



# Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board

**Wednesday 19 March 2025 at 6.00 pm**  
To be held as an online virtual meeting

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting by viewing the live webcast. The link to view the meeting is available [HERE](#)

## Membership:

Members Councillors:	Representing	First alternates Councillors:	Representing
Patel	Harrow	Blackman	Harrow
Stevenson	Harrow	Greek	Harrow
Suresh	Harrow	Kalu	Harrow
Crabb	Brent	Farah	Brent
Kennelly	Brent	Miller	Brent
Krupa Sheth	Brent	Chohan	Brent

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## **Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:**

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest\*\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also a Prejudicial Interest (i.e. it affects a financial position or relates to determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission, or registration) then (unless an exception at 14(2) of the Members Code applies), after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

### **\*Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences**- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

### **\*\*Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

(a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:

- To which you are appointed by the council;
- which exercises functions of a public nature;
- which is directed is to charitable purposes;
- whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party of trade union).

(b) The interests a of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral ward affected by the decision, the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who employs or has appointed any of these or in whom they have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000, or any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are a director
- any body of a type described in (a) above.

# Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Item	Page
<b>1 Election of Chair</b>	
To be appointed from the London Borough of Harrow membership for this meeting.	
<b>2 Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members</b>	
<b>3 Declarations of Interests</b>	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant personal or disclosable pecuniary interests in the items on this agenda.	
<b>4 Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	1 - 8
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 6 November 2024 as a correct record.	
<b>5 Matters Arising</b>	
<b>6 Deputations (if any)</b>	
<b>7 Fees and Charges 2025-26 Report</b>	9 - 14
This report provides Members with information concerning the proposed level of fees and charges to be applied by the Brent & Harrow Trading Standards Service during 2025/26.	
<b>8 Joint Advisory Board Report Work Plan 2025-26</b>	15 - 24
This report provides Members with information concerning the proposed 2025/26 work plan for Brent & Harrow Trading Standards.	
<b>9 Single Use Vapes Ban Update</b>	25 - 28
The purpose of this report is to provide members with information on the ban on single-use vapes (disposable vapes) to be applied from 1 June 2025.	

## **10 Date of Future Meetings**

Members are asked to note the provisional schedule of meetings agreed between Brent & Harrow for the 2025-26 Municipal Year:

- Wednesday 4 June 2025 at 6pm to be hosted (online) by the London Borough of Brent
- Wednesday 5 November 2025 at 6pm to be hosted (online) by the London Borough of Harrow
- Thursday 5 March 2026 at 6pm to be hosted (online) by the London Borough of Brent

These dates will be subject to final confirmation by each respective borough in approving their calendar of meetings for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

## **11 Any Other Urgent Business**

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Deputy Director Democratic Services (London Borough of Brent) or their representative before the meeting in accordance with the constitutions of both councils.



## Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board Minutes

**Held as an online meeting at 6pm on  
Wednesday 6 November 2024**

**Present:**

**Chair:** Daniel Kennelly London Borough of Brent

**Councillors:** Nicola Blackman London Borough of Harrow  
Krishna Suresh London Borough of Harrow  
Pritesh Patel London Borough of Harrow  
Bhagwanji Chohan London Borough of Brent  
Steve Crabb London Borough of Brent

**1. Election of Chair**

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Daniel Kennelly (London Borough of Brent) be elected as Chair for the meeting.

**2. Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members**

Apologies for absence were received from Simon Legg (London Borough of Brent), Councillor Krupa Sheth (London Borough of Brent) with Councillor Bhagwanji Chohan substituting and Emma Phasey (London Borough of Harrow) with Gareth Jones attending on her behalf.

**3. Declarations of interest**

None.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6 June 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**5. Matters arising**

None.

## **6. Deputations (if any)**

No requests for deputations had been submitted for the meeting.

## **7. Trading Standards Mid-Year Review Report 2024-25**

Samuel Abdullahi (Senior Enforcement Officer for Brent Council) presented the mid-year review report for the year 2024-2025. In presenting the report, members were advised it provided an update on the Service's performance mid-way through the year highlighting some of the key achievements and some challenges faced, with the following points noted:

- The Service received 2,163 service requests during this period from various sources, such as consumers, businesses, other local authorities and enforcement bodies.
- The Service had responded to 69 business enquiries or requests for advice. 32 of these have been for the Brent Team and 37 for the Harrow Team.
- The Service had delivered 25.5 hours of tailored advice to businesses in connection with product safety. This related to physical and online compliance on clothing and electricals items and some product recalls were also initiated.
- During the ongoing cost of living crisis, Trading Standards continued to enhance the safety of products and promote a fair trading environment within their boroughs.
- One of the areas of concern had been focussed on the supply and sale of second-hand tyres (part-worn tyres).
- The Service had continued to visit businesses to test weighing scales with 5 businesses having been inspected across both boroughs and it discovered the scales were in fact calibrated to the benefit of the customer.
- The Service visited 31 businesses (17 in Brent and 14 in Harrow) that were considered as high risk or amongst the most complained about. An Officer recently secured a refund of £1,500 from a car dealer in Harrow following a complaint received concerning the description of a vehicle.
- Referrals were received from the Office for Product Safety and Standards and colleagues at the Ports about businesses in the borough either importing or selling unsafe products and the team continuing to work to ensure companies met the necessary compliance standards. As an example, the Board were advised that officers had been working with a Harrow based company concerning a Climbing Arch product. The company had carried out a product recall and were currently working with the team to ensure that the replacement being put on the market was safe.
- The team have conducted online audits of agents actively advertising rental services as well as responding to complaints. The team had examined the websites of 15 (10 Brent and 5 Harrow) businesses and inspected 6 agents (2 Brent and 4 Harrow). 2 of the agents visited, 1 in each borough had been issued with a Notice of Intent (NOI) to issue

monetary penalties as they had been found not to comply or display their fees.

