



Portsmouth

CITY COUNCIL

Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel

REVIEW OF TRADING STANDARDS

Date published: 26 March 2010

Under the terms of the Council's Constitution, reports prepared by a Scrutiny Panel should be considered formally by the Cabinet or the relevant Cabinet Member within a period of eight weeks, as required by Rule 11(a) of the Policy & Review Procedure Rules.

Preface

For as long as trading has existed, there have been unscrupulous traders. This has taken, and continues to take, many forms. In the ancient world some traders would mix sand or soil with precious spices in order to increase their weight and as technology developed, the use of measuring devices calibrated to exaggerate the weight of valuable goods would be employed.

Although not the first example of centralised Government weights and measures legislation, the Magna Carta (c.1215) stated that:

“One measure of Wine shall be through our Realm, and one measure of Ale, and one measure of Corn, that is to say, the Quarter of London; and one breadth of dyed Cloth, Russets, and Haberjects, that is to say, two Yards within the lists. And it shall be of Weights as it is of Measures”

Even today, local Trading Standards Services are the local weights and measures authority, although this has been joined by a raft of other statutory legislation to protect consumers.

However, Trading Standards can do so much more than their statutory duties and examples of this given throughout the review have included education on the sale of age restricted goods to both retailers and the public, a pioneering use of volunteers to help deliver services and increasing public awareness via initiatives such as ‘Scamnesty’

The panel has found the evidence given during the course of this review fascinating and feels that the recommendations given will further improve the excellent service already being delivered, which should prove to be of benefit to all residents, businesses and visitors to the city.

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Councillor Caroline Scott.
Chair, Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel.

Date: 26 March 2010

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the Cabinet with the recommendations of the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, following its review of Trading Standards.

2. Background

2.1 At a meeting held on 18 December 2009 the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel agreed the following objectives for a scrutiny review of the council's Trading Standards service:

1. To be informed of Trading Standard's current mode of operation and make recommendations for the strategic future direction of the service;
2. To investigate whether establishing a separate company would be of value to the Trading Standards Service, and eventually the Council as a whole.
3. To investigate whether sharing services or buying in services would represent an effective and value for money option for the service; and
4. To be informed of, and if necessary make recommendations for improving, the way the council investigates the sale of counterfeit goods. To take into account the legal, economic and other issues surrounding this crime.

2.2 The Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel comprised:

Councillor Caroline Scott (Chair)
Mike Blake
Margaret Foster
David Fuller
Richard Jensen
Jim Patey

Standing Deputies were Councillors Cheryl Buggy, David Stephen Butler, Jim Fleming, Andy Fraser, Terry Henderson, David Horne and Luke Stubbs.

2.3 At the time of the publication of this report the panel had met formally to take evidence on 4 occasions between 18 December 2009 and 5 March 2010.

2.4 A list of meetings held by the panel and details of the written evidence received are attached as *appendix one*. The minutes of the panel's meetings are published on the council's website and copies of all the documentation reviewed by the panel are available from customer, community and democratic services upon request.

3 To be informed of Trading Standard's current mode of operation and make recommendations for the strategic future direction of the service.

3.1 The Trading Standards Manager believed that prevention was better than cure and used this philosophy to drive Portsmouth City Council's (PCC's) Trading Standards Service. This preventative approach required staff with different skills

to those traditionally associated with Trading Standards. Fewer qualified Trading Standards Officers were required, which saved the service money.

