

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Enforcement Policy – Covid-19 National Emergency

1. The Council has a key role to play in responding to the national public health emergency presented by the spread of the Covid-19 virus.
2. One of the functions the Council has in responding to the emergency is to exercise regulatory and enforcement powers. These have been provided by the Government to enforce social distancing and other measures designed to stem the spread of the virus and protect the public health and safety of our communities. These include:
 - a. The power to close premises and businesses during the emergency period.
 - b. The power to close or place restrictions on certain other businesses and services during the emergency period.
 - c. The power to close or place restrictions on places of worship, crematorium and community centres.
 - d. The power to restrict the use of footpaths that have been declared closed for the duration of the emergency period.
3. Many of the county borough's residents and businesses are demonstrating a good level of compliance with the measures in force. However, there remains a significant minority who are not complying.
4. The approach the Council will take to exercising its enforcement powers will be aligned with the approach being taken by South Wales Police using the framework:

Engage

Explain

Encourage

Enforce

5. The Council will seek to gain voluntary commitment from our residents and businesses to the social distancing and other emergency measures being implemented by the Government in the first instance, by engaging with our public, explaining the risks of not complying with the measures in force and encouraging people to comply.
6. Enforcement will be a last resort, but where the Council believes there is a significant risk to the NHS and the health and safety of our residents, it is proposed to use the enforcement powers available to us.
7. Complaints will be processed in accordance with the Council's standard procedures, eg licensing matters will be dealt with by Licensing Department, anti-social behaviour complaints will be dealt with by the Community Safety Team, environmental health and trading standards matters dealt with by that team etc.
8. The Council will ensure consistency of approach across all regulatory functions by sharing all complaints received on a weekly basis, in a tasking and co-ordinating group, chaired by the Head of Planning and Public Protection. The tasking and co-ordinating group will assess the risk posed by those complaints to public health and security and then determine whether action is required. The Council will follow the engage, explain, encourage and enforce framework when mobilising action. The group will be organised and supported by the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator
9. In the event that there is an imminent and significant threat to public health and security the Council reserves the right to move directly to enforcement.