- Operation CeCe (Illicit Tobacco Enforcement) began in 2021 to tackle the sale and supply of illicit tobacco products and a total of 22 businesses had been visited during this reporting period (15 in Brent and 7 in Harrow). No illicit tobacco products were found at the businesses in Harrow, with the inspection including use of a tobacco sniffer dog. In Brent officers seized illicit tobacco from 10 of the businesses visited but found nothing in the other 5. Further dates have been scheduled for additional Operation CeCe operations during the final half of the year, with 2 having been completed and another 2 to complete before the end of December 2024.
- 23 businesses have so far been visited to check compliance with regard to the sale of age restricted products to minors. 12 of these have been Brent and 11 in Harrow. Out of the 11 businesses in Harrow, 2 of these had sold to the child volunteers.
- 13 advisory (5 Brent and 8 Harrow) visits were made to businesses within both boroughs that were identified as selling knives. The purpose of these visits was to advise and ensure that the businesses were storing and displaying knives safely and securely.
- A total of two cases were concluded in court during the reporting period both cases were concerning the sale of an age restricted product to a minor. In May, at Willesden Magistrates court a business in Brent had been convicted for the sale of a Nicotine inhaling product (vape) to a person under the age of 18. The judge fined the company £600 and ordered a victim surcharge of £240 and costs of £800 to be paid. In June, Willesden Magistrates court had fined a business in Harrow £300 with them ordered to pay £300 costs and a victim surcharge of £120 for the sale of alcoholic beverage to a person under the age of 18.
- The team had generated/inputted 59 intelligence reports on the National Intelligence Database (IDB) to help assist in identifying any local, regional, or national emerging trends.
- The team was set to deliver a rapid response service to residents to prevent, disrupt, and deter doorstep criminals. To date, the team had received a total of 3 callouts (2 in Brent and 1 in Harrow), which had led to total savings of £9,000 in Brent.
- In April, a Harrow resident saved a total of £28,000 after being cold called by a rogue builder posing as a surveyor who falsely identified some work that they claimed needed to be carried out. The resident was quoted £30,000 for the job and paid a deposit of £2,000 before the team's involvement.
- In regards to work volumes, work areas were constantly reviewed with the teams having regular meetings to assess where they are and then put in place action plans to ensure that they achieve the maximum output of work by the end of the year, which will be reported in the Annual Report for 2024/25.

The Chair thanked Samuel Abdullahi for his report and welcomed questions from Board, with the following noted:

- Concern was raised about paan spitting and the impact of this on residents. Samuel Abdullahi said that paan spitting did not fall under the remit of Trading Standards, however following a recent meeting it was agreed to assess how to tackle this issue collectively. Gareth Jones informed the Board of the work specifically addressing paan spitting supported by Chris Whyte who advised of the deployment of Environment Enforcement Officers to areas where paan spitting was common like Wembley, involving the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices if someone is caught spitting. Recognising the issue as a public health concern work was also ongoing with the community, its leaders, GP's and medical centres to promote the message around the harm caused by chewing paan. Samuel Abdullahi stated that if any of the paan contained tobacco then Trading Standards could take action.
- Councillor Patel highlighted that chewing paan often did contain tobacco and also highlighted that a lot of tobacco looked like sweets and came packaged as such so may not be easily seen by the team. Samuel Abdullahi stated that the team were aware of the different types of paans and the paan that looked like sweets was considered smokeless tobacco and would be seized.
- In regards to product safety, there was a concern in regards to fake medicines being sold. There was a demand for medicines, such as Diazepam and Xanax and some of them contained synthetic opioids, which is classed as Class A drugs. Anu Prashar stated that the team do come across fake medicines at times, usually alongside illicit tobacco. Any fake medicines are referred to the Medicine Agency and removed from the shop. Some of these medicines may not be fake but have been illegally imported.
- Regarding the sale of gas canisters, which young people were using to get high, concern was raised about this also being a fly tipping issue. It was clarified that this was a Police matter. Recent changes in legislation meant that the large gas cannisters could not be sold in small shops. Gas canisters were meant for catering and it was suspicious that small shops were selling them.
- Alcohol being sold under the counter and spices being mixed without the manufacturer's consent was raised. Anu Prashar explained that the Enforcement Code prevented the Service visiting every shop on the high street instead the team were intelligence led. In regards to the concerns highlighted, again the team would need to be informed of the specific business involved. This would involve the Environment Health team but regardless of that the team would still like to receive information regarding this.
- The Chair noted the improvement in Harrow on the age restricted testing and queried the cost of the fine for underage purchasing i.e. £600 plus costs. Anu Prashar explained that fines were means tested regardless of them being a first offence or not.



- Clarity was sought around the use of fireworks for festivals. Anu Prashar confirmed that fireworks for Chinese New Year and Diwali and New Years Eve were allowed to be used until 1am and there should be no fireworks being used past 11pm at any other time. In regards to fireworks being used for anti-social activities, the Nuisance Team would need to be approached. Councillor Blackman provided the following information on fireworks legislation and controls:

*The Fireworks Regulations 2004 were introduced with the aim to reduce noise, nuisance and injuries by the misuse of fireworks. The main regulations prohibit the use of fireworks between the hours of 23:00 and 07:00 except on specific dates and festivals. Bonfire night it is allowed until 12am, New Year's Day until 01:00 the next day, the day of Diwali until 01:00 the next day, and Chinese New Year until 01:00 the next day. Enforcement for this falls to the Police.*

*The Regulations also control sales to those over 18, licensing of sellers of fireworks and impose a maximum decibel level (120 decibels) for fireworks intended for public sale. These can all be investigated by trading standards.*