- 3.2 Officers working in Portsmouth Trading Standards were paid less than officers working in comparable authorities, but staff retention was not a problem. Most officers loved their job and enjoyed working for an authority with such an innovative approach to Trading Standards. The current staff level was felt to be the minimum required to deliver the present level of service.
- 3.3 Trading Standards had the following four tactical objectives:
 - Informed, confident consumers;
 - Informed, successful businesses;
 - Reduce sales of age restricted items to underage young people;
 - Provide a fair and safe trading environment.
- 3.4 The Edge Project had been established in 2003 and used volunteers as 'Consumer Champions', to act as an intermediary with the public, breaking down barriers between officers and vulnerable residents. Volunteers came from many different backgrounds and included students from Portsmouth University. This project was described as a unique and pioneering approach to Trading Standards.
- 3.5 During April to November 2009, Community Trading Standards Officers, in partnership with volunteers, had helped ten victims of scams and three victims of rogue trading. Whilst this did not appear to be a large number, this figure had been improving each year. Additionally, they had gathered 350 good pieces of evidence, set up three new 'No Cold Calling Zones' and held 55 community engagement events in the same time period. It was confirmed that Trading Standards had added £34.27 million worth of value to the city's economy during 2009/2010, far in excess of the £15 million originally estimated. The Office of Fair Trading had helped to collate this figure, which was felt to be robust. A full breakdown of this figure is attached as *appendix two* of this report. In addition, Trading Standards had saved Portsmouth residents £500k in the previous seven months.
- 3.6 In response to a question, Mr Murphy, Head of Trading Standards, West Berkshire Council, informed the panel that West Berkshire Council, unlike Portsmouth City Council, did not presently use volunteers. He felt that PCC was innovative in this way and would investigate the possibility of setting up a similar scheme at West Berkshire Council. He felt that the similar management challenges facing the two authorities lent them to sharing best practice.
- 3.7 The Protect Project. Concerns had been raised about the poor treatment of individuals with learning difficulties by some members of the retail trade. Volunteers working with Trading Standards carried out test purchases, which confirmed that cases of discrimination existed. Reactions varied from these individuals being followed around the shop to simply being ignored. In some instances shop staff had tried to deny these individuals their rights, but most sub-standard treatment had been down to a lack of knowledge of how best to engage with them.

- 3.8 In light of this a polite request card has been produced for people with learning disabilities to hand to shop staff. One side of this card explains that the bearer has learning difficulties, and gives helpful instructions to ensure that the retailer engages with them in the correct manner. The other side of the card outlines consumers' rights under the Sale of Goods Act 1979 and in addition the card bears the PCC logo. Card users informed the panel that they felt it beneficial that the card bore the PCC, as this elevated it's authority with retailers.
- 3.9 Since the introduction of the card, bearers had confirmed its effectiveness. After reading the card, unhelpful or unsure retailers were more informed and almost without exception offered good customer service.
- 3.10 Peter and Chris, mystery shoppers who gave evidence to the panel, enjoyed working with Trading Standards and were pleased with the results that had been achieved with the collaborative work. In addition, they praised the work of the Principal Trading Standards Officer in involving people with learning disabilities with the service. Her close involvement led them to feel that she was now a part of their group 'family'.
- 3.11 The Rapid Action Trading Standards (RATS) Team existed for occasions when a fast response was needed. This team could be called to visit a resident's home whilst a rogue trader was still present in order to intercept them.
- 3.12 The Trading Standards Manager informed the panel that the service was developing a vulnerable victim support service for people who had been pressured into changing their utility supplier. Currently no specific legislation existed on this issue.
- 3.13 Anybody involved in debt collection requires a licence and such cases can be referred to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT)/ The OFT have the ability to check if the individual or company has a licence, via local the Trading Standards service.
- 3.14 Proxywatch is a multi-agency initiative, operated with funding from the Safer Portsmouth Partnership. It assisted members of the public and retailers in reporting underage persons who tried to obtain age related goods by asking adults to purchase them on their behalf. An information card had been produced and made available to retailers and the public, which gave the contact details for reporting such instances directly to Trading Standards.
- 3.15 The Proxywatch scheme had previously not been well publicised, but this situation had now improved. Collaboration with Trading Standards had resulted in Proxywatch awareness material being displayed in stores, to inform and deter adults from age related goods for underage persons. The promotional material also assists the person serving by 'backing them up' when they inform the purchaser that they are about to commit a crime.
- 3.16 The 'Scambuster' regional intelligence unit had been set up by Trading Standards South East Ltd and facilitated the sharing of information across local authority boundaries.
- 3.17 Operation Mississippi. These were proactive patrols with the Police and other agencies using marked Police vehicles. Any trader seen working at a household

premises would be approached and asked to prove that they are who they claim to be.

