



Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board

Tuesday 30 June 2026 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:	Second alternates Councillors:
P. Patel	Harrow	Blackman	Harrow
Halai	Harrow	Greek	Harrow
Suresh	Harrow	Murphy-Strachan	Harrow
A. Patel	Brent	Kansagra	Brent
Dar	Brent	M. Butt	Brent
Burn	Brent	Dixon	Brent

For further information contact:

(LB Brent) Abby Shinhmar, Governance Officer Tel: 0208 937 2078: Email: abby.shinhmar@brent.gov.uk

(LB Harrow) Rita Magdani, Senior Democratic & Electoral Services Officer Tel: 07707 138582; Email: rita.magdani@harrow.gov.uk

For electronic copies of agendas please visit:

[Council meetings and decision making | Brent Council](#)

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 or trade union).

- (b) The interests 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
1 Election of Chair	
To be appointed from members of the London Borough of Harrow for this meeting.	
2 Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members	
3 Declarations of Interests	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant personal or disclosable pecuniary interests in the items on this agenda.	
4 Minutes of Previous Meeting	1 - 6
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 5 March 2026 as a correct record.	
5 Matters Arising	
6 Deputations (if any)	
7 Trading Standards Annual Report 2025-26	7 - 18
This report presents the Trading Standards Annual Report for the year 2025/2026.	
8 Apprentice 2026 Report	19 - 22
This report informs members of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) funding available to support the recruitment of a Tobacco and Vapes Apprentice. It outlines the purpose of the role, funding arrangements and the associated apprenticeship training programme.	
9 Date of Future Meetings	
Members are asked to note the remaining schedule of meetings agreed between Brent & Harrow for the 2026-27 Municipal Year as follows:	
Tuesday 3 November 2026 at 6pm to be hosted online by the London	

Borough of Brent

- Thursday 4 March 2027 at 6pm to be hosted online by the London Borough of Harrow

10 Any Other Urgent Business

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

This page is intentionally left blank



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board

Minutes

**Held as an online meeting at
6pm on Thursday 5 March
2026**

Present:

Chair: Councillor Krupa Sheth – London Borough of Brent

Councillors: Norman Stevenson – London Borough of Harrow
Krishna Suresh – London Borough of Harrow
Pritesh Patel – London Borough of Harrow
Daniel Kennelly – London Borough of Brent
Steve Crabb – London Borough of Brent

1. Election of Chair

RESOLVED: That Councillor Krupa Sheth (London Borough of Brent) be elected as Chair for the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members

None.

3. Declarations of Interests

RESOLVED: To note that there were none.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2025 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

5. Matters arising

RESOLVED: None received.

6. Deputations (if any)

RESOLVED: No requests for deputations had been submitted for the meeting.

7. Fees and Charges Report 2026-27

Anu Parshar, Senior Regulatory Service Manager introduced the report, which provided Members with information concerning the proposed level of fees and charges to be applied by the Brent & Harrow Trading Standards Service during 2026/27.

In accordance with paragraph 13(f) of the Consortium Agreement between the London Borough of Brent and the London Borough of Harrow members noted that the Joint Advisory Board were being asked to consider and make recommendations on the level of fees and charges to be made to the public in respect of the service.

Members were advised that Trading Standards fees fell into the following categories:

1. Statutory fees (set by legislation, although some offer discretion to vary the amount up to a maximum value) i.e. explosives
2. RPI linked fees (agreed previously by Brent's Executive)
3. Discretionary fees (there is discretion to vary the value charged)

In considering the basis on which the proposed fees had been developed. Members were advised this had included benchmarking against other comparable Local Authorities to ensure proportionality and to maintain a competitive position for services that could be offered to customers. Broadly speaking, the aim was to ensure full cost recovery for each respective borough.

In terms of individual fees:

- Explosive License Fees - The fees to process explosive (firework) licenses, charged by the Harrow team were set by the Health and Safety Executive by virtue of the Health and Safety and Nuclear (Fees) Regulations as amended by the Health and Safety and Nuclear (Fees) (Amendment) and Gas Safety (Miscellaneous Amendment) Regulations 2024. The Firework Regulations 2004 set all year round sales licence fees which was in addition to the storage licence. The fees varied subject to the exact licence required, although they were typically £59 to

renew a one year licence in addition to £500 for an all year round license. It remained the case that in Brent, this function was the responsibility of the Licensing Team who received the income.