*The Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on the local authority to investigate for statutory nuisance. A statutory nuisance is assessed using a number of factors including the frequency of occurrence, duration, timing and nature of such events and an average person's sensitivity to noise. Whilst firework events are inherently noisy, they are short-lived and unlikely to meet the threshold for statutory nuisance.*

*The Boroughwide PSPO prohibits the lighting of fires in a public place not designated for such use or as part of an organised event approved through the responsible authority. It also prohibits the use of fireworks in the street.*

*The Licensing Act 2003 regulates the sale of alcohol and other licensable activities. However, a firework display is not a licensable activity and it therefore cannot be used to regulate or prohibit displays at events. It is therefore not regulated under a premises license or a temporary event notice.*

*The Animal Welfare Act 2006 contains no specific offences relating to setting off fireworks.*

As part of the licensing inspection, the Service would assess the storage of fireworks ensuring that they were in a locked capacity and not accessible by customers as well as the category of fireworks ensuring that they were category 3 or below, as category 4 and above were only permitted for firework displays. A second inspection then took place to ensure that sellers are complying with legislation.

- Clarity was sought around residential lettings and the clamp down on the client money protection scheme and whether more focus would be put

on these. Anu Prashar explained that the Service looked at complaints through the Council's reporting tool and worked closely with the private sector housing teams across both boroughs. Private sector housing had an enforcement duty and the Service would ensure that they remained compliant. Under the Tenants Fee Act, there must be a complainant in order for an investigation from the Service to take place.

- The health and safety around private funeral director businesses was discussed and Anu Prashar agreed to check when the last inspection was carried out. The Environmental Safety Team was in charge of the health and safety regulations for funeral directors and Gareth Jones advised that he would also check the position regarding the inspection of those businesses operating in Harrow.

With no further issues raised the Board thanked officers for the update provided and RESOLVED to note the report.

## **8. Consumer Bills and New Law Report**

Anu Prashar (Senior Regulatory Service Manager for Brent Council) presented a report regarding current Parliamentary Bills and new pieces of legislation that the local authority had a responsibility to enforce which would be undertaken by Trading Standards, The following points were noted:

- On the 5 July 2024, the country saw a change in government and the King's Speech on 17 July 2024 set out upcoming legislation and policy, which it was hoped would improve protections for consumers and legitimate businesses.
- The Product Safety and Metrology Bill was introduced to Parliament in September 2024, with the objective of maintaining the UK's global leadership in product regulation. It was intended to ensure product development, including safety, environmental standards and information for consumers remained up to date and, where appropriate, aligned with EU legislation. It was also hoped that this will result in clearer responsibilities for online sellers, providing stability and certainty for UK businesses around things like CE marking and international safety standards and this was crucial for better consumer protection against fire risks for example. The Bill also updated the legal metrology framework, crucial for ensuring accuracy in weights and measures for purchased goods.

The Bill, which would cover almost all manufactured goods and affect an estimated 220,000 UK businesses also included mechanisms to identify new and emerging issues in the supply chain and would enable more effective sharing of data between regulators and market surveillance authorities, a function carried out by Trading Standards. In addition, the Bill sets out powers that would be provided to the Secretary of State to introduce secondary legislation to cover these issues. It was the detailed, secondary legislation which would impact on retail operations and supply chains. It was expected the Bill would be enacted during Spring 2025, followed by secondary legislation by Summer 2025 and

would also provide local authorities with extra power to investigate and act against businesses that sell unsafe or mislabelled products.

- The Renters' Rights Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 11 September 2024 and would abolish Section 21 'no fault evictions' and strengthen tenants' protections in the private sector. Landlords will have to join a new Ombudsman service and should they fail to do this, they could face enforcement action from local Councils, ranging from civil penalties of up to £7,000 to criminal prosecution or fines of as much as £40,000 for repeated breaches.
- The Government announced in the 2024 King's Speech that it would bring forward a Tobacco and Vapes Bill to restrict the sale and marketing of e-cigarettes to children. The Bill would also prevent people born on or after 1 January 2009 from ever being sold tobacco cigarettes. This bill had now been introduced into Parliament and there were provisions for licensing for retail and sales of tobacco and vapes. The sale of vape with flavours that were child appealing, would also be reformed to reduce their appeal with potential restrictions on the display and packaging of products, similar to that of tobacco. A Fixed Penalty Notice or a fine could be issued if legislation was not adhered to.
- The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 (DMCC Act) was introduced to the UK parliament on 25 April 2023. Although the DMCC Act revoked the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs) which was currently one of Trading Standards key pieces of legislation, it had largely reinstated the powers with some changes. The new legislation included commercial practices, misleading admissions and prohibited banned practices. These changes aligned with the broader regulatory movement to crackdown on "Online Choice Architecture" or "Dark Patterns". Important changes to the list of banned practices were also made during the legislative process. The government consulted on, and agreed to create new banned practices, such as giving fake reviews. These additions bring the UK position closer to that of the EU where the Enforcement and Modernisation Directive (also known as the "Omnibus Directive") brought in similar prohibitions on fake reviews and endorsements. Although most of the existing banned practices constitute criminal offences, the new banned practices on fake reviews would not, so the main risks for businesses will be civil liability, including potentially large fines.

The Act also deals with so-called "drip pricing" practices. Drip pricing is where only part of an item's price is shown during the early part of the consumer journey, for example tickets for air travel and the total amount to be paid is revealed at or near the end of the buying process, by which time the consumer may feel committed to the purchase. The Act also covers so-called subscription traps which it had been estimated cost consumers over £1.6 billion a year. The also Act included new rules for subscription contracts with consumers and the main consumer law provisions of the DMCC Act were expected to come into force in April 2025 with the new subscription contracts regime following about a year later in Spring 2026.

