

Black Country Local Authorities Service Standards



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| <p>Joint Statement of the Chief Executives</p> | <p>The four local Authorities in the Black Country are responsible for protecting people’s health, safety and wellbeing as well as the environment and amenities. They are responsible for promoting economic growth and employment opportunities.</p> |
| <p>Name Signature</p> | <p>Key to supporting these objectives is a regulatory regime that balances support and enforcement. In the context of a clear set of service standards, providing advice that supports businesses to thrive and grow through all stages of the business lifecycle, whilst targeting formal enforcement actions at those businesses that breach the legislation contrary to our local needs and priorities and obtaining an unfair competitive advantage.</p> |
| <p>Name Signature</p> | <p>Similarly, residents and communities thrive best when they can enjoy the highest standards of local amenities.</p> |
| <p>Name Signature</p> | <p>It is recognised by each of the Authorities, as well as by national government, that business often operates on a wider basis than a single Authority. Following initiatives, such as “Better Business For All” and working with the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, it is recognised that businesses and communities alike thrive and are supported by providing consistency and certainty as far as possible.</p> |
| <p>Name Signature</p> | <p>Therefore, the four authorities have developed a single document outlining their service standards</p> |
| <p>Name Signature</p> | <p>Section 6 of the Regulators’ Code sets out Government’s expectation that local authorities will ensure that their approach to their regulatory activities is transparent. The provisions of section 6 include an expectation that local authorities will publish a clear set of service standards, setting out what those they regulate should expect from them. This includes their enforcement policy, explaining how they respond to non-compliance.</p> <p>Published service standards serve to bring the provisions of the Regulators’ Code to life for each regulator and are important for regulators in meeting their responsibility under the statutory principles of good regulation¹ to be accountable and transparent about their activities.</p> <p>The Regulators’ Code requires that published service standards should be easily accessible, clearly signposted, and kept up-to-date, but does not set out a single required approach to service standards. It is for each local authority to determine an approach to service standards that will work best for those it regulates and itself. The Code expects that local authorities will engage with those they regulate in relation to the development of their service standards.</p> |

¹ Section 21, Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006, available at www.legislation.gov.uk

Service Standards For Dudley Council, Sandwell Council, City of Wolverhampton Council and Walsall Council Regulatory Services

A. What You Can Expect From Regulatory Services In The Black Country

This document explains what you can expect of Regulatory Services across the Black Country Local Authorities' Regulatory Services. 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.

B. Areas We Regulate

Each Authority delivers the following services

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| <p>Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental Health ○ Trading Standards ○ Licensing ○ Waste Enforcement | <p>Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental Health ○ Trading Standards ○ Licensing (excluding taxi licensing) • Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Private Sector Housing |
| <p>Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental Health ○ Trading Standards ○ Licensing ○ Unauthorised Encampments ○ Community Protection ○ Highway Safety | <p>City of Wolverhampton Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental Health ○ Trading Standards ○ Licensing ○ Waste Enforcement ○ Environmental Crime ○ Highways Enforcement ○ Unauthorised Encampments |

C. How We Deliver Our Services

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

- Protect the public, businesses and the environment from harm
- Support the local economy to grow and prosper
- Protect and promote the health and wellbeing of our residents

We determine our activities by assessing the needs of local people and our business community, and considering the risks that require addressing. We do this through engagement with a range of groups and organisations, including:

- local communities and local community forums
- elected members

- the voluntary sector
- individual businesses and business organisations
- partners and stakeholders

This is done through the use of complaints, intelligence, data and other information available to us and our partners and reflecting each Authority's strategic priorities. In this way we ensure our resources are targeted appropriately in the light of these local needs and of national priorities.