- 3.18 'Scamnesty' is a national event organised by the Office of Fair Trading to raise awareness of scams. Every year 3 million people fall victim to scams in the UK, costing an estimated £3.5 billion. At the time of publication of this report the results from the 2010 'Scamnesty' initiative were still being collated, but there had been a lot more respondents than in the previous two years. The 2009 'Scamnesty' had attracted over 300 responses, whereas the 2008 'Scamnesty' had only attracted about 10 responses.
- 3.19 Banks had been requested to alert Trading Standards of unusual activity, such as large amounts of money being withdrawn, and vulnerable people, such as the elderly, being accompanied to withdraw large amounts of money.
- 3.20 As an example of this, immediately prior to the February meeting of the panel, Lloyds bank had called Trading Standards to alert them of an unusually large cheque which had been written by a known vulnerable person. Trading Standards had subsequently contacted the person in question, as well as the trader, in order to establish the validity of the cheque. In this instance the transaction was in order, but Trading Standards would have been in a position to act if it had not of been.
- 3.21 A training programme existed for those who had been caught selling age sensitive goods to underage persons. The cost of this training was £50, whereas a fixed penalty notice for the offence was £80. This was carried out in conjunction with the Police and put the emphasis on education, rather than punishment. Approval was being sought to roll out this scheme nationally
- 3.22 The panel learnt that staff approved of this approach. The Community Trading Standards Officer felt that the approach taken by Trading Standards was "fantastic, as it supports businesses by offering them information and training"
- 3.23 Mr Sodha, owner and manager of the Portsmouth Kwikimart stores also welcomed this approach and informed the panel that many store owners now felt that Trading Standards and the Police were there to help, rather than just to prosecute. He added that Trading Standards now share information and give guidance to store owners to help them improve their knowledge and ensure that they complied with the law.
- 3.24 Unfortunately however, Mr Sodha felt that some traders were not willing to move with the times and harboured a negative view of Trading Standards. He explained that some believed that the role of the authority was to punish, not assist. He felt that the situation could be improved if Trading Standards publicised itself, and its work, to traders more. He also felt that compulsory training would be beneficial.
- 3.25 The Community Trading Standards Officer responded that a training pack was offered to with all new licences, but not marketed to existing traders. Resources dictated that the neediest should be focused on, but he thought that the principle of offering the training packs to all traders was good. The Principal Trading Standards Officer reinforced this by adding that most illegal sales were due to a

lack of knowledge and that the training programme was the backbone to this aspect of Trading Standards.

- 3.26 A victim support service existed, which helped vulnerable people through the process of making claims through the small claims courts, for example.
- 3.27 The Trading Standards Manager (TSSEL) explained that he was a Director of Trading Standards South East Ltd, which was a Private Limited Company consisting of 19 local authorities. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, was a board member of the company, ensuring that PCC had input into both the operational and the executive management of the company.
- 3.28 The panel heard evidence from Mr Abrahams who had not had a good experience with the Trading Standards Service. Sub-standards works had been carried out to his driveway by rogue traders, who Trading Standards had been unable to identify. The panel learnt that tracking down rogue traders who moved between different areas was very difficult, but the centralised intelligence of TSSEL could be a great aid to finding them. Mr Abrahams made the panel aware that the traders looked reputable, with business cards and overalls bearing the company name. The panel were informed that Trading Standards could confirm whether rogue traders were known to them and also had a list of 'Square Deal' approved traders.
- 3.29 The Office of Fair Trading was taking an increasingly intelligence led approach. It works with partners to clarify who should take action and the most appropriate tool to use. It is responsible for collating the annual strategic threat assessment initiative which helps to target resources, for example, on underage drinking, which are co-ordinated nationally but delivered locally. The increase in internet trading was an area of growing concern which requires closer partnership working. Tackling local internet businesses who may have a wider effect would be a challenge.
- 3.30 Mr Quigley, Team Manager of the Illegal Money Lending Team, explained that the team was set up as a pilot project in 2004 with regional teams in Glasgow and Birmingham examining different types of illegal money lending activity. It was funded by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, extended to 2008 and subsequently rolled out to other regions. Illegal money lending had been undetected for a long time and intelligence is vital in order to combat it.
- 3.31 He felt it important to deal with the financial inclusion aspect of the illegal money lending problem in order for solutions to be effective. The Loan Shark Team and Trading Standards work with other agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and debt advisers. Financial inclusion means bringing people into mainstream society where they can access financial services such as bank accounts. The Illegal Money Lending Team works with credit unions and assists with witness protection. There are currently about 36 people in witness protection across the UK. The Illegal Money Lending Team works with 95 local authorities, who are all very responsive.
- 3.32 With an Annual Percentage Rate (APR) a consumer knows what they have to pay, but people tend to pay more attention to the weekly amount that they have to pay. Some neighbourhoods used to create thrift clubs, but these are harder to establish