- Trading Standards officers would get an extension of powers enabling them to apply through the courts for Online Interface Orders (OIOs)

against traders that mislead consumers. An online interface can be defined as 'any software, including a website, part of a website or an application, that is operated by or on behalf of a trader, and which serves to give consumers access to the trader's goods and services'. OIOs were important to Trading Standards because they make it easier to carry out investigative and enforcement action online. Up until now, only the Competitions & Market Authority (CMA) had the ability to apply for an OIO.

The Chair thanked Anu Prashar for her report and welcomed questions from the Board, with the following noted:

- Clarity was sought regarding the Renters' Rights Bill and how this would be implemented consistently across other boroughs, as landlords in some other boroughs did not need to get a licence. In response Gareth Jones advised that he would seek to obtain further clarification and feedback.
- The Chair recognised the positive change in eliminating vape flavours that would otherwise be appealing to children and asked how receptive businesses were to this change. Anu Prashar explained that there would be a phasing out period designed to focus the sale of vapes at tobacconists given the huge range of outlets, such as card shops, phone shops etc where they were currently available.
- The Chair asked how the Service could take down websites that are hosted abroad. Anu Prashar stated that the Service had contacts with international bodies that would assist in taking the websites down.

With no further issues raised, the Chair thanked the team for their hard work in compiling the reports and the Board **RESOLVED** to note the report.

## 9. Date of Future Meetings

**NOTED** the date for the next meeting is:

Wednesday 19 March 2025 at 6pm to be hosted (online) by the London Borough of Harrow

The meeting closed at 7:15pm.

COUNCILLOR DANIEL KENNELLY  
Chair

**London Boroughs of Brent & Harrow  
Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board  
Wednesday 19 March 2025  
Report from the Senior Service Manager**

**FOR INFORMATION**

**TRADING STANDARDS FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26**

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report provides Members with information concerning the proposed level of fees and charges to be applied by the Brent & Harrow Trading Standards Service during 2025/26.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Joint Advisory Board Members consider the report and make recommendations or comments where appropriate.

**3.0 Details**

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 13(f) of the Consortium Agreement between the London Borough of Brent and the London Borough of Harrow, the Joint Advisory Board 'should consider and make recommendations on the level of fees and charges to be made to the public in respect of any part of the service, for consideration by whoever is authorised to make fees and charges decisions by each respective council's constitution'.
- 3.2 As per the council's Fees and Charges policy, our Strategic Director has delegated powers in conjunction with the Chief Executive, to vary fees in certain circumstances without the need to bring reports before Cabinet or other decision making bodies. When appropriate circumstances provide, the Service will utilise this policy to maximise income opportunities.
- 3.3 Brent is the host authority for the consortium and therefore the fee structure and charges are applied at the same level to each borough.
- 3.4 Trading Standards fees fall into the following categories:
1. Statutory fees (set by legislation, although some offer discretion to vary the amount up to a maximum value)
  2. RPI linked fees (agreed previously by Brent's Executive)
  3. Discretionary fees (there is discretion to vary the value charged)
- 3.4.1 Statutory fees are set nationwide by government. Generally, local authorities have no discretion to change these fees although on occasions, the legislation will permit a fee to be set locally up to a maximum value.

### *Explosive License Fees*

- 3.4.2 The fees to process explosive (firework) licenses, charged by the Harrow team are set by the Health and Safety Executive by virtue of the Health and Safety and Nuclear (Fees) Regulations as amended by the The Health and Safety and Nuclear (Fees) (Amendment) and Gas Safety (Miscellaneous Amendment) Regulations 2024. These fees vary subject to the exact license required although are typically £59 to renew a short-term license rising to £500 for an all year round license. It remains the case that in Brent, this function is the responsibility of the Licensing Team who receive the income.

### *Letting and/or Property Management Penalty Fees*

- 3.4.3 Under the Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc) (England) Order 2014 and the Consumer Rights Act 2015, we can impose monetary penalties of up to £5,000 where breaches of the legislation have taken place.
- 3.4.4 Under the Tenant's Fees Act 2019 and Client Money Protection Schemes for Property Agents (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc.) Regulations 2019, we can impose monetary penalties of up to £30,000 where breaches of the legislation have taken place.
- 3.4.5 However, the legislation requires enforcing authorities to take into consideration any representations received from the recipients of such penalties. Accordingly, the value of each penalty is considered on a case-by-case basis to determine what is appropriate in the given circumstances. It is proposed that the penalties range from £1,000 (low harm) to £5,000 (high harm) for first offences. For subsequent offences, we will either prosecute or levy a penalty of £5,000 (low harm) to £30,000 (high harm). These penalties only relate to the legislation quoted in 3.4.4 above.

### *Primary Authority Fees*

- 3.4.6 A RPI escalator (Retail Price Index) applies to our Primary Authority partnerships which is a scheme enabling us under Section 31 Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, to charge businesses on a 'cost recovery' basis, for primary authority services.
- 3.4.7 Brent's Executive agreed a report titled "*Introduction of a Charge Based Regulatory Advice Service for Businesses*" in June 2013, which stipulates that an increase is applied to the rates charged for primary authority advice, on an annual basis on 1 April each year by the annual change in the RPI for January of the year concerned. The RPI in January 2025 was 3.6%.
- 3.4.8 The proposed rounded up, hourly rate increase in our primary authority fees to include this rise are shown in the table below.

Service	2024/25	2025/26
Primary Authority – fixed contract (per hour)	£75.00	£78.00
Primary Authority - pay as you go (per hour)	£93.00	£97.00

3.4.9 The remaining fees the Council has discretion to determine annually, with any change in the fee being set each year according to prevailing circumstances. When determining the level to fix these fees, care is required to ensure we remain competitive amongst other local authorities who offer similar services so as to ensure we do not lose custom.

