



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE TRADING STANDARDS JOINT ADVISORY BOARD Wednesday 8 June 2022 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor and Councillors Patel (London Borough of Harrow), Stevenson (London Borough of Harrow), Suresh (London Borough of Harrow), Kennelly (London Borough of Brent), Farah (London Borough of Brent) and Miller (London Borough of Brent)

Also present: Councillors

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Crabb (London Borough of Brent)

Officers in Attendance were:

1. **Election of Chair (From amongst the London Borough of Harrow representatives)**

RESOLVED: That Councillor Anjana Patel (London Borough of Harrow) be elected as Chair for the meeting.

2. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

None.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

5. **Matters arising**

The following matter was raised in relation to the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2022.

Minute 4 – Matters Arising - Outstanding Delegations

In response to the request for an update on progress regarding the outstanding delegations, Emma Phasey (Head of Licensing and Enforcement, Harrow Council) advised that the Legal Department at Harrow Council was working on finalising the details. A further update would be provided at the next meeting.

6. **Trading Standards Annual Report 2021-2022**

The Board received a report, presented by Anu Prashar (Senior Regulatory Service Manager, Brent Council) outlining the Annual Report for 2021/2022.

The Trading Standards Service operated on a joint consortium basis between the London Borough of Brent and the London Borough of Harrow, with Brent being the host authority. In accordance with the contractual terms between the two boroughs, an annual report must be presented to the Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board.

The Service carried out the local authority's statutory duties relating to the legislation enforced by a Weights and Measures Authority. This gave the Service responsibility of enforcement and legal powers under hundreds of Acts of parliament or statutory instruments.

The Service sought to promote and maintain a fair and equitable trading environment for consumers and businesses alike, creating a level and equal marketplace in which consumers can spend in confidence and business can confidently trade. Duties extended to all business types including those who trade online and the growing internet marketplace, the local high streets, commercial business parks, trading estates, those who trade from their homes and door to door tradespeople.

The following issues were then raised by members of the Board in response to the report:

□ Further details were sought on the monies raised from Proceeds of Crime financial investigation confiscation. It was advised that 50% went to the Government,

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12.5% to the courts, and 37.5% to the local authorities;

□ Members queried the performance management of the Service, and whether key performance indicators (KPIs) were taken into account in areas that needed improvement. It was advised that data existed that showed performance indicators, and the previous versions of reports had sections that itemised such information. However, the current format did not contain the information. This could be highlighted in future reports if required; and

□ Support was expressed for the intelligence-led visit of premises, as it was recognised that not all businesses could be visited due to changes in legislation that required pre-arranged appointments to be made. However, there were exceptions, with the most-complained businesses, which could be visited at short notice.

Having considered the report, the Board **RESOLVED** to note and endorse the Brent and Harrow Trading Standards Annual Report for 2021/22.

7. **Tackling Illegal Tobacco in 2021/2022**

The Board received a report presented by Samuel Abdullahi (Senior Regulatory Officer, Brent Council) which detailed the work on tackling the supply of illicit tobacco. This work was funded by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), and was named Operation CeCe (Op CeCe).

Op CeCe commenced in January 2021 with the aim of tackling the sale and supply of illicit tobacco products such as cigarettes, hand rolling tobacco and shisha. The objective was for the disruption of illegal tobacco within England and Wales. HMRC provided funds to National Trading Standards (NTS) to carry out the work which were allocated to London Trading Standards on a regional level to allocate to those taking part in the project.

The following issues were then raised by members of the Board in response to the report:

□ How funding for the operation was disbursed. It was advised that funding was not lump-sum but on specific activities. This provided that London Trading Standards managed some of the costs for individual authorities. ,

Having considered the report, the Board **RESOLVED** to note the outcomes in 2021/22.

8. **Trading Standards New Legislation**

The Board received a report presented by Anu Prashar (Senior Regulatory Service Manager, Brent Council). Members were provided details of new pieces of legislation that the local authority had responsibility to enforce which would be undertaken by Trading Standards, as announced by the Government.

The Service had seen several new pieces of legislation and standards. These included a new standard for battery safety; restrictions on the sale of certain solid fuels; changes to energy labelling requirements; new rules on single use plastics; new age legislation regarding Botox, cosmetic fillers, knives and corrosive substances. 4

The following issues were then raised by members of the Board in response to the report:

- Local Authorities were being given important powers, however, that did not translate into more personnel to undertake the work. It was advised that Brent and Harrow only had 9 Trading Standards officers between them. Therefore, much of the work would be intelligence-led, with collaboration from central London sources on sharing information;
- Clarification was also sought on whether local authorities would work with the Police where required. It was advised that some illicit activities required Police involvement, whilst others could be dealt with by the Service. Data and information would be shared with the Police.

Having considered the report, the Board **RESOLVED** to note the update provided.

9. **Dates of Future Meetings**

Members noted the following dates for meetings during the 2022-23 Municipal Year:

a. Wednesday, 12 October 2022, at 6:00 pm, to be hosted by the London Borough of Brent; and

b. Thursday, 9 March 2023, at 6:00 pm, to be hosted by the London Borough of Harrow.

10. **Any other urgent business**

There were no other matter or urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.38 pm

COUNCILLOR ANJANA PATEL

Chair

The meeting closed at Time Not Specified

L. JONES

Chair