now, due to more transient populations. The Loan Shark Team can “parachute” staff into areas where there are problems, in addition to their regional staff.

- 3.33 Support for victims ranges from holding community events to individual counselling. Some victims have been helped to overcome traumatic experiences and rebuild their confidence, enabling them to find employment. Staff undertake needs assessments and build good relationships with victims. They make appointments for people and help them to complete paperwork.
- 3.34 There is joint working between the Police Licensing Team and the Trading Standards Service. The area of work covered by the Police includes alcohol and crime reduction. Resources comprise one Sergeant and two Police Constables working on licensing enforcement and another two Police Constables working on active engagement. In addition there is part-time administrative support. Although agencies work together, they do not always achieve a common aim because their different powers lead to different approaches. For example, selling age sensitive goods to underage persons could be dealt with either by a training programme for those who were caught (the £50 cost paid by the manager’s store) or a fixed penalty notice of £80. The scheme, which was launched in April 2009, has been very successful.
- 3.35 Community wardens work with the Police on Friday and Saturday evenings to combat underage drinking and other anti-social behaviour as part of Operation Bourne. If the Police receive intelligence about a problem, they will deploy partners in order to act. Putting labels on bottles of alcoholic drink has been suggested as it will show where people obtained them. The Police had been working with Queen Alexandra Hospital over alcohol-related admissions for the last two years, although there is room for improvement with regard to liaison. QAH has a new computer system, which was expected to improve the situation.
- 3.36 Older people were felt to be particularly vulnerable to doorstep crime, as they were often unaware that people calling at the door could pose a danger, or attempt to steal from them. The 2001 census was given as an example by the Chairman, who had been invited into older resident’s houses, without them looking at her identity badge.
- 3.37 This was acknowledged to be a problem which rogue traders often capitalised upon. ‘No Cold Calling Zones’ could be established, but this relied upon the consent of all residents in the area. The panel was informed that stickers for the inside of residents front doors were available, reminding them to ask strangers for identification and to keep the chain on. The Police could also supply audio reminders for vulnerable residents. This allowed a family member, carer or friend to record a message, giving similar information. It was felt that warning information delivered by somebody that the resident knew would be more likely to be heeded.
- 3.38 With regard to “no cold calling zones” the Office of Fair Trading issues guidance but it is a local issue. Until now there have been very few repeat instances of cold calling locally and Trading Standards are working with the Police. Anti-Social Behaviour Orders could be used for repeat cold callers. Trading Standards are concerned with protecting consumers from being swindled and the Police are

concerned with cold calling as it leads to distraction burglaries. In local “No Cold Calling Zones” all cold calling is prohibited, including by charities and politicians.

4 To investigate whether establishing a separate company would be of value to the Trading Standards Service, and eventually the Council as a whole.

