

**MINUTES OF THE TRADING STANDARDS  
JOINT ADVISORY BOARD  
Tuesday 17 July 2007 at 7.30 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Benson (Chair, London Borough of Harrow), Councillor Ferry (London Borough of Harrow), Councillor Weiss (London Borough of Harrow), Councillor Jones (London Borough of Brent) and Councillor Hashmi (London Borough of Brent)

Officers in Attendance were: Bill Bilon (Director of Trading Standards), Gareth Llywelyn-Roberts (London Borough of Harrow), Michael Read (London Borough of Brent), Ash Shah (London Borough of Brent) and Naomi O'Connor (London Borough of Brent)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Baker (London Borough of Brent)

**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 13 March 2007.**

RESOLVED: -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2007 be approved as a true and accurate record subject to the following amendment:

In matters arising, '1.5 million tonnes of goods' be replaced with '£1.5 million worth of counterfeit goods.'

**2. Matters Arising**

There were none.

**3. Report No. 1/07 From the Director of Trading Standards.**

**Annual Report of the Director of Trading Standards for the year 2006/07**

The Director of Trading Standards referred the Board to the Annual Report, which detailed the work of the Trading Standards Consortium during financial year 2006/07.

In response to Members questions, Officers confirmed that:

- On page three of the report, '9.36 hectares (Brent-4.32 & Harrow 5.04)' should be '9,361 hectares (Brent- 4,325 & Harrow- 5,036)'.
- The Trading Standards Service had been successful in retaining it's Charter Mark Status in April 2007.
- Revenue from Proceeds of Crime was used to offset the redundancy and pension costs arising from the re-organisation of

the Trading Standards Service to enable early realisation of savings.

- Revenue from Proceeds of Crime had been gained through the assistance of officers from the London 'Regional Asset Recovery Team' (RART).
- Future revenue from Proceeds from Crime would not necessarily be ring-fenced for use by the Trading Standards Service.
- 701 unannounced test purchase visits, in the financial year 2006/07 had occurred in Brent and 1257 had occurred in Harrow. These visits were to a wide range of businesses, including Public Houses, Clubs and Restaurants to see if traders were supplying age restricted goods to children. An officer explained that these visits were intended to be to premises where activities could affect the well being of children.
- Lack of resources in the Service was a problem and therefore the Service had to prioritise inspections of trade premises on a risk based system.
- Across the board, the Service performed very highly when compared to other London Boroughs.
- The Service had 'Notified Body' status.
- The Service worked with both Licensing and the Police in order to prevent alcohol being sold to minors.
- Generally, the re-organisation of the Service had been positive.
- The Service had been disappointed with the penalties given to traders who sold knives to young people. The Service was launching a campaign to tackle this problem and was liaising with the Magistrates to educate on the fine levels.
- Next year's budget would decide whether the two vacant positions in the Service, would remain vacant.

Officers agreed to send all Members of the Board notification of press-releases via e-mail. One Member commented that he believed that resources, such as proceeds from crime gained from inspections should be spent on core activities such as inspections instead of branching out into new ones. It was agreed that the delivery of the core service was the priority and any new areas would be secondary.

RESOLVED: -

That the above be noted.

4. **Report No. 2/07 from the Director of Trading Standards**

**Report for information on the provisions and implications of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988**

The Board received a report from the Director of Trading Standards providing information to Members on the new statutory duty placed upon local Weights and Measures Authorities to enforce the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (CDPA) from 6 April 2007.

An officer confirmed that regular meetings took place between retailers and the Trading Standards Service in order to prevent the sale of illegal goods. Officers were working with the Immigration Authorities in order to deport illegal immigrants who had been selling counterfeit DVDs. The majority of illegal DVDs were from China.

An officer stated that officers regularly patrolled Harrow Town Centre in order to prevent the sell of illegal DVDs. The officer also stated that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) worked to prevent the sale of illegal DVDs.

A Member commented that those who sold illegal DVDs were using new methods. These methods included knocking on people's doors. The Member suggested that the Trading Standards Service should seek to deal with this problem.

Officers agreed to report back to the Board details of those illegal DVD sellers who had been arrested. Officers also agreed to formulate a business case in order to investigate the possibility of making the Proceeds from Crime Service a profitable one.

An officer confirmed that in paragraph 3.1 of the report, '2006-07' should be '2007-08'.

RESOLVED: -

That the above be noted.

5. **Any Other Business**

***Best Value Review***

An officer informed the Board that a review of the Trading Standards Service had been agreed as part of the Cabinet decision in Harrow to

restructure the service. It was also made clear that this was good practice, was required by Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for all services and would serve as a vehicle to inform Members of priorities, value for money and budget decisions. It was proposed that the process would also facilitate finalising the agreement of the revised Service Level Agreement between Brent and Harrow. The officer explained the background to the partnership and why a new agreement was required as well as the generic process for agreement to be reached.

The officer explained that when the Best Value Review had reported in 2002, the outcome was clear:- that the benefits of a joint service between Harrow and Brent outweighed the delivery of separate 'in house services.' The officer stated that the Trading Standards Service was recognised as being very high performing but was also considered high cost and thus the review would inform the current position for both Councils.

The officer proposed that to begin the review, a 'steering group' involving Members from both Harrow and Brent should be organised. One Member commented that he thought that only a light touch review would be necessary, which was agreed.

The officer stated that he would discuss with Harrow's Portfolio Holder for Environment Services what the next step should be.

RESOLVED: -

That the above be noted.

6. **Date of next meeting**

RESOLVED: -

To note that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 27 November 2007, to be held at the Town Hall, Wembley.

7. **Any Other Urgent Business**

RESOLVED: -

To note that there was no other urgent business.

The meeting ended at 9.10pm.

Councillor Benson  
Chair