

**TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN
2009/2009**

London Borough of Waltham Forest

PART 1: DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN.

A: THE TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE IN THE COMMUNITY

STAGE 1A - Community and Directorate Objectives

1A1. Community and Directorate Objectives

Sustainable Community Strategy/council Priorities	Areas of trading standards work developed from this objective
Principle: Create wealth and opportunity for residents Priority: Ensure residents are fit and healthy for work	To carry out rigorous enforcement against illegal sales to children, especially in relation to cigarettes and tobacco

Sustainable Community Strategy/council Priorities	Areas of trading standards work developed from this objective
Principle: Retain wealth in the borough Priority: Create an attractive cultural and leisure offer supported by vibrant town centres	To operate a zero tolerance approach to counterfeiting in the Borough
Principle: Retain wealth in the borough Priority: Improve community safety and reduce anti-social behaviour	To carry out rigorous enforcement against illegal sales to children Participate in 'Our Area Matters' initiative Participate in national 'Operation Liberal' initiative
Principle: To achieve excellence Priority: Deliver customer focussed services	To maintain Charter Mark accreditation To consult with consumers, businesses and other stakeholders

1A2. Explanation of how the community and corporate plans take account of consumers

Waltham Forest Council Values Statement (extract)

We aspire to have a culture within the Council where:

We are honest, open, our decisions are transparent and we deliver what we say;

We put our customers first, respond pro-actively, flexibly and join up our service wherever possible;

We trust, respect and listen to our staff, each other, customers and partners.

1A5. Significant variations from the 2007-2008 Service Delivery Plan

Key Variations from 2007-2008 SDP	Reason for Variation
<p>Dip in performance for consumer satisfaction rating (CPA E30). Target = 94% Achieved = 92%</p>	<p>We are now in the process of identifying why performance has dipped. We changed our method of collection at the end of the year and this may have played a part. A section to investigate reasons that consumers are not 'very satisfied' has been added to the standard questionnaire and the findings will be analysed and acted upon.</p>

B: ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS AND FEEDBACK

1B1. Summary of Consumer Needs identified as a result of the assessments – these will be taken into account in developing work plans, projects and programmes

Trading Standards Priorities Ranking

Consultations were conducted at the CPS Roadshow and with members of the Residents Panel. The results showed that the public ranked Trading Standards priorities as below.

Activity	Ranking
Underage sales of fireworks	1 (joint)
Sales of dangerous goods	1 (joint)
Underage sales of knives	3
Rogue traders	4 (joint)
Underage sales of solvents/lighter fuel	4 (joint)
Underage sales of alcohol	4 (joint)
Underage sales of cigarettes	7
Underage sales of spray paints	8
Underage sales of DVDs/computer games	9
Advice on consumer rights	10
Unsafe motor vehicles	11
Overloaded goods vehicles	12
Fair weights and measures	13
Counterfeit goods	14
Prices, sales and special offers	15
Street sales of counterfeit DVDs	16

Top 10 Complaint Categories

OFT Complaint Category	Ranking
Telecoms	1
Secondhand motor vehicles	2
Home maintenance/repairs/improvements	3
CDs/tapes/video games/software	4
Food and drink	5
Ancillary credit business	6

Clothing and clothing fabrics	7
Radio/TV/audio visual equipment	8
Estate agency/house purchase	9
Personal computers and related	10

1. Continued development and promotion of the 'Get a Better Trader' scheme to include car dealers, in addition to home repairs and maintenance. Public access to membership details as part of the activities of the Consumer Support Network (CSN).

2. Publicity activities in connection with:

- National Consumer Week. The 2007 theme is 'Be a Savvy Shopper this Christmas'
- Crime Prevention Week
- Fireworks Safety
- Magistrates Court Open Day
- Age Concern Winter Event

3. Participation in 'Operation Liberal', which involves carrying out high visibility joint patrols between Police and Trading Standards to target rogue traders and those involved in distraction burglary. This initiative is to be coordinated with the other members of North East Thames Trading Standards Authorities (NETTSA) group.

4. To target car servicing and used car sales businesses by carrying out a joint project with the Vehicle Inspectorate (VOSA) and the Police.

5. Consumer consultation to establish the current level of consumer satisfaction and improve the rating compared to 2007/8. Consultation on Trading Standards priorities at publicity events and by using the CPS Customer Panel. Further analysis of those using Trading Standards to identify gaps in service delivery.

1B2. Summary of Business Needs identified as a result of the assessments – these will be taken into account in developing work plans, projects and programmes

Assessment of:

- Trader Advice requests;
- Home Authority contact;
- Analysis of Formal Actions (i.e. prosecutions and Formal Cautions);
- Equality Impact Assessment (to be reviewed this year).

1. Adoption of the Regulators' Compliance Code, which asks regulators to perform their duties in a business-friendly way, including review of the Enforcement Protocol.

2. Trader consultation in accordance with the requirements of the National Indicator, in order to seek their views on Trading Standards.