#### *Weights and Measures Fees*

3.5.0 By virtue of S11(5) and S49(4) of the Weights and Measures Act 1985, the local authority can charge 'such reasonable fees as we determine' for carrying out our duties under the Act. The Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) used to publish annual guidance for weights and measures fees to local authorities so they could remain competitive. ACTSO took the decision in April 2019 not to give this guidance as the 'actual costs of each local authority vary widely for many reasons and local authorities must follow their own corporate rules in relation to assessing costs and charging'. The fees have risen between 3.53% and 5.19%.

3.5.1 The table below shows the proposed fees:

Service Charged Per Officer Per Hour	VAT	2024/25 (Inc VAT where applicable)	2025/26	
			(excl VAT)	(incl VAT)
Verification of weights & measures equipment	20%	£92.40	£81	£97.20
Calibration of weights for business	20%	£92.40	£81	£97.20
Weights & measures testing for other local authorities (per hour)	0%	£77	£81	£81
Additional officer testing assistance (per hour)	0%	£49	£51	£51
Officer use of safety lab (per hour)	20%	£102	£88	£108.60

#### *Registration of Premises for Auction Fee*

3.5.2 By virtue of S26(2) Greater London Council (General Powers) Act 1984, we apply a 'reasonable fee' for the registration of a premises to host an auction. The legislation states this fee has to cover 'administration and inspection costs'. The current fee is £395, and it is proposed this fee increases to £414.

3.5.3 It is very rare to get applications for this purpose with none received during 2024/25.

### *Fee for Officers Carrying Out Duties at Wembley Events*

3.5.4 A charge is made for officers conducting their duties at Wembley events on behalf of brand holders or other merchandisers. The rate for this work £72 per hour per Enforcement officer and £97 for Senior/Supervisory Staff. Officers are expected to work during matches and events held at Wembley.

### *Financial Investigator's Fee*

3.5.5 Our Financial Investigators continue to offer their services to other local authorities. In addition to agreements with these local authorities, which ensures a share of any money raised via the Home Office Proceeds of Crime incentivisation scheme, we charge an hourly fee for our time spent conducting the investigation. This covers our costs in the event that no order is made or if an order is made by the Court and it is not paid for any reason resulting in no incentivisation scheme payment being received.

3.5.6 It is proposed to increase this fee from £49 to £51. This is to ensure we remain competitive with other local authorities offering a similar service. This fee is charged in addition to a share of any subsequent incentivisation scheme payment.

3.5.7 The hourly fee quoted above for our financial investigation services, does not apply to any internal London Borough of Brent but will apply to London Borough of Harrow referrals. The hourly rate to be applied is the rate on the date that any contract is made with an external authority as opposed to the applicable fee on the date a financial investigation may conclude.

## **4.0 Financial Considerations**

4.1 Below is the list of the previous income budgets.

- 2020/21 - £45,500
- 2021/22 - £40,200
- 2022/23 - £42,000
- 2023/24 - £50,500
- 2024/25 - £45,500

(These figures exclude income received from court costs awarded or proceeds of crime recovery).

There is an increase in the income budget to reflect the work going back to normal.

4.2 At the time of drafting this report, income of £68,015 for 2024/25 had already been achieved via its fees and charges against a fees and charges income figure of £45k. There were an increased number of Wembley events, and the above budgeted income reflects this.

## **5.0 Legal Considerations**



5.1 There is no legal implications arising from this report.

## **6.0 Equality Implications**

6.1 The proposals in this report have been screened to assess their relevance to equality and were found to have no equality implications.

## **7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

7.1 There is no requirement to specifically consult Ward Members about this report as it affects all wards across both Boroughs.

## **8.0 Human Resources Implications**

8.1 There are no human resource or property implications arising from this report although it should be noted that the number of staff vacancies currently within the Service may result in a reduced ability to generate income, as well as the continued restrictions during the pandemic.

### **Contact Officer**

Any person wishing to obtain more information should contact Anu Prashar, Senior Regulatory Service Manager, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley Middlesex HA9 0FJ. Telephone: (020) 8937 55215, [anu.prashar@brent.gov.uk](mailto:anu.prashar@brent.gov.uk)

ANU PRASHAR  
SENIOR REGULATORY SERVICE MANAGER

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**London Boroughs of Brent & Harrow  
Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board  
Wednesday 19 March 2025  
Report from the Senior Service Manager**

**FOR INFORMATION**

**TRADING STANDARDS WORK PLAN 2025/26**

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report provides Members with information concerning the proposed 2025/26 work plan for Brent & Harrow Trading Standards.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Joint Advisory Board Members consider the report and make any recommendations or comments where appropriate including suggesting alternative priority areas of work that the Trading Standards Service may wish to consider.

**3.0 Details**

- 3.1 The Service drafts an annual work plan, which proposes the activities to be undertaken and the priority areas of work for the coming financial year. The plan also acts as a guide for the purposes of monitoring performance during this period.
- 3.2 In accordance with the consortium agreement, there is a requirement for the London Borough of Brent to estimate the number and type of activities that will be undertaken by the Service during the financial year and to present this to the Joint Advisory Board.
- 3.3 A copy of the proposed work plan for the year 2025/26 is attached as an Appendix to this report.

**4.0 Financial Considerations**

- 4.1 There are no financial considerations arising from this report as the work plan is drafted in a manner to be achieved within the budget provided for the Service for 2025/26.
- 4.2 This report is written as if the 2025/26 budget will remain unchanged from the previous year. If there are any changes to the budget after the drafting of this report, the work plan will be adjusted accordingly to reflect any changes.