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

- We ensure that information, guidance and advice is available to help you to meet legal requirements (see [Helping you to get it right](#) at section E below).
- We carry out inspections and a wide range of other enforcement activities to check compliance with legal requirements, and we target these checks where we believe they are most needed (see [Inspections and other compliance visits](#) at section F below).
- We deal proportionately with breaches of the law as set out in our Enforcement Policy, including taking firm enforcement action when necessary (see [Responding to non-compliance](#) at section G below).
- We provide a range of services to businesses, including pest control, licences, registrations, issue of certificates, verification, primary (see [Requests for our service](#) at section H below).

Our services will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the [Regulators' Code](#)

D. Working With You

In all your dealings with us you can expect, and will receive, an efficient and professional service. Our officers 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
- 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.

E. Helping You To Get It Right

We want to work with you to help your business to be compliant and successful and it is important to us that you feel able to come to us for advice when you need it. We won't take enforcement action just because you tell us that you have a problem.

Information and guidance on meeting legal requirements is available through the Business Companion Website www.businesscompanion.info In addition there is a regional Trading

Standards Business News Service which is published quarterly on line <http://portfolio.cpl.co.uk/portfolio/TSBN>

Where you need advice that is tailored to your particular needs and circumstances we will:

- Discuss with you what is required to achieve compliance
- Provide advice that supports compliance and that can be relied on
- 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.

The Authorities in the Black Country operate the “Home Authority” principal. Any business based within the area of each Authority and which trades on a regional or national basis may benefit from a single source of advice in a specific area of legislation for all their business operations. Further, Sandwell and Walsall, operate the Primary Authority scheme. This provides that businesses which have been accepted onto the scheme and have signed a formal Primary Authority Agreement can benefit from Assured Advice. Advice provided under the Primary Authority Regime is chargeable on a cost recovery basis.

Certain other areas of work undertaken by the Authorities, including licensing regimes, certain other business advice, and certain metrology services are also chargeable. Details of each Authority’s fees are available on each Local Authority’s website or can be provided on request.

F. Inspections And Other Compliance Visits

We monitor and support compliance in a number of different ways including through inspections, sampling visits, test purchases, advisory visits and complaint investigations. These visits will always be based on an assessment of risk – we won’t visit without a reason.

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 when visiting your premises
- Exercise discretion in front of your customers and staff
- Have regard to your approach to compliance, and use this information to inform future interactions with you
- Provide information, guidance and advice to support you in meeting your statutory obligations, if required
- Provide a written record of the visit.

G. 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 Enforcement Policy.

We deal proportionately with breaches of the law as set out in our Enforcement Policy, available on each Local Authority’s website, including taking firm enforcement action when necessary

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
- Keep in touch with you, where required, until the matter is resolved

H. Requests For Our Services

We clearly explain the services that we offer, including details of any fees and charges that apply.

In responding to requests for our services, including requests for advice and complaints about breaches of the law, we will:

- Acknowledge your request
- 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
- Inform you of the outcome as appropriate

Contact details for the services in each authority can be found at Annex .1

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 respond to anonymous complaints and enquiries where we judge it appropriate to do so.

Personal data will be managed in accordance each Authority's Data Protection Policy, a copy of which is available on their respective websites or can be provided on request.

I. Our Team

We have a dedicated team of officers who have the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience to deliver the services provided. We have arrangements in place to ensure the on-going professional competency of all officers.

Where specialist knowledge is required in an area outside of our expertise we have arrangements in place, with both neighbouring authorities and other regulatory organisations, to call on additional resources as necessary.

J. Working With Others

We work closely with other council services such as Planning and Economic Development and our aim is to provide a streamlined service to you.

We are part of a much wider regulatory system within each of the four authorities. We have good working relationships with other regulators such as West Midlands Police, DEFRA, West Midlands Fire & Rescue, 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, to help target regulatory resources.

Our officers are familiar with the work of our partners and can signpost you to the advice and guidance you need. We are members of the Central England Trading Standards Authorities (CEnTSA); Central England Environmental Health Partnership and other Regional Groups as well as the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

K. Having Your Say

- **Complaints and appeals**

Where we take enforcement action, there is often a statutory right to appeal. We will always tell you about this at the appropriate time.

