background

Oliver Boulter, IOW Planning Officer, is in the process of approaching Parish and Town Councils to canvass their support in funding greater capacity within the IOW Council's planning enforcement team.

Available documentation

Original email from Oliver Boulter, dated 1st September 2026 provided in conjunction with this paper.

Additional Information

I, Cllr Barney, attended a zoom called arranged between Cllr Fuller & Oliver Boulter on Monday 12th October 2026, to understand the request in greater detail

Salient points.

Due to budget constraints, the IOW planning team have been forced to prioritize their resources, reducing the budget available for planning enforcement. Moving forward planning enforcement will focus on matters of community and historical importance, leaving to one side smaller complaints such as matters concerning domestic residential enforcement. All enforcement complaints will be recorded and where possible reviewed but only those considered a priority based on resource allocation will be actioned, the rest only if time allows.

As of the meeting, the last quarterly report recorded 34 live enforcement cases registered with IOW enforcement in the Cowes area, 22 open cases, a further 7 unopen & 5 unallocated. This compares with Gurnard where there are 5 cases, 1 unopened & Northwood with zero cases being considered and 1 case unallocated.

On 1st November Oliver Boulter is recruiting a new officer, paid for by Town and Parish Councils, whose time will be dedicated purely to local planning enforcement. Presently Mr. Boulter's budget allows for 4days per week of the Officers time. Mr. Boulter would prefer five days and is looking for a Town or Parish Council willing to fund the additional 1 day per week commencing immediately. The cost of 1 day per week will be £12,000 pa.

Taking up this offer will give CTC direct access to the specific officer for the enforcement of cases raised solely in the Parish / Town paying for the allocation. Access & involvement with the officer will be direct and can include any of the following; dialogue with the officer, officer site visits accompanied by the relevant Town representatives, input into decision making, regular reporting, attendance at Town planning meetings & full Council meetings as needed.

In short, within reason, the Town / Parish that pays the bill inputs directly into the agenda for the Officer's time.

Other examples

IOW Town & Parish Councils currently involved in the scheme include Newport (2 days per week), Carisbrooke (1day pw), Ryde (3 days pw) & Sandown (2 days pw).

Partnership

The above proposal has been discussed with Gurnard and Northwood Parish Councils. Gurnard, being asked to consider £12,000 pa, rejected it at their last meeting, due to cost.

A proposal maybe to 'partner' with Gurnard and Northwood, splitting the costs on a needs / proportion basis, as an example, Cowes £10,000, Northwood & Gurnard £2,000 pcm each.

Positives / Negatives

Negatives – IOW Council should be paying for this service, why should CTC pay for it?

Positives – its gives CTC greater access, insight and control over planning enforcement at a local level. The direction of travel in Westminster seeks to give greater control / budget responsibility to Town and Parish Councils. In a Mayoral system, with decisions moving to Hampshire, controlling planning enforcement locally gives CTC greater control over local planning enforcement

Conclusion

On balance, whilst it may not be right to pay for services that should be paid for by IOW Council, the IOW council are not going to pay for local planning enforcement. Without allocating funds of our own residents and the Town will lose out. Once homeowners and developers

understand that local enforcement is not going to happen we face an increase in planning & building violations.

Proposal

Based on the reality of the situation and provided Finance can find the budget through savings in other areas, I propose that we accept the proposal made by Oliver Boulter and underwrite to pay for 1 day per week, £12,000 pa, of an enforcement officers time commencing immediately.

We do this on a pilot basis for six months, with a review after 3 months.

We approach Northwood and Gurnard and ask them to take up some of that Officer's time and share the costs in the same proportion as the time they require.