3. Provision of an translation services as required upon request, in particular when traders are being interviewed under the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

PART 2: THE SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

POLICIES TO MEET NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

PART 2A Informed Confident Consumers

Provisions for educating, informing, advising and creating informed confident consumers in reflection of the earlier assessments in Part 1 and to meet each of the national standards.

Activity/programme/project/work planned	Standard(s) 12(a-i)/local priorities the activity will meet (see Appendix 1 for definitions)
Handling of consumer complaints/enquiries within corporate targets for response and resolution as referred from Consumer Direct	(a) (b)
Regular update of Trading Standards content on the Council's website including information on e-commerce	(a) (b) (c)
Development and promotion of the 'Get a Better Trader' scheme in partnership with the CSN. Extension of the scheme to used car sales, as a result of consumer consultation.	(a) (b) (e) (f)
Participation in Operation Liberal, aimed at detecting rogue traders and reducing distraction burglaries	(b) (d) (e) (f)
Participation in Crime Prevention Week	(a) (d) (h)
Fireworks Safety promotion, a display at local supermarkets aimed at local residents	(a) (d) (g) (i)
Participation in National Consumer Week in conjunction with the Trading Standards Institute on the theme 'Be a Savvy Shopper this Christmas'	(b) (c) (d) (e) (h) (i)

Participation in the Magistrates Court Open Day	(a) (d) (h)
To maintain Charter Mark status for Trading Standards	(a) (g) (i)
To publicise the conclusions of consultations and implement findings where practical	(g) (h) (i)

PART 2 A1 Planned Level of Consumer Advice and Assistance

Level of Consumer Advice and Assistance Provided (Mark Y for Yes where Appropriate)			
Level/Client	Local Tax Payers	Contract in Area	No Local Connection
Self-help Information	Y + Consumer Direct		
Assisted Information	Y		
General Help	Y + Consumer Direct		
General Help plus Case Work	Y		

PART 2B Informed Successful Business

Provisions to create informed successful businesses through education, information and advice.

Activity/programme/project/work planned	Standard(s) 13(a- j)/local priorities the activity will meet (see Appendix 1 for definitions)
To adopt the Business Compliance Code and review and publish the Enforcement Protocol accordingly.	(a) (c)
Development and promotion of the 'Get a Better Trader' scheme through the Consumer Support Network. To extend the scheme to used car dealers.	(a) (b) (c) (d) (f) (g)
Participation in initiatives via the London Trading Standards Authorities organisation, including London-wide Trading Standards initiatives and benchmarking	(e) (f) (i)
To identify local business groups, and seek their views on Trading Standards and act on the findings where possible	(d) (f) (g) (i)
To act as a Responsible Authority under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003, responding to consultations within target times	(e) (i)
To publicise the conclusions of consultations and implement findings where practical	(d) (g) (h) (i)

PART 2C Enforcement of a Fair and Safe Trading Environment

Provisions to secure a fair and safe trading environment for the protection of all consumers in the community, to foster an environment in which genuine traders can flourish and drive out rogue traders.

Activity/programme/project/work planned	Standard(s) 14(a-h)/local priorities the activity will meet (see Appendix 1 for definitions)
<p>To carry out planned, comprehensive trader inspections as per the LACORS Risk Assessment Scheme, ensuring that all high risk premises are inspected annually and compliance levels are monitored. To target traders as identified through use of the Consumer Direct Database.</p> <p>(LACORS = Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services)</p>	(c) (d) (h) (e)
<p>To respond to and resolve consumer complaints relating to criminal matters within corporate target times, taking formal action, where necessary, within statutory time limits</p>	(a) (b) (e)
<p>To deliver metrology verification and calibration services through the North East London Metrology Partnership</p>	(c) (h)
<p>To update the Waltham Forest Enforcement Protocol, taking the Business Compliance Code into account.</p>	(a)
<p>To respond to and resolve enquiries from traders, other Trading Standards authorities and other external bodies within corporate target times</p>	(b)
<p>To conduct at least twelve age related test purchasing sessions using young volunteers and in partnership with local Police. It is aimed at benefiting the health and well being of young people and discouraging anti-social behaviour</p>	(e) (f)
<p>To carry out between ten and fifteen operations to that aim to reinforce a zero tolerance approach to organised counterfeiting.</p>	(a) (c) (f) (g)

Activity/programme/project/work planned	Standard(s) 14(a-h)/local priorities the activity will meet (see Appendix 1 for definitions)
To conduct at least six Road Traffic Act weighing sessions for overloaded vehicles in partnership with the Police and the Vehicle & Operator Services Agency	(e) (g)
To participate in the 'Our Area Matters' initiative in which the council and other partners work together to tackle crime and disorder	(c) (g)
To carry out investigations into car servicing and the safety of used cars within the borough.	(c) (g)
To carry out Credit Fitness checks on local businesses as requested by the Office of Fair Trading	(e)

PART 2D Provision of an efficient, effective and improving Trading Standards Service

Provisions to develop and modernise the Trading Standards service and to ensure it is able to meet the requirements of this Service Delivery Plan efficiently and effectively including delivery of continuous improvements.