We are always willing to discuss with you the reasons why we have acted in a particular way, or asked you to act in a particular way. You can contact the manager of the service which is dealing with this matter.

We manage complaints about our service, or about the conduct of our officers, through each Authority's Corporate Complaints Policy. Details can be found at Annex 2

- **Feedback**

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 in need of improvement. This helps us to ensure we keep doing the right things and make changes where we need to. We use customer satisfaction surveys from time to time but we would welcome your feedback at any time. You can provide feedback using the contact details in Annex 1.

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

- **Developing our services with you**

We have a number of groups that we consult with to ensure that we are delivering our services to meet your needs. We are always happy to welcome new members to these groups. We currently work with the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, and local business groups in each authority.

Annex 1 How to Contact Us

Dudley Council

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| Trading Standards & Environmental Health | Directorate of the Urban Environment 4 Ednam Road Dudley DY1 1HL |
| Telephone | 0300 555 2345 |
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Sandwell Council

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| Trading Standards and Licensing | Unit 33 Coneygree Industrial Estate Coneygree Rd Tipton DY4 8XR |
| Telephone | 0121 569 6535 |
| Email | trading_standards@sandwell.gov.uk licensing_team@sandwell.gov.uk |
| Environmental Health & Private Sector Housing | Sandwell Council Court House High Street West Bromwich B70 8LU |
| Telephone | 0121 569 6600 |
| Email | ehts_enquiries@sandwell.gov.uk |

Walsall council

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| Trading Standards, Environmental Health & Community Protection | Civic Centre Darwall St Walsall WS1 1TP |
| Telephone Environmental Health | 01922 653030 |
| Email Environmental Health | environmentalhealth@walsall.gov.uk |
| Telephone | 01922 653040 |
| Email Trading Standards | tradingstandards@walsall.gov.uk |
| Telephone Community Protection | 01922 653050 |
| Email Community Protection | communityprotection@walsall.gov.uk |
| Telephone Licensing | 01922 653060 |
| Email Licensing | licensing@walsall.gov.uk |

City of Wolverhampton Council

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| Trading Standard, Environmental Health & Licensing | 1 st Floor Civic Centre St Peter's Square Wolverhampton WV1 1DA |
| Telephone Trading Standards | 03454 040506 |
| Telephone Environmental Health | 01902 551155 |
| Email all services | customerservices@wolverhampton.gov.uk |

Annex 2 How to Comment or Complaints

Comments and complaints can be made to each authority as detailed below:

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

In the first instance, complaints should be addressed to:

Dolores Nellany Public Protection Manager (Food and Consumer Safety) Or
Tim Glews, Public Protection Manager (Environmental Safety and Health)

Dudley MBC
4 Ednam Road
Dudley
DY1 1HL

If the matter is not resolved, further details on the corporate complaints procedure can be found at: <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council/compliments-comments-complaints/>

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

In the first instance, complaints should be addressed to:

Stephen Gabriel

Head of Regulatory Services
Sandwell Council
Court House
High Street
West Bromwich
B70 8LU

If the matter is not resolved, further details on the corporate complaints procedure can be found at http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200195/contact_the_council/283/feedback_and_complaints

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

In the first instance, complaints should be addressed to:

Regulatory Services Manager (Business & Compliance) or Regulatory Services Manager (Community Protection)

Walsall Council
The Civic Centre
Darwall Street
Walsall
WS1 1TP

If the matter is not resolved, further details on the corporate complaints procedure can be found at <http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/index/tellus.htm>

City of Wolverhampton Council

In the first instance, complaints should be addressed to:

Andy Jervis

Head of Regulatory Services
City of Wolverhampton Council
Civic Centre
St Peter's Square
Wolverhampton
WV1 1SH

If the matter is not resolved, further details on the corporate complaints procedure can be found at <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/complaints>