- Letting and/or Property Management Penalty Fees - Under the Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work Order 2014 and the Consumer Rights Act 2015, monetary penalties of up to £5,000 could be imposed where breaches of the legislation had taken place.
- Weights and Measures Fees - By virtue of S11(5) and S49(4) of the Weights and Measures Act 1985, the Local Authority could charge 'such reasonable fees as determined' for carrying out legal duties under the Act. Additionally, the fees had risen between 3.7% and 3.92%.
- Fee for Officers Carrying Out Duties at Wembley Events - A charge for officers conducting their duties at Wembley events on behalf of brand holders or other merchandisers. The rate for this work was £74 per hour per Enforcement officer and £99 for Senior/Supervisory Staff.
- Financial Investigator's Fee – the Board's Financial Investigators continued to offer their services to other Local Authorities. In addition to agreements with these Local Authorities, which ensured a share of any money raised via the Home Office Proceeds of Crime incentivisation scheme, an hourly fee was charged for time spent conducting the investigation. This covered costs in the event that no order was made or if an order was made by the Court and it was not paid for any reason resulting in no incentivisation scheme payment being received. It was proposed to increase this fee from £51 to £53.

Comments were then sought on the update provided, with the following issues raised:

- Clarity was sought around whether the Wembley Stadium duty was only applicable to Brent officers, which Anu Prashar confirmed was the practice.
- Members queried whether the service always exceeded the income target and noted that the targets had not been subject to significant increase. Anu Prashar explained that Trading Standards was primarily an enforcement agency and not an income generating agency. Some of the income did not include court costs. Most of the income achieved was from Wembley events however, cost recovery also generated income. Some Local Authorities had dedicated teams for cost recovery but Brent did not have the scope for this.
- Members noted that regulating letting agents provided opportunities to enforce penalties which had seen income peak through penalty notices. However, a reduction in income was seen following many letting agents becoming compliant. Additionally, last year new legislation had been introduced which meant that penalty notices could be imposed to those

selling illegal vapes and issued to consistently non-compliant businesses, which was expected to lead to an increase in income.

- Members asked if there was a business case to increase enforcement and whether the service had enough officers to deal with Wembley events. Simon Legg highlighted that this was beyond the scope of this meeting, however Brent carried out a pay review which included Wembley events and also had arrangements in place to ensure staff were available to support on event days.

With no further comments raised the Chair thanked officers for the update provided and it was **RESOLVED** to note and endorse the proposed level of charges outlined within the report for formal approval.

8. Work Plan Report 2026-27

Anu Parshar, Senior Regulatory Service Manager introduced the report, which provided Members with information concerning the proposed 2026/27 Work Plan for Brent & Harrow Trading Standards.

In presenting the report, it was noted that the service budget was expected to remain the same with only minor adjustment to service priorities and the issue of door scams and sale of illicit tobacco still identified as ongoing concerns.

In terms of the approach outlined members noted the intelligence led and risk based nature of the service along with the work being undertaken across inter-authority companies and efforts to raise income and also publicise work to raise awareness.

In noting the pending implementation of the Renters Reform Bill confirmation was provided of the services focus on this theme as the new legislation came into force.

Comments were then sought on the update provided, with the following issues raised:

- Members queried if the service carried out work for online retailers. Anu Prashar explained that following complaints received from consumers the service targeted businesses that operated in Brent or Harrow including those importing goods.
- Clarity was sought on how to advertise to renters about the new renters rights. The Chair said that she and Councillor Donnelly Jackson (Brent's Cabinet member for Housing) had raised this issue with housing and environment teams and both Harrow and Brent's websites would be updated with the correct contact details. Anu Prashar explained that the Renters Rights Act was mainly to do with housing authorities and did not come under the Tenants Fees Act.