- 4.1 Operating a separate, commercial, Trading Standards Company should offset the costs of the council’s Trading Standards Service. The goal was to offer the council’s Trading Standards service at no cost to the council. Instead, this service would be funded in part by money seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 by the separate Trading Standards Company.
- 4.3 The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 allows local authorities to confiscate and recover assets from those who benefit from criminal activity. In 2008 an illegal money lender in Portsmouth had assets in excess of £400k seized. This had not been a case dealt with by PCC, but illustrated the potential income that the council could receive in the future if another illegal money lending operation of this size was brought to justice in the city.
- 4.4 After an illegal money lender in Gosport was arrested, £35,000 was found under the floorboards in their house. The case was referred through the Police and two people needed witness protection. The seized assets were returned to the community and funded a successful community event with credit unions, which helped people open a bank account. Two of whom now have ISA savings accounts.
- 4.5 The panel was informed that the council’s present Trading Standards service was prohibited from generating income, as it was a publicly funded, statutory function of the council. Forming a separate company would allow a profit to be made on the services that it provides, which could be invested back into self-funding and further developing the council’s core Trading Standards service.
- 4.6 The Company Secretary and Operations Manager of TSSEL advised not to underestimate the amount of time needed to set up a separate company. In the case of TSSEL, approval had to be sought from the scrutiny panels and full council of each member authority. However, TSSEL would be happy to share experiences and offer advice, should PCC wish to set up a separate Trading Standards company of its own.
- 4.6 The reasons behind PCC forming a separate company would be different to the reasons behind the formation of TSSEL. TSSEL had been formed mainly to provide a joined up service amongst member authorities with centralised co-ordination. The rationale behind a separate PCC Trading Standards company would be to gain funding via the Proceeds of Crime Act and to allow a for-profit service. The revenue generated via this would then be ploughed back into PCC Trading Standards to improve services for residents and fund new initiatives.

5 To investigate whether sharing services or buying in services would represent an effective and value for money option for the service.

5.1 Sharing a Trading Standards service was explained to be particularly suitable for smaller authorities, which may only have five or six officers working in its Trading Standards service. Having so few staff could lead to problems, such as:

- business continuity in times of staff absence;
- lack of economies of scale to allow officers to specialise;
- lack of economies of scale to allow managers to focus on management and strategic activities; and
- business resilience if a major Trading Standards incident arose.

The business case for sharing a Trading Standards service could include:

- offering a more coherent and consistent service across a wider area;
- a larger pool of staff would offer more resilience with regard to staff sickness and leave;
- decreased management overheads, due to less managers;
- allowing officers to specialise;
- allowing managers to focus on the strategic direction of the service and managing staff;
- enhance the position of the service, with regard to recruitment and staff retention.

5.2 Logistically, a shared service would have to offer the same level of service to all in the wider area that it covers, apply the same policies across the combined area and must be directly accountable to all member authorities. For example, the service review panel must include councillors and officers from all member authorities.

5.3 The aims of West Berkshire Council sharing services was to reduce costs and office space, offer improved development opportunities for staff and enable the service to better respond to intensive issues. Sharing services would also result in a proportionally higher investment in staff, and if proven to be successful, could lead to other council functions joining, such as licensing.

5.4 The panel was advised that there would be risks involved in setting up shared services, which could include staff retention if the change process was poorly managed, set-up costs and a lack of support from staff, or one of the authorities involved. In any instance, it would be critical that local delivery is retained, as well as local accountability.

6 To be informed of, and if necessary make recommendations for improving, the way the council investigates the sale of counterfeit goods. To take into account the legal, economic and other issues surrounding this crime.

6.1 The Trading Standards Intervention Manager explained that internationally, counterfeiting was estimated to cost G20 governments and consumers over €100 billion (£89.62 billion) every year and approximately €62 billion (£55.56 billion) in

tax revenues and higher welfare spending. The predicted additional cost to health services in the G20 to treat injuries caused by dangerous fake products was estimated at €100 million (£89.62 million).

