

TRADING STANDARDS JOINT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

22 MARCH 2010

Chairman: * Susan Hall

**Councillors:
(Harrow)** * Keith Ferry
Tom Weiss

**Councillors:
(Brent)** * Eddie Baker
* Sami Hashmi
* Lesley Jones

* Denotes Member present

1. Appointment of Chair

RESOLVED: That Councillor Hall be appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that no declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the Previous meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2009 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising from the last Meeting

Members raised matters arising since the previous meeting of the Advisory Board. In response, officers advised that:

- it had not yet been decided whether to proceed with the TrustMark Scheme;

- a member of staff currently training to become an Accredited Financial Investigator was now being mentored by a Police Officer at Wembley police station. It was anticipated that the training would be completed within the next eighteen months. The officer added that once fully trained, both Harrow and Brent would have a designated Financial Investigator;
- funds made available through the Brent Neighbourhood Working Schemes were available to use at the discretion of Brent Councillors.

RESOLVED: That the items be noted.

5. Trading Standards Budget for 2010/11

The Director of Trading Standards introduced a report which detailed the Trading Standards Budget for 2010/11. He advised that Harrow would provide a budget of £828,000 for the 2010/11 financial year. This represented an inflationary increase of 1.5% from the previous year's contribution. He stated that Brent would provide a budget of £886,000, which was identical to their contribution for 2009/10.

The Chairman reiterated the importance of all media correspondence being channelled through the appropriate corporate communications team.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6. Trading Standards Work Plan for 2010/11

An officer introduced a report which set out the Trading Standards Work Plan for 2010/11. He advised that 7 units was the equivalent of an officer working 7 hours on a particular case or activity.

He advised that a new addition to the Harrow and Brent Enforcement Teams 2010/11 work allocation was Enterprise Act Complaints. He stated that a proactive approach would be adopted in handling data from Consumer Direct and local residents regarding the ten traders' within Harrow and Brent who had received the most complaints.

He advised that officers would be more involved with Doorstep Crime Multi-Agency Operations and Doorstep Rapid response actions, using reactive and proactive approaches to monitor the amount of money that had been fraudulently obtained from individuals.

In response to questions from the Board, the officer stated that the:

- category of infringement reports ranged from 0 - 6, with 6 being the most serious;

- activities listed in the Harrow and Brent Enforcement Teams Work Plan for 2010/11 were almost identical, as the issues in each borough were very similar;
- Work Plan comprised of Harrow and Brent Council's Corporate priorities and included local and national policies;
- the range of activities identified in the Work Plan for the 2010/11 Municipal year could be affected by large scale operations as evidenced by the current investigation, currently being conducted in Brent, into the supply of a counterfeit food product which had a nationwide implication. This resulted in raids at numerous premises throughout the country.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

7. Any Other Business

Fraudulent Calling Cards:

In response to a query from a Member of the Board, the Director of Trading Standards advised that investigations following complaints regarding fraudulent calling cards were being conducted. He added that the Office of Fair Trading were also conducting an investigation on this matter.

Vote of Thanks:

The Chairman expressed her thanks to officers and Members for their contributions to the Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board over the 2009/10 Municipal year.

RESOLVED: That the items be noted.

8. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: That the next Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board would be held at Brent Town Hall in July 2010, at a date to be advised.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 7.50 pm).

(Signed)
Chairman