- Members asked about the online delivery of drugs to people's properties and the risk of this being picked up and asked whether the service was working with Border Control and other agencies. Anu Prashar confirmed that Trading Standards did work with Port Authorities. Additionally, Trading Standards worked with HRMC and Port Authorities around the import and sale of illicit tobacco. Simon Legg explained that a lot of the big ports had internal Trading Standards officers including Heathrow Airport. Tobacco was easily hidden, lightweight lucrative and easily smuggled, however Trading Standards officers at ports aimed to intercept it before it reached the high street.
- Members asked if any shop had been banned in Harrow for selling illegal vapes or illicit tobacco. Anu Prashar stated that there had been no bans enforced in Harrow and that the service was working with shopkeepers who were able to send back the stock to the supplier. Simon Legg informed the meeting that the most frequent FOI requests were regarding vapes; the figures of which could be provided to members.
- In terms of the extent of illegal sales Anu Prashar advised that issues impacted both boroughs, although the trend was not above levels within other Local Authorities.
- Members asked if the issue of vapes required more resource. Anu Prashar said that if the service was to take on prosecutions it will get its costs back. The matter was around education and enforcement.

With no further comments raised the Chair thanked officers for the update provided and it was **RESOLVED** to note and approve the 2026-27 Work Plan.

9. Date of Future Meetings

NOTED the dates for the provisional schedule of meetings agreed between Brent & Harrow for the 2026-27 Municipal Year:

- Tuesday 30 June 2026 at 6pm to be hosted (online) by the London Borough of Harrow
- Tuesday 3 November 2026 at 6pm to be hosted (online) by the London Borough of Brent
- Thursday 4 March 2027 at 6pm to be hosted (online) by the London Borough of Harrow

10. Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Crabb informed the Board that he would not be standing in the May elections so this would be his final meeting as Board Member. Councillor Crabb thanked everyone, particularly the Trading Standards team. The Chair thanked Councillor Crabb for his service and dedication to the Board and wished him all the best for the future.

The meeting closed at 6:45pm.

COUNCILLOR KRUPA SHETH
Chair

**London Boroughs of Brent & Harrow
Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board
30 June 2026
Report from the Senior Service Manager**

FOR INFORMATION

TRADING STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report presents the Trading Standards annual report for the year 2025/2026.
- 1.2 It is a requirement of the Trading Standards Consortium Agreement that an annual report is presented to the Joint Advisory Board which includes details of the work undertaken during the financial year to which it relates.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Joint Advisory Board Members take note of the report and provide comments where appropriate.

3.0 Details

- 3.1 The Trading Standards Service operates 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.
- 3.2 The Service carries out the local authority's statutory duties relating to the legislation enforced by a Weights and Measures Authority. This gives the Service responsibility of enforcement and legal powers to enforce, hundreds of Acts of parliament or statutory instruments. The 2025/2026 annual report is attached for Members' information and consideration showing some of the work carried out in that financial year.
- 3.3 The Service seeks 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, business can confidently trade and our local economy can grow. Our duties extend to all business types including those who trade online and the growing internet marketplace, our local high streets, commercial business parks, trading estates, those who trade from their homes and door to door tradespeople.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The Trading Standards Service for 2025/2026 was provided within its agreed net budget.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 There are 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 staffing or property implications arising from this report.