- 6.2 In the UK, the total cost in terms of lost taxes and higher welfare spending was predicted to be €4.1 billion (£3.67 billion). These figures are all conservative estimates taken from the May 2009 report 'The Impact of Counterfeiting on Governments and Consumers by Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP)
- 6.3 The same report also stated that 380,000 jobs in the UK are destroyed by counterfeiting, with 31,000 workers unlikely to find reemployment
- 6.4 Understandably, counterfeiting is seen as a lucrative crime by serious criminals and is often related to other criminal activity. Anecdotal evidence indicated that some people who sold DVD's on the street were illegal immigrants, and did so to in order to pay the criminal gang that brought them to the UK. This is an example of how an apparently fairly innocent crime could front something more serious.
- 6.5 A lot of the sellers were provincial and not based in London. The fact that a lot of goods were made in the Far East and shipped to the UK meant that sellers could be based anywhere. Despite being a port, Portsmouth was not a first point of entry into the EU. This meant that it was unlikely for counterfeit goods to enter the UK, or the EU, via the city. However, authorities remained vigilant to such activity.
- 6.6 PCC has a statutory duty to enforce Section 93 of the Trade Marks Act 1994, regarding the unauthorised use of a Trade Mark. The panel was informed that the power of a Trade Mark should not be underestimated, as they appeared on almost every product and were very ferociously guarded by their owners. The use of a Trade Mark without the permission to do so is a criminal offence and most big brands employed Brand Protection Officers to protect the company's interests. Companies had the power to either take civil action, or to refer the matter to the Police.
- 6.7 The panel was informed that Trading Standards would only intervene when the sale of counterfeit goods caused a high level of consumer detriment or raised concerns regarding public safety. Currently, Portsmouth did not have a high level of counterfeit goods, but this was monitored and recent intelligence had indicated that larger scale counterfeiting was on the increase.
- 6.8 Portsmouth did not have a large audience for counterfeit goods because there were no large markets, where such goods were often sold. However, car boot sales in the city were monitored. Most Counterfeit goods within the city were low level, such as DVD's. Operation Mississippi sought to tackle this and on the day of the March 5 meeting of the panel, two cars were patrolling the city looking for rogue traders and illegal street sellers.
- 6.9 The last large scale sale of counterfeit goods in the city had been during the FA Cup final, won by Portsmouth Football Club, in 2008. During this time the city had been flooded with counterfeit goods, such as scarves and hats from sellers who had been drawn to the city from all over the country. Many of these sellers had been very aggressive and a number of seizures were made. This episode

demonstrated how a local company, in this case a football club, could be affected. Every counterfeit item sold had potentially taken the sale of a genuine item away from the football club, thereby losing it revenue. In addition, this money had also been lost from the city, as in a lot of cases it went to a seller based in another part of the country

- 6.10 Trading Standards operated on an intelligence led basis, in collaboration with the public, Police and trademark holders. In late February 2010, Trading Standards had acted on intelligence received and seized £30,000 worth of counterfeit clothing from a retailer in the Cascades shopping centre. This demonstrated that, although more commonplace, the sale of counterfeit goods was not isolated to market stalls and car boot sales. It could take place at stores in shopping centres and on the High Street.
- 6.11 Examples of counterfeit DVD's collected from a street seller in the city were shown to the panel, along with a counterfeit video camera seized from a 'one-day sale'. The counterfeit DVD's were contained inside a foil wrapper, which had the recognisable cover art and title of the film printed on the outside. The DVD inside was obviously counterfeit, having been recorded on a blank DVD-RW disc.
- 6.12 The video camera, however, had been very professionally produced and included a well printed box, instruction manual and warranty card. This item had been purchased at a clearance sale in the city and sold at a price that would lead most people to assume that it was the genuine article being sold at a discounted price; perhaps as an ex demonstration model or customer return. After studying the camera, the panel felt that it would be almost impossible for the average consumer to know that it was counterfeit.
- 6.13 In serious cases the people involved could go to prison. The sellers of counterfeit golf clubs being sold on an internet auction site had recently been successfully brought to justice following an investigation by Havering London Borough Council. This had been an international business and the largest operation of its kind to be investigated by a Council Trading Standards Service. All those found guilty had received custodial sentences.

7 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1 Due regard to EIA has been given to each of the recommendations enclosed within the report and the panel is satisfied that no group would be disadvantaged by their implementation. The recommendations, if approved, would benefit all equally, or in the case of recommendation one, benefit the health of young people most and promote improved engagement and understanding between shop owners and staff with the Council and the Police. A full EIA will be included with the officer response report.

