

Appendix 1: Enforcement Agent Code of Conduct

The Council employs externally contracted civil enforcement agents.

The contracted enforcement agents must act in accordance with this Code of Practice which must be adhered to at all times unless in an individual case the prior permission of the Council is obtained to take alternative action.

The Contractor must ensure and monitor that its employees and agents comply with this Code of Practice at all times.

The Contractor must ensure that taking control of goods is carried out in a humane and fair manner and in accordance with the Council's requirements. If there is any doubt regarding the action to be taken in a particular case it should be reported to an authorised officer of the Council.

Professional Standards

- All enforcement agents employed by The Contractor must carry full and proper photographic identification issued and authorised by them, and when attending a debtor's property must produce such at the outset without being asked. Such identification must also be shown to any other person who has reason to require it.
- The enforcement agent must also carry written authority from the Council and the Contractor to act on their behalf and if requested to do so, must show that to the debtor and to any other person who has reason to make that request.
- The enforcement agent must introduce themselves to debtors and state that they are acting on behalf of the relevant Council.
- The enforcement agent must not misrepresent his/her powers.
- The enforcement agent must take no action if it appears that the only persons present at the address of the debtor are children or vulnerable adults.
- The enforcement agent must make sure that when discussing details of debts they are dealing with the debtor or someone else who is assisting the debtor at the debtor's request for example an interpreter or their legal representative.
- The enforcement agent must be discreet and take care when making enquiries with neighbours.
- The name of the enforcement agent who visited the debtor's property must be shown on any documents left with the debtor or at the property.
- The enforcement agent must be dressed smartly, be courteous and polite in all circumstances and have a professional approach to their work. The nature of the work demands that a firm but correct attitude should be adopted with

debtors and other people they contact in the course of their duties. They must carry out their duties in a calm, dignified and polite manner and shall do nothing to prejudice the reputation and integrity of the Council.

- The enforcement agent must be mindful and respectful to religions and cultures, including an understanding of certain days as cultural and religious festivals. On becoming aware of such days in respect of a particular debtor, Enforcement agents will be expected to consider the appropriateness of proceeding with further action on that day.
- The enforcement agent must follow procedures in confidence and leave letters or documents for the debtor in sealed envelopes marked “private and confidential”. Documents left with debtors or at the property must be on pre-printed stationery and comply with plain English standards.
- All forms and notices issued to the debtor must comply with the requirements of the “Taking Control of Goods Regulations 2013”.
- The enforcement agent must promptly report any physical assaults or serious verbal threats or other matters of concern to the appropriate officer for the Council and if necessary should report any serious risk of a breach of the peace to the police.
- The enforcement agent must be contactable by the Council by means of a mobile phone during working hours and have appropriate messages on voicemail for debtors.
- The enforcement agent must be equipped with technology which must allow them to update the records of the debtor immediately and allow them to provide proof of visits to the debtor’s premises.