**5.0 Legal Considerations**

- 5.1 There is no legal implications arising from this report.

## **6.0 Equality Implications**

6.1 The proposals in this report have been screened to assess their relevance to equality and were found to have no equality implications.

## **7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

7.1 There is no requirement to specifically consult Ward Members about this report as it affects all wards across both Boroughs.

## **8.0 Human Resources Implications**

8.1 There are no human resource or property implications arising from this report although it should be noted that the number of staff vacancies currently within the Service may result in a reduced ability to generate income, as well as the continued restrictions during the pandemic.

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ANU PRASHAR  
SENIOR REGULATORY SERVICE MANAGER



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**Brent & Harrow  
Trading Standards**

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**Team Work Plan  
2025-2026**

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## Introduction

Brent and Harrow Trading Standards is responsible for the enforcement of a wide range of legislation controlling the advertising, marketing, distribution and supply of goods and services throughout the manufacturing, importation, distribution, and service delivery chain. Its remit covers criminal and contract law and includes product safety, fraud, weights and measures, trademark protection, e-commerce and unfair trading practices.

The role of the Trading Standards is to promote a fair, healthy and safe trading environment in Brent and Harrow by ensuring compliance with regulatory legislation, protecting consumers and supporting local businesses. Trading Standards has a statutory responsibility to enforce regulatory legislation aimed at protecting consumers, particularly the most vulnerable and preventing businesses from engaging in unfair, illegal or unsafe practices.

In the UK, consumers take a lot for granted. The products we buy are safe, we do not expect to be victims of fraud, the weights quoted on goods are correct and the businesses will trade with us fairly are just some examples.

Trading Standards work is central to maintaining a confident marketplace supporting businesses to develop and the local economy grow. The Service fulfils the local authority's statutory role of a 'weights and measures authority' tasked with enforcing more than 250 pieces of legislation.

This work plan aims to set out some of our priority areas for the coming year and provides a guide to the expected levels of performance for each of the boroughs' teams. The plan offers flexibility to assist in meeting unexpected demands and to adapt service delivery as required, to meet emerging threats or respond to major investigations.

The ongoing move towards new and emerging online markets remains a significant issue for the Service and we will continue to explore the most effective ways to tackle consumer issues within these new markets.

There are new pieces of legislation which will be implemented during 2025. This includes the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 (DMCC). This Act is expected to come into force in April 2025 and will give strengthen enforcement of consumer protection laws. The Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (England) Regulations 2024 makes it illegal to sell or supply single-use vapes in England from the 1 June. The service has already started informing businesses of this change and will continue this work in 2025/26. The Tobacco and Vapes Bill is expected to come into force 1 June 2025. This legislation aims to create a smoke-free generation and regulate the sale and use of tobacco and vaping products. We will be working with businesses throughout the year to ensure that they are prepared for the forthcoming changes.

The Service continues to employ two Financial Investigators who conduct investigations generated not only from within our own councils, but also on behalf on various other external agencies. Their duties and outputs are measured differently and are outside the scope of this work plan.

The Service's leadership team currently includes Anu Prashar and Samuel Abdullahi.

## Priorities

The Trading Standards Service aim is for a safe, fair and legal marketplace, that supports and benefits local businesses and which helps the local economy grow.

The Service fulfils the local authority's statutory role of a 'weights and measures authority' and is tasked with enforcing more than 250 pieces of legislation.

Our Service priorities for the year are influenced by the following:

The National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) has identified the following areas in its Strategic Assessment dated October 2024<sup>3</sup>, which it considers to be priority areas of work:

- Doorstep crime and cold calling (including energy fraud).
- Lettings (England only).
- Mass marketing fraud/scams.
- Illicit and underage sale of vapes (England only).
- Illicit tobacco.
- Used cars.
- Intellectual property.
- Other fair-trading issues.
- Estate agency.
- Animal feed work

NTSB also has the following as cross cutting themes and enablers, as they impact on each of their priority areas:

- e-Crime and the use of social media/online platforms.
- Serious and organised crime.
- The cost-of-living crisis.

London Trading Standards (LTS), who represent the 33 local authority Trading Standards Services across London, have identified their priority areas of work for members.

LTS thematic priority areas are as follows:

- Lettings – focus on intelligence gathering/sharing and identifying non-compliant traders.
- Doorstep crime – assists protection and safeguarding; to include Scams issues.
- Fair trading – assists protection, advice for consumers and safeguarding business; this includes other Scams issues.
- Intellectual property crime – Assists in Safeguarding legitimate business (which has a cross over into)-
- Product safety – assists in Safeguarding from unsafe products available to consumers and IP Crime.
- Illicit Tobacco and Alcohol – Assists in Safeguarding, IP Crime and can include Product Safety – focus on intelligence gathering, identifying traders and lawful sharing with partners.



The sub- thematic priorities are:

- Doorstep Crime – focus on Services, Construction, and all Home Maintenance traders.
- Fair Trading – particularly all Investments; Enablers i.e. - Virtual Offices / Boiler rooms etc; Identifying rogue traders, (Cost-Of-Living Crisis); and Fake / Copycat websites.
- Intellectual Property – focus on intelligence gathering / sharing and identifying traders including the supply and *more so*; the storage of illicit goods.
- Product Safety – focus on MOT’s Servicing and Repairs; Beauty treatments and cosmetics; Electrical Services and Installations; and identifying traders and importers.
- Underage sales – focus on intelligence gathering / sharing and identifying traders.
- Lettings – Money and Tenancy protection schemes, Redress schemes and Tenants Fees Act 2019

The Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) work and fund some of our product testing. OPSS inform us when a product safety and recalls. OPSS no longer produces a Product Safety Strategic Intelligence assessment report but publish a Product Safety Database (PSD) report 2023 to 2024 dated October 2024.