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

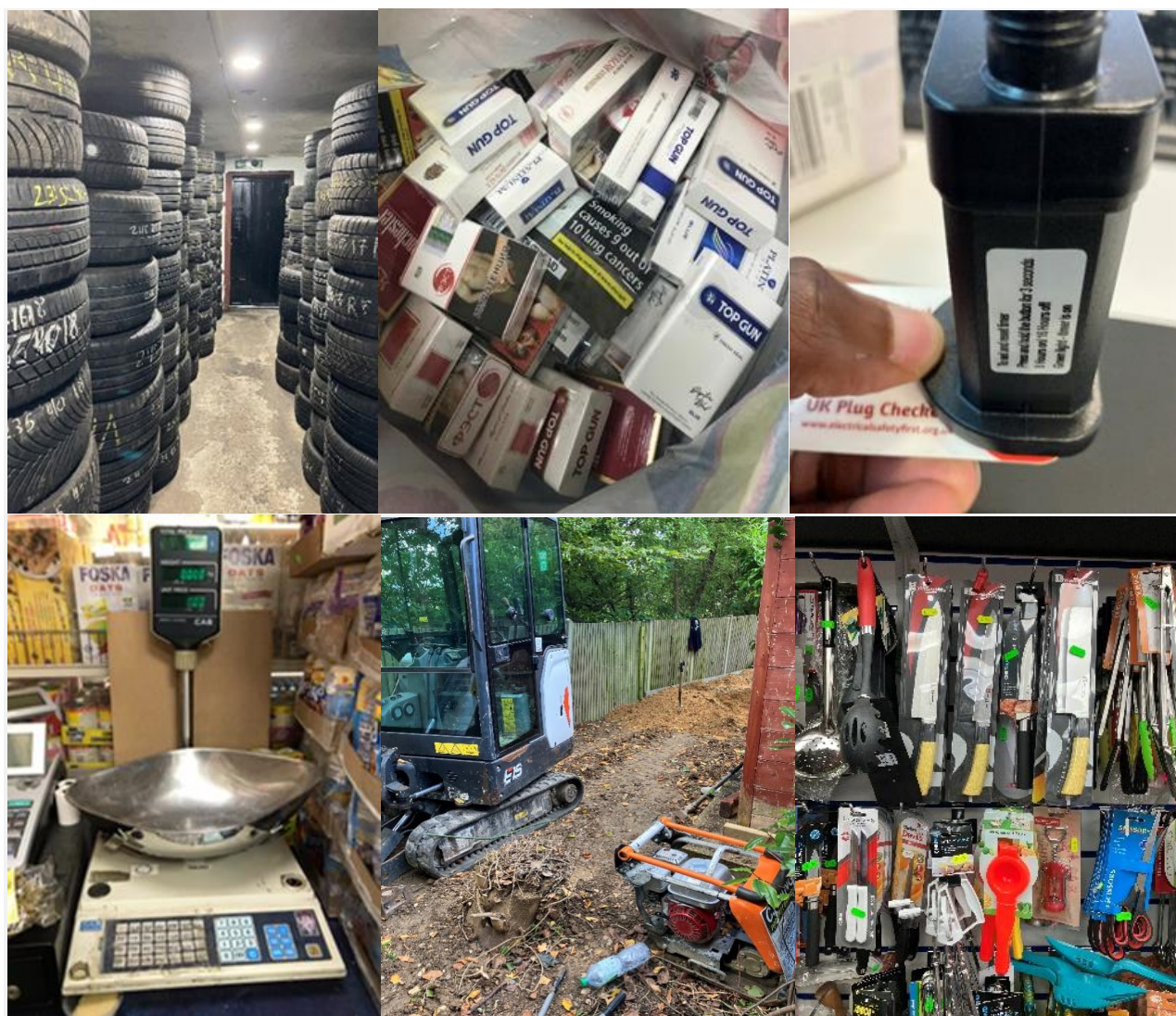
ANU PRASHAR
SENIOR REGULATORY SERVICE MANAGER



**Brent and Harrow Trading
Standards Service**
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



Annual Report 2025/26



Introduction

This Annual Report provides an overview of the work carried out by Brent and Harrow Trading Standards, highlighting key achievements and the value the service delivers to both councils and their communities.

The service is managed by Anu Prashar, with Samuel Abdullahi serving as Team Leader. The Service Manager reports to the Head of Regulatory Services, Simon Legg, within the Neighbourhoods & Regeneration Directorate.

During most of the year, the Trading Standards team comprised 3.5 Enforcement Officers in Brent and 2.5 in Harrow. One Brent officer left to join another borough in February 2026. The team is also supported by two qualified and accredited Financial Investigators.

The Role of Trading Standards

Trading Standards is a frontline public protection service responsible for enforcing legislation that protects consumers and ensures businesses trade fairly and safely. The Service fulfils the Council's statutory role as a Weights and Measures Authority, enforcing over 250 pieces of legislation.

The Service plays a key role in protecting residents and legitimate businesses from harm, financial loss, unsafe products, scams, and unfair trading practices, while supporting a safe and confident local economy.

Trading Standards also contributes to wider Council priorities, including community safety, safeguarding vulnerable residents, public health, and economic resilience.

Key areas of work include product safety, illicit and counterfeit goods and tobacco, age-restricted sales, rogue traders, scams, business compliance, letting agents and intelligence-led enforcement activity.

Service Requests

During 2025/26, Trading Standards responded to service requests relating to unsafe products, rogue traders, scams, counterfeit goods, misleading business practices, online sales disputes, and wider consumer protection concerns. The Service continues to work closely with the Citizens Advice Consumer Service (CACS), receiving referrals involving criminal activity, significant consumer detriment, and ongoing harm affecting residents.

A total of 4,355 service requests were received during the year, with 1,093 assessed by the Brent team and 861 by the Harrow team. Referrals originated from residents, businesses, Ports Teams, the Metropolitan Police, other Trading Standards authorities, and industry partners. 2384 of these were notifications from CACS (this is used to indicate transfer of cases from CACS for information purposes only).

