

Banners : Unauthorised Signage in the City Centre

Planning Committee
27 November 2003

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update Committee on the delegation of powers to serve enforcement notices on unauthorised banners in the city centre for a period of six months.

2 Summary

- 2.1 A number of properties in the New Town were identified as having unauthorised banners. Using delegated powers, Planning enforcement has taken action, where necessary. The appearance of the streets has been improved. This successful approach should be used across the city centre. Committee is requested to extend the delegated powers for a further six months and to a broader area of the city centre. The World Heritage Site boundary would provide an appropriate definition of this area.

3 Main Report

- 3.1 On 12 June 2003, Committee resolved to grant delegated powers to serve enforcement notices in respect of unauthorised banners in the New Town for a period of six months. The Enforcement Section carried out a comprehensive survey of the area, where banners fixed to railings and buildings were most prevalent. Eighteen individual properties were identified as having at least one banner displayed. Site visits were carried out to each of these premises, and owners were advised of Committee's initiative. Each owner was sent a follow up letter, giving them the opportunity to co-operate by removing the banners and avoiding any formal action being initiated.
- 3.2 A subsequent survey confirmed that of the eighteen properties formally notified, ten complied with the Council's request almost immediately. The remainder were sent formal letters advising them of the initiation of enforcement action. This resulted in six owners removing their banners.

- 3.3 Two properties continue to display banners, and Legal Services have been provided with details for the service of an enforcement notice in respect of one of these. Ownership details of the other property are currently being sought.
- 3.4 This trial took place over the summer months when banners are most likely to be erected. It has resulted in almost 90% of the banners being removed without recourse to formal action. The threat of delegated enforcement action has been sufficient in almost all cases to persuade the majority of property owners to comply and remove the banners.
- 3.5 This has improved the appearance of the streets most affected, notably York Place and Broughton Street, very quickly and effectively. It has also discouraged other businesses from displaying similar signage.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The strategy has proved to be very successful during this short period, and has resulted in a significant improvement in the street scene within the World Heritage Site and the New Town Conservation Area.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 To recommend to the Council that it agrees that authority to serve enforcement notices in respect of unauthorised banners is extended to cover the entire city centre, and that the time period be extended for a further six month period.



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19/11/03

Appendices None.

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Wards affected City Wide.

**Background
Papers** None.