The PSD is a core dataset for OPSS, providing insight into the market surveillance activity of regulatory officers across the UK and highlighting where the greatest levels of activity are taking place in terms of product sectors, as well as providing an oversight of the most reported hazards and corrective actions taken. Analysis of PSD data can also highlight where there may be emerging safety issues for novel products and within certain sectors, which can feed into and drive OPSS’s regulatory activity and decision making to target market surveillance activity, reduce risk and protect consumers.

The report sets out high level findings from the PSD incorporating product safety and non-compliance notifications from local authorities and national regulators.

The most frequently notified product category on the PSD was electrical appliances and equipment (22.9% of products notified) followed by cosmetics (20.2%) and toys (14.4%).

Within the London Boroughs of Brent and Harrow each local authority has a corporate plan setting out what it is to accomplish in the future and how this will be achieved. Brent has a ‘Borough Plan 2023-2027’ and Harrow a plan entitled ‘Restoring pride in Harrow. These plans highlight the broad subject areas listed below as priority areas for each Council:

Brent:<sup>1</sup>

- Prosperity and Stability in Brent
- A Cleaner, Greener Future
- Thriving Communities
- The Best Start in Life
- A Healthier Brent foundations

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<sup>1</sup> [Brent Borough Plan 2023-27.pdf](#)

Harrow:<sup>2</sup>

- A council that puts residents first
- A borough that is clean and safe
- A place where those in need are supported.

These areas of work have each been given consideration including an assessment of the intelligence available. From this, we are able to focus where our resources should be deployed to achieve the biggest impact. This approach is in line with the IOM (National Trading Standards Intelligence Operating Model) as well as contributing to the relevant Borough objectives.

Whilst setting our work plan, the following assumptions have been made:

- Work will be reactive (complaint-driven) focusing on statutory responsibilities rather than proactive except for the purposes of supporting specific borough priorities or initiatives
- All complaints (service requests) received for investigation will be risk-assessed via our matrix and will only be investigated if the relevant threshold is reached
- We will continue to focus on steering business towards primary authority advice
- Any commercial activities which generate an income will be prioritised to maximise revenue
- We will seek to manage demand where possible by signposting service users to other resources and encouraging greater use of on-line advice and information
- We will publicise our work as much as possible to act as an educational resource or deterrent warning when applicable.

We have categorised the following areas of work to form the basis of our 2025/26 priorities:

### High Priority

Most Complained About Businesses	Estate Agents/Letting Agents including partnership working
Doorstep Crime and Scams	Counterfeit Goods (Large Scale Operation)
Unsafe Goods (Manufacture /wholesale) including Port referrals	Underage Sales – nicotine inhaling products, knives, alcohol, tobacco, fireworks
Primary Authority Partnerships	Energy related fraud investigations and enforcement
Illicit Tobacco Products and nicotine inhaling products (vape products) enforcement activity	Second hand car dealers / used car sales

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<sup>2</sup> [Restoring Pride in Harrow 2024 - 26](#)

## Medium Priority

Misleading Descriptions (higher value goods)	Incorrectly Labelled Goods (safety)
Consumer Credit/illegal lending*	Counterfeiting and Copyright (low level)
Online Terms and Conditions	Energy Labelling of Premises and Goods
Unsafe Goods (Retail Level)	Hallmarking
Package Travel holiday complaints	Storage of Fireworks (unless critical safety implication)

\*High priority cases are also referred to Illegal Money Lending Team

## Low Priority

Single use carrier bag charges	Restrictive Notices
Misleading Descriptions (low value goods)	Underage Sales – lottery, spray paints, games, butane
Mock Auctions	Essential Packaging
Market Sales	Provision of Advice re Credit Card Charges
	Business Names

## Work Volumes

The tables below show the projected performance of the respective Brent and Harrow teams during 2025/26. It should be noted the nature of Trading Standard's duties is variable and therefore these figures are subject to change.

As a result, at year end some areas of work may have generated a higher than expected volume whereas other areas might see a decrease as a result of the need to respond to demands in other areas that arise during the year. Our work volumes will be kept under continuous review and reported quarterly to ensure that they are being implemented effectively and progress is being made.

The work volumes are based on a Harrow's number of enforcement staff of 2.5 and Brent's number of enforcement staff of 3.5.

<b>Harrow Team 2024/25</b> Based on staff numbers:	<b>Brent Team 2024/25</b> Based on staff numbers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.5 Enforcement Officers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.5 Enforcement Officers</li> </ul>

**Planned  
volume  
Brent**

**Planned  
volume  
Harrow**

Complaints (Service Requests) Completed	366	250
Trader Enquiries / requests for advice	78	54
High Risk / Most Complained-about Trader Inspections	31	25
Port Referrals	5	1
Other Business Inspections	66	71
Weights & Measures, Average Quantity or Verification visits	4	3
Primary Authority Hours	117	36
Underage Test Purchase Visits	62	57
Infringement reports (average 40 work units per report)	31	21
eReports (average 7 work units per report)	9	7
Prosecutions completed – Crown Court	2	1
Prosecutions completed – Magistrates' Court	8	6
Licensing Reviews Completed	1	1
Simple Cautions Signed	6	4
Letters of Warning Issued	9	10
Fixed Penalty Notices Issued	8	7
Local and Regional Projects Completed	2	2
Service Improvement Work (Hours)	97	107
Approved Trader Scheme New Recruits or Audits	12	21
Doorstep Crime Rapid Response Actions	3	5
Number of Scam Victims Contacted c/o NTS Scams Hub	40	43
Partnership or Area Based Working Events / Weeks of Action	8	6
Samples, Mileage and Websites Checks	58	54
Number of Intelligence Logs Input on Regional Database	64	60
External social media including press releases issued	6	4

**London Boroughs of Brent and Harrow  
Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board  
Wednesday 19 March 2025  
Report from the Senior Service Manager**

**FOR INFORMATION**

**Update on the Ban of Disposable Vapes**

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with information on the ban on single-use vapes (disposable vapes) to be applied from 1 June 2025.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Joint Advisory Board Members consider the report and make recommendations or comments where appropriate, particularly ahead of the guidance we are required to draft.