All service requests are risk-assessed and prioritised based on available intelligence, vulnerability, and potential harm. During the year, 384 were progressed and investigated in Brent and 228 in Harrow.



Investigations included inspections, evidence gathering, business interviews, and liaison with manufacturers and suppliers. In some cases, businesses voluntarily removed products from sale following Trading Standards intervention, reducing consumer risk at an early stage.



Officers carrying out checks during a business inspection and a weighing scale checked for accuracy

Product Safety & Market Surveillance

Product safety remains a key priority for the service, particularly in relation to electrical goods, toys, cosmetics, and imported products sold through high street and online retailers.

The Service continues to undertake a wide range of activities to protect its residents and promote the well-being of our communities. Compliance inspections, market surveillance and investigations have been carried out.

Where products were identified as potentially unsafe, the service worked with businesses and suppliers to:

- Remove products from sale
- Arrange product recalls where necessary
- Conduct further technical assessments
- Share intelligence with other local authorities or enforcement bodies

This work is essential in reducing the risk of fires, injuries, and other consumer harm associated with unsafe goods

Some examples of the work carried out this year are detailed below.

Following a referral from Suffolk Ports Team regarding imported travel cots and strollers, Trading Standards identified product traceability and labelling issues during import checks.

Officers reviewed the technical documentation, confirmed the products met relevant safety standards, and provided compliance advice to the business regarding corrective labelling and traceability measures.

A collaborative approach enabled the products to be safely released to the market while ensuring future shipments and production processes were fully compliant. The intervention protected consumers, supported business compliance, and prevented an estimated £20,000 financial loss to the business.



Officers participated in a joint London Trading Standards, London Fire Brigade and Office for Product Safety and Standards e-bike and e-scooter fire safety awareness campaign in Brent, engaging with food delivery operatives using e-bikes. A short survey on ownership, usage, specifications, modifications and charging practices was completed, with safety advice provided. Most operatives followed guidance, charging bikes outdoors and unplugging chargers once fully charged.



Tackling Criminal Behaviour and Creating a Level Playing Field

One of the key functions of Trading Standards is to protect consumers and support legitimate businesses. We have an array of penalties available to us where businesses deliberately break the law, ignore our advice or cause serious harm. This ranges from monetary penalties and undertakings to fines and imprisonment.

Illicit Tobacco Enforcement

The service continued to target the supply of illicit tobacco products across the boroughs.

Illicit tobacco products undermine legitimate businesses, contributes to anti-social behaviour, and pose significant public health risks. Trading Standards officers carried out targeted inspections and intelligence-led operations in partnership with the Police and other agencies.

Enforcement activity during this reporting period included visits to 57 businesses (30 in Brent and 27 in Harrow, including 11 test purchases, of which 2 resulted in positive sales). Illegal products were seized from 25 businesses (19 in Brent and 6 in Harrow), resulting in ongoing investigations into non-compliant businesses.

Seizures included over 68,300 cigarette sticks, 3.6kg of hand-rolling tobacco, 222kg of smokeless tobacco (chewing and oral), and 3.6kg of shisha tobacco.

During the same period, 5 cases involving 7 defendants were concluded in court, resulting in combined fines of £10,800, costs of £8,220, and victim surcharges totalling £4,400.



Illicit tobacco products recovered and seized during enforcement visits

Letting Agents Compliance Work

The Service continues to pro-actively conduct online audits of agents actively advertising rental services as well as responding to complaints. We have created a new partnership with our housing colleagues and share intelligence to provide a meaningful response to local businesses and residents.



The websites of agents in both Brent and Harrow were examined and officers issued Notices of Intent (NOI) to issue monetary penalties to agents found to be noncompliant.

5 of the NOIs issued have resulted in Final Notices issued for monetary penalty amounting to £13,000 (£4,800 for Brent & Harrow £8,200).

High Risk and Most Complained About Businesses

The Service is intelligence-led and has focused resources around high-risk and most complained-about businesses, from used car dealers and cosmetic importers to small convenience shops. Officers have conducted compliance visits, providing detailed advice and information to 56 of these businesses (25 in Harrow, 31 in Brent) and where possible has facilitated refunds, much to the gratitude of the consumers.