8 Conclusions.

- 8.1 The panel was impressed with the pro-active stance taken by Portsmouth Trading Standards' current business model and the innovative mode of operation employed with regard to the use of volunteers. However, the Council should not be complacent and should look to continually improve the service offered.

- 8.2 The panel fully endorsed the proposal for a separate Limited Company to be established. The fact that this move would allow the service to generate income, in order to fund new initiatives, or even become self funding, was predicted to be of immense benefit to the city.
- 8.3 The panel found it particularly encouraging that the Head of another Trading Standards Service felt that Portsmouth's approach was innovative and would investigate the possibility of setting up a similar approach with their service.
- 8.4 It felt that the collaborative work with individuals who have learning difficulties should be noted and given particular praise, as it had greatly helped to improve the independence and confidence of a vulnerable and often overlooked part of society.
- 8.5 The panel expressed surprise at the £34.27 million worth of value that the service had made to the economy of the city during 2009/2010 and felt that this should be made widely known and applauded.
- 8.6 The panel was pleased to learn of the supportive, rather than purely enforcing role given by the service to licensed retailers. It felt that the licensed retailers training pack was an excellent initiative, which should be offered to all existing licensed retailers.
- 8.7 Another benefit of a separate Limited Company would be that the service could be used by other authorities, in either a consultative or 'hands on' role. However, if this were to take place, the panel urged caution that the current high quality of service delivered to the city should not be affected in any way.
- 8.8 The panel was encouraged by the success of initiatives such as Scamnesty and the efforts made to engage the public in such initiatives. The panel feels that the Council should be proud of its Trading Standards Service and should further advertise success stories to the public, as well as ways in which the service can help retailers and consumers in the city.
- 8.9 Although Trading Standards offer the Rapid Action Trading Standards (RATS) team and has a list of 'Square Deal' approved traders, the panel feels that these could be better advertised to the public. If further publicity of the RATS team would give concerns regarding resources, ie – a fear that the service would not be able to respond to an increase in demand, then further resources should be made available.

Recommendation	Action	Action by	Deadline	Resource Implications
1. Resources be made available via Portsmouth City Council (Trading) Ltd to enable the alcohol retail training currently offered to license holders in Portsmouth to be advertised, made available and delivered to licensed retailers via BIIAB accreditation thus cementing Portsmouth as a centre of excellence.	Secure BIIAB accreditation	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 October 2010	Officer time
	Marketing Campaign	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 March 2011	Officer time £1500
	Deliver training	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 March 2011	Officer time £1000 venue and materials
2. The establishment of a conduit with, initially, neighbouring authorities in order to "trade" (swap, barter, buy, sell or share) best practice and, if necessary, services.	Establish trading company	Robert Briggs	31 October 2010	Officer time Set up and admin costs
	Identify and implement via a robust business case activities which can be traded in the area of alcohol acquisition by minors	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 March 2011	Officer time
	Identify and implement via a robust business case activities which can be traded in the area of trading standards services to business	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 March 2011	Officer time

Recommendation	Action	Action by	Deadline	Resource Implications
	Identify and implement via a robust business case activities which can be traded in the area of community engagement in trading standards issues affecting them	Zorica Lys	31 March 2011	Officer time
	Identify and implement via a robust business case activities which can be traded in the area of trading standards intervention activities	Peter Emmett	31 March 2011	Officer time
3. Additional efforts and resources be made available to further promote the success, innovative operation model and pro-active stance of the Portsmouth trading standards service to the public and business in the city.	Provide showcase event.	Zorica Lys	30 November 2010	Officer time Venue and materials £3K
	Promote community services	Zorica Lys	31 March 2011	Officer time materials £2K
	Promote business services and Square Deal fair trading scheme	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 March 2011	Officer time
	Promote reduction in underage alcohol supply	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 March 2011	Officer time
	Promote Intervention activities	Peter Emmett	31 March 2011	Officer time