Activity/programme/project/work planned	Standard(s) 15(a-k)/local priorities the activity will meet (see Appendix 1 for definitions)
To formulate, monitor and review the Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan with regard to relevant guidance and present it for approval by the relevant Portfolio Holder	(a) (f) (g) (h) (j)

Activity/programme/project/work planned	Standard(s) 15(a-k)/local priorities the activity will meet (see Appendix 1 for definitions)
To deal with complaints about service in accordance with corporate procedures	(d)
To carry out consumer and business consultation on consumer satisfaction, council standards and Trading Standards priorities	(a) (c)
To carry out trader consultation in accordance with National Indicator 182: satisfaction of business with local authority regulation services	(c) (k)
To carry out monitoring in accordance with National Indicator 183: impact of local authority trading standards services on the fair trading environment using the Consumer Direct database	(k)
To participate in the Waltham Forest Consumer Support Network	(h)
To continue the development of the Trading Standards section of the Waltham Forest Council website	(a) (g)
To carry out a programme of annual staff appraisal, including agreed performance targets and identification of training and development needs. To carry out regular review meetings with staff.	(a) (b) (e) (g) (k)
To participate in the Council's Emergency Planning process as required	(i)
To participate in the North East Thames Trading Standards Authorities meetings and carry out joint initiatives as agreed	(h)
To implement the Improvement Plans arising from the Peer Review of Trading Standards and the Charter Mark Assessment process	(a) (f) (g)

Appendix 1

12. Informed Confident Consumers

Standards

Provision must be made for:

- a. Providing quality advice and information, using modern technology and appropriate media.
- b. Informing consumers to enable them to deal with new or difficult trading activity.
- c. Creating confidence in e-commerce issues.
- d. Developing and delivering proactive education programmes to vulnerable groups.
- e. Joined-up working through trading standards regional co-ordinators or with other organisations, to improve service delivery through increased coverage, improved efficiency and so on.
- f. Participation in your local Consumer Support Network.
- g. Improved accessibility and availability of the service to local consumers including action to identify gaps in the service and reach non-users.
- h. Measuring use and effectiveness of education, advice and information services.
- i. Encouraging participation in consultation processes.

13. Informed Successful Business

Standards

Provision must be made for:

- a. Providing quality advice and information, using modern technology and appropriate media.
- b. Developing and delivering a proactive education programme for business.
- c. Working with business to improve compliance and minimise non-compliance and failure.
- d. Participation in Local Business partnerships, forums and the Business Link for London.
- e. Joined-up working through Trading Standards regional co-ordinators or with other organisations to improve service delivery through increased coverage, improved efficiency and so on.

- f. Exploiting existing links between business, local authorities and government agencies to give information and advice.
- g. Improved accessibility and availability of the service to local business including action to identify gaps in the service and reach non-users.
- h. Measuring the use and effectiveness of education, advice and information services.
- i. Encouraging participation in consultation processes.

14. Enforcement of a Fair and Safe Trading Environment

Standards

Provision must be made for:

- a. Principles of good enforcement that meet the requirements of the Enforcement Concordat & take into account the Code of Crown Prosecutors.
- b. The operation of the Home Authority principle in accordance with LACORS guidance including responding to queries from other authorities.
- c. A programme of enforcement activity that is informed & linked to recognised risk assessment analysis, and which reflects appropriate levels of enforcement.
- d. Enforcement arrangements for e-businesses/ e-commerce.
- e. Targeting traders or business sectors that are known to give rise to high levels of problems.
- f. Tackling practices that target the vulnerable and socially excluded.
- g. Arrangements through trading standards regional co-ordinators and/or with other enforcement agencies, (including central government agencies) to target rogue traders and unsafe or misdescribed goods to avoid duplication.
- h. The inspection of metrological equipment and goods based on risk assessment. Verification of equipment and arrangements for joined up working on legal metrology issues.

15. Provision of an efficient, effective and improving Trading Standards Service

Standards

Provision must be made for:

- a. Communicating and raising the profile of the service and the Plan to those responsible for delivering it, to council members and to those whom will use the service.
- b. Ensuring that officers within the service know which parts of the plan they are responsible for and how their performance against the plan will be measured.
- c. Consulting users on developing the service.
- d. Dealing with complaints about the service.
- e. Developing and training staff to ensure that they have the skills required to deliver the service.
- f. Developing all aspects of the Service from delivery to internal procedures to reflect current recognised good practice.
- g. Maximising efficiency through use of IT and other modern technology.
- h. Evaluating and improving joined-up working and co-ordinated activities for enforcement, advice and information sharing.
- i. Plans for responding to emergencies effectively.
- j. Allocating resources appropriately.
- k. Ensuring formal reporting procedures are carried out in an efficient and timely manner.

Councillor Afzal Akram

Date

Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Enforcement and Protection