Locksmith: A sharp increase in complaints concerning a locksmith prompted a visit. A meeting was held with the manager, who was asked to submit an action plan to reduce complaints and improve compliance. Types of complaints received – unclear billing and overcharging.

Protecting Vulnerable Residents (Doorstep Crime & Scams)

Protecting vulnerable residents remains one of the key priorities for Trading Standards. During 2025/26, the Service supported residents affected by scams, rogue traders, doorstep crime, and financial exploitation through enforcement action, safeguarding referrals, scam awareness initiatives, and partnership working with Adult Social Care, banks, Police, and safeguarding teams.

The Service also supported residents involved in disputes relating to building and renovation works by coordinating visits with Building Control and surveyors and assisting with civil and banking interventions where appropriate.



Trading Standards officers engaging with residents during a community safety awareness event

The Service continued to work with the National Trading Standards Scams Team and Royal Mail to identify and intercept scam mail designed to financially exploit vulnerable residents

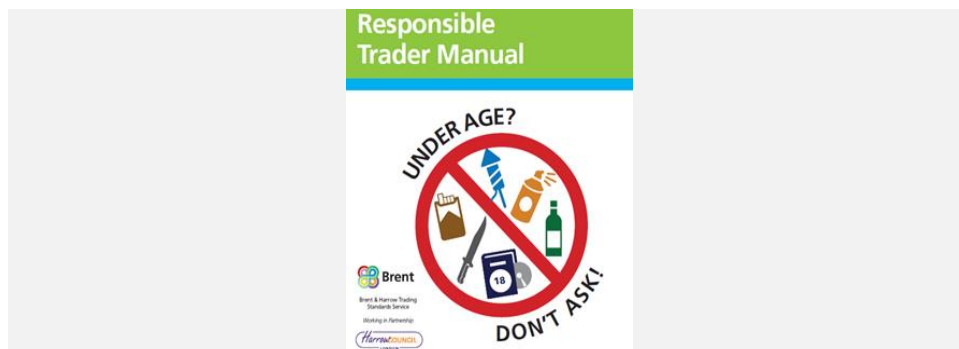
Protecting Vulnerable Residents (Age-Restricted Sales Enforcement)

Preventing children and young people from accessing age-restricted products remains a key priority for Trading Standards. During 2025/26, the Service carried out test purchasing operations relating to tobacco, vapes, alcohol, knives, and fireworks to assess business compliance and protect young people from harm.

A total of 84 test purchase visits were conducted across both boroughs using child volunteers. Overall, 90.48% of businesses tested refused sales to children.

	TPs	Sold	% Sold
Brent	33	5	15.15%
Harrow	51	3	5.88%
B&H	84	8	9.52%

Where non-compliance was identified, officers provided advice and issued formal warnings. As a result of enforcement action, two businesses were prosecuted for selling nicotine inhaling products to children. The prosecutions resulted in combined fines of £2,200, with £2,392 awarded in costs and an £880 victim surcharge.



The service also continued to engage with local retailers to encourage best practice and improve awareness of legal requirements.

Supporting Legitimate Businesses

In addition to enforcement activity, Trading Standards continues to support legitimate businesses and contribute to both boroughs' objectives of promoting business growth through effective and proportionate regulation.

Support was also provided to Primary Authority businesses, including guidance on complex product safety matters, recalls, and market withdrawals across the UK and EU.



During 2025/26, officers received 92 requests for business advice and guidance (38 in Brent and 54 in Harrow).

Officers conducted 268 compliance inspections (144 in Brent and 124 in Harrow) across areas including product safety, consumer rights, fair trading, labelling, pricing, and age-restricted sales, supporting compliance and a fair-trading environment for responsible businesses.

During the year, Brent delivered 15 hours and Harrow 20 hours of Primary Authority advice across areas including product safety, fair trading, and trademarks.

Officer providing compliance advice to a local business



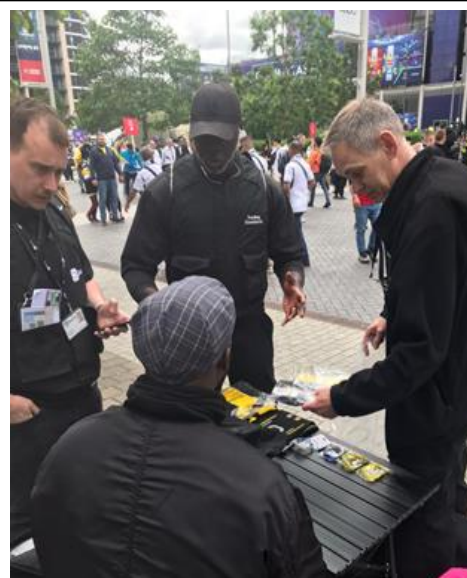
The team has a statutory duty to carry out market surveillance and enforcement activities concerning the storage and sale of fireworks and is responsible for ensuring that fireworks sold in Brent & Harrow are manufactured to the relevant standard and that they are not sold to minors.