**3.0 DETAILS**

- 3.1 The Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (England) Regulations 2024 comes into force on 1 June 2025 (the Regulations). Therefore, from this date, the sale and supply of single-use vapes often called disposable vapes will no longer be permitted. This applies to sales in the shops or online and it does not matter if it contains nicotine or not. The purpose of this ban is to protect the environment by removing devices that are not rechargeable or refillable to reduce pollution and harm to the health of animals and plants.
- 3.2 This means that refillable and rechargeable options will be permitted to be sold as they offer a more sustainable alternative that generates less waste.
- 3.3 Guidance published in January 2025 by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) states that in England, local authority Trading Standards will lead on enforcing the ban within their area.
- 3.4 Please note whilst DEFRA has stated in their guidance that in England Trading Standards will lead on enforcing the ban within its area, Regulations 8 does specify that authorisation would need to be in writing from the local Regulator, which is the local authority and, in our case, the London Borough of Brent and the London Borough of Harrow. Therefore, it is envisaged that LB of Harrow will need to specifically authorise Trading Standards to carry out this duty within Harrow.
- 3.5 The powers that an authorised enforcement officer holds, includes entering any business premises which the officer has reasonable reasons to suspect it is selling

or supplying within the course of the business a single-use vape. Officers will be able to seize any single-use vapes they find.

- 3.6 A person who supplies, offers to supply or has in their possession for supply a single-use vape is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine.
- 3.7 The Regulations also have civil sanctions which would enable regulators to impose a range of civil sanctions. These are fixed monetary penalties, compliance notices, stop notices, and enforcement undertakings. The local authority can recover the costs of enforcement (paragraph 27 of the Schedule) in the case of compliance notices and stop notices.
- 3.8 The Regulations make provision for the procedure relating to these sanctions and the available appeal mechanisms.
- 3.9 Failure to comply with these sanctions can and may lead to a criminal proceeding being brought against the individual and could be liable for an unlimited fine or a prison sentence.
- 3.10 Concerning the civil sanctions, the service will need to publish guidance on civil sanctions under these Regulations. The guidance must be revised “where appropriate”. Before publishing any guidance or revised guidance under these regulations the enforcement authority must consult such persons as it considers appropriate. The guidance must contain the following information;
- a) the circumstances in which the penalty or notice is likely to be imposed
  - b) the circumstances in which it may not be imposed;
  - c) rights to make representations and objections and rights of appeal
  - d) in the case of a fixed monetary penalty, the amount of the penalty, how liability for the penalty may be discharged and the effect of discharge
- 3.11 As a Service we have already put an action plan in place to help businesses transition. A press release was drafted notifying businesses of the changes in the law and signposted to the online Government guidance for businesses preparing for the ban on the sale and supply of single-use vapes and links to free training provided by the Chartered Trading Standards Institutes on 28 February 2025 and 19 March 2025.
- 3.12 This has been shared with both Brent and Harrow communications teams, Brent for Business and the Economic Development Team in Harrow.
- 3.13 At the time of writing the report, a request has been put in for the Brent and Harrow Trading Standards web page to be updated with the appropriate information so that the communications team can also put out social media pointing businesses to the information.
- 3.14 Do note whilst The Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (England) Regulations 2024 introduces the ban on single-use vapes it does not restrict the vape flavours or any further changes with regards to the law relating to vapes. Any

potential changes may be addressed separately under the Tobacco and Vaping Bill.

#### **4.0 Financial Considerations**

4.1 The staffing resource to implement this will be met from within the Trading Standards base budget.

#### **5.0 Legal Considerations**

5.1 Regulations 8 does specify that authorisation would need to be in writing from the local Regulator, which is the local authority. The written authorisation would need to be granted by 31 May 2025 to enable officers to start enforcing on 1 June 2025.

5.2 Regulation 13(1) states that each Regulator must publish guidance about its use of civil sanctions. It is intended that guidance will be completed ahead of any enforcement work being taken under the Regulations.

5.3 Regulation 13(5) states that the Regulator must consult such persons as it considers appropriate before publishing any guidance or revised guidance under this regulation. The current plan is that consultation with the appropriate persons will commence in April 2025 and if there are any revisions following the consultation this will be carried out by May 2025 for further consultation if necessary and the guidance will be published by 1 June 2025.

#### **6.0 Equality Implications I**

6.1 The proposals in this report have been screened to assess their relevance to equality and were found to have no equality implications.

#### **7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

7.1 There is no requirement to specifically consult Ward Members about this report as it affects all wards across both Boroughs.

#### **8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications**

8.1 There are some staffing implications arising from this report.

8.2 Written procedures guidance and notices will need drafting to enforce the provisions of these Regulations, specifically the civil sanctions.

8.3 Being a new legislation and officers are unfamiliar with it, officers will have to invest some time in training concerning the new Regulations

8.4 There is a possibility that additional work may be generated through visits to businesses to ensure compliance.

Any person wishing to obtain more information should contact Anu Prashar, Senior Regulatory Services Manager, Regulatory Services, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley Middlesex HA9 0FJ. Telephone: (020) 8937 5522 Email: [anu.prashar@brent.gov.uk](mailto:anu.prashar@brent.gov.uk)

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