The Service issued 34 fireworks licences to 29 businesses in Harrow.

Partnership Working (Events and Days of Action)

Effective partnership working remains central to the success of Trading Standards enforcement activity.

The Service continues to support enforcement operations at Wembley Stadium event days in partnership with the Metropolitan Police, The Football Association, brand protection teams, and environmental enforcement officers to tackle illegal street trading and counterfeit merchandise. This collaborative approach has resulted in significantly improved compliance levels and a substantial reduction in illegal trading activity on event days.



The Service also contributes to Harrow's multi-agency 'Week of Action' initiatives, working alongside Police, Licensing, Environmental Health, Community Safety, and other Council teams to address local enforcement and community safety priorities.

Staff Recognition and Professional Achievement

In June 2025, a member of the Service received national recognition through acceptance into the College of Fellows and was invited to deliver a keynote presentation at the 2025 Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) Conference on future-proofing the profession.

This achievement reflects the Service's continued contribution to professional leadership, innovation, and best practice within the wider Trading Standards community.



Keynote presentation delivered at the 2025 CTSI Conference on future-proofing the Trading Standards profession

Proceeds of Crime (POCA)

The Service has two accredited Financial Investigators to support complex investigations and ensure that individuals who profit from criminal activity do not retain the financial benefits of their offending, they identify, trace, and recover criminal assets under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA).

The Financial Investigators also conduct investigations other departments in Brent such as planning and for other local authorities. This year they secured 9 confiscation orders totalling £1,726,548.50. 74 production orders were served to investigate financial crime, and 1 restraint order was secured.

Sample Case 1

On 29 September 2025, a defendant was ordered to pay £133,500.00 under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 in relation to doorstep crime incidents and roof repairs. This case was conducted on behalf of Islington Trading Standards.

Sample case 2

In a Brent case, a defendant failed to stop using a house as four self-contained dwellings that were in breach of an enforcement notice, therefore on 20 March 2026, the Crown Court made a confiscation order for £461,473.99 which represented the rental income made over the period of offending.



Sample case 3

Another Brent case was heard at Crown Court on 30 March 2026, where a confiscation order was made for £195,047.15 following the conversion of a house into seven flats that were in breach of a planning enforcement notice.



In conclusion, the Service continues to provide a vital frontline public protection function across Brent and Harrow, delivering significant benefits to residents, businesses, and local communities. During 2025/26, it responded effectively to a wide range of consumer protection issues, supported vulnerable residents, removed unsafe products from the market, and worked proactively with businesses and enforcement partners.

As demonstrated throughout this report, the Service contributes directly to public protection, safeguarding, economic confidence, public health, and early intervention. By tackling scams, illegal trading, unsafe products, and underage sales, while supporting fair and compliant businesses, it helps protect residents, strengthen local economies, and reduce wider social and financial harms.

The preventative nature of Trading Standards work continues to deliver substantial long-term social value and cost avoidance, reducing pressures on other Council services and partner agencies while helping to keep communities safe and resilient.

**London Boroughs of Brent & Harrow
Trading Standards Joint Advisory Board
30 June 2026
Report from the Senior Service Manager**

FOR INFORMATION

**TOBACCO AND VAPES ENFORCEMENT GRANT - Apprentice
Programme Funding**

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report informs councillors of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) funding available to support the recruitment of a Tobacco and Vapes Apprentice. It outlines the purpose of the role, funding arrangements, and the associated apprenticeship training programme.

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 Tobacco use remains one of the leading preventable causes of ill health and premature mortality. Additionally, the rise in youth vaping and the evolving regulatory landscape require strengthened local enforcement, education, and prevention activity.
- 3.2 Smoking is the number one preventable cause of death, disability, and ill health in the UK. It causes around 80,000 deaths per year, one in four of all cancer deaths and kills up to two-thirds of its long-term users. There is good evidence on the potential short to medium term harms of vaping, but more research is needed to understand the longer-term harms, particularly to children. This evidence shows that whilst vaping is less harmful than smoking it is not risk free. Given this, and additional evidence that shows that vapes can be an effective quit aid for adult smokers, the health advice is that if you are an adult smoker, it is better if you vape, but if you are an adult that does not smoke or are a child you should never vape.
- 3.3 The Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026 is a landmark piece of legislation designed to reduce smoking and tackle youth vaping, with the long-term aim of creating a “smoke-free generation.” It will:
- Create a smoke-free generation, by raising the age of sale each year for all tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, shisha and heated tobacco.

- Offer stronger controls on vaping and nicotine products to prevent these products being deliberately branded, promoted, and advertised to children to stop the next generation from becoming hooked on nicotine.
- Provide powers to introduce a licensing scheme for the retail sale of tobacco, vapes and nicotine products in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and expand the retailer registration scheme in Scotland.
- Create powers to extend smoke-free restrictions to certain outdoor public places (e.g. near schools, playgrounds, hospitals).

3.4 Local Authority Trading Standards (LA TS) enforce compliance with product standards and sale requirements at a local level for tobacco and vaping products. This includes, for example, age of sale restrictions, display requirements and checking the types of products on sale. To boost Trading Standards capacity to enable more underage sales test purchases, to remove illicit products from the market, and to identify non-compliant products and bring them into compliance where possible, the Department of Health and Social Care provided £10 million in 2025/26.

3.5 This funding was specifically intended to:

- Recruit approximately 80 apprentice enforcement officers across England,
- Increase local inspection and compliance activity,
- Support seizure of illicit tobacco and vape products,
- Strengthen action against underage sales and organised criminal supply chains.

3.6 This sits alongside broader national investment, including £100 million HM Revenue and Customs and Border Force's illicit tobacco strategy to tackle illegal activity and opportunities that criminals might seek to exploit.

3.7 This programme represents a direct allocation of central government resources into local authority enforcement capacity, with apprentices acting as a key mechanism for delivering sustained, long-term workforce capability. The aims are to provide LA TS in England with additional resources to increase their current enforcement activity on illegal and underage sales of tobacco and vapes.

3.8 London Trading Standards received further additional funding for more apprentices to be recruited. As Brent and Harrow Trading Standards were unsuccessful in receiving an apprentice in the previous cohort, we applied again and were successful in our bid.

Role of the Tobacco and Vapes Apprentice

3.9 The apprentice will be embedded within Trading Standards functions, supporting delivery of local tobacco control and vaping enforcement priorities. This role will contribute to reducing health inequalities and protecting vulnerable populations, particularly young people. Their key responsibilities will be to;

- Assist with test purchasing operations

- Support inspections of retailers for compliance with tobacco and vaping legislation
- Help identify and respond to illicit tobacco and non-compliant vape products
- Gather and analyse intelligence relating to illegal sales
- Support regional and national data sharing initiatives
- Collaborate with Public Health, HMRC, police, and other partners
- Support coordinated enforcement initiatives
- Participate in awareness campaigns targeting youth vaping and smoking cessation
- Work with schools, community groups, and partners to deliver educational sessions
- Maintain case records and documentation
- Assist in preparing evidence for enforcement actions.

3.10 The apprenticeship is the Level 6 Tobacco and Vapes course, funded by DHSC and delivered by the Credit Services Association (CSA) and is a 29 month course. At the time of writing, this recruitment is currently ongoing, and it is expected that the apprentice will start the course in September.

3.11 This creates a very welcome opportunity, to provide a debt free way for the successful candidate, to study for a professional qualification leading on to becoming a qualified Trading Standards Officer. In the longer term, this also helps to alleviate the national shortage of qualified officers and some of the difficulties recruiting experienced and/or qualified staff, into the Trading Standards profession.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The funding is initially provided by the DHSC to London Trading Standards, who will disseminate it to the local authorities that have been awarded an apprentice under this scheme. The funding will cover the salary, on costs as well as IT equipment, personal protective equipment while the apprentice is employed as an apprentice. Funding is expected to cease after 2028/29.

5.0 Legal Implications

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

8.0 There are no significant staffing implications arising from this report.

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

ANU PRASHAR
SENIOR REGULATORY SERVICE MANAGER