Recommendation	Action	Action by	Deadline	Resource Implications
	Promote service activity	Robert Briggs	31 March 2011	Officer time
	Continue to reduce the proxy supply of alcohol to minors by delivering the Proxy Watch scheme	Neil Fitzpatrick	31 March 2011	Officer time Funded with ABG of £15K from SPP (this is under review and is likely to be withdrawn in the medium term)
4. In the light of the current economic climate, the help that trading standards can give, along with measures that can be taken by consumers to protect themselves against rogue traders, be publicised to residents as a matter of priority.	Promote trading standards services for consumers including consumer awareness	Zorica Lys	30 November 2010	Officer time Advertising materials £2K
	Advertise RATS response to doorstep crime and raise awareness	Peter Emmett	30 November 2010	Officer time
	Promote consumer advice services via Square Deal	Neil Fitzpatrick	30 November 2010	Officer time
	Promote self help via public information services e.g. Consumer Direct	Zorica Lys	31 March 2011	Officer time

Recommendation	Action	Action by	Deadline	Resource Implications
5. Enhance working relationships with Elected Members.	Identify the most appropriate method of communication with individual councillors	Zorica Lys	30 November 2010	Officer time
	Develop effective two-way communication i.e. through feedback, survey's, intelligence, invitations to events and or newsletters	Zorica Lys	30 November 2010	Officer time
	Provide a mechanism to enable councillors to highlight key trading stanards issues for service response and feedback	Zorica Lys	30 November 2010	Officer time
6. Grow public involvement and participation in the national Scammnesty campaign	Encourage consumers to report scams via contact points	Zorica Lys	31 March 2011	Officer time Materials £1000

Meetings Held by the Panel.

Date	Witnesses	Documents Received
18 December 2009	<p>Paul Hunt (Head Environment & Public Protection Service)</p> <p>Robert Briggs (Trading Standards Manager)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Edge: Footsteps to your rights; • The Frank Sorrel Project and Protect; • The Edge Report; • The Edge Volunteer welcome pack; • The Edge Student welcome pack.
21 January 2010	<p>Robert Briggs (Trading Standards Manager)</p> <p>Mike Coates (Deputy Director, Office of Fair Trading)</p> <p>Steve Glennon (Head of Adult and Family Learning)</p> <p>Tony Quigley (Team Manager, Illegal Money Lending Team)</p> <p>Insp. Louise Tester (Hampshire Constabulary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) leaflet 'Trading Standards at your Council'; • PCC Autumn Trading Standards Newsletter.

Date	Witnesses	Documents Received
12 February 2010	<p>Gaynor Jackson (Company Secretary and Operations Director of Trading Standards South East Ltd)</p> <p>Sean Murphy (Head of Trading Standards, West Berkshire Council)</p> <p>Mr Abrahams (Portsmouth resident)</p> <p>Mr Sodha (Owner/Manager of the Portsmouth Kwikimart Stores)</p> <p>Robert Briggs (Trading Standards Manager)</p> <p>Peter Emmett (Trading Standards Intervention Manager)</p> <p>Neil Fitzpatrick (Principal Trading Standards Officer)</p> <p>Dave Taylor (Principal Trading Standards Officer)</p> <p>Craig Copland (Community Trading Standards Officer)</p>	

Date	Witnesses	Documents Received
5 March 2010	<p>Robert Briggs (Trading Standards Manager)</p> <p>Peter Emmett (Trading Standards Intervention Manager)</p> <p>Zorica Lys (Principal Trading Standards Officer)</p> <p>Peter (Edge Project Volunteer)</p> <p>Chris (Edge Project Volunteer)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trading Standards Service Delivery 2010/11 Business Case.

Financial impact of Portsmouth Trading Standards on the city – a breakdown of the £34.27 million of added value quoted in para. 3.5 of the report

Environment & Public Protection Service Plan 2010-13	
Outcome Objective 4 To facilitate a fair trading environment	
4.1 Informed, confident consumers: give individuals confidence to make informed decisions about what goods and services they require whom they purchase them from.	
Activity area	Financial impact
Protect and respect project	£168,683
Elderly project	£412,900
Scamnesty	£1,116,305
Edge	£8,772,634
Young People	£5,241,353
Trading standards victim support	£1,032,419
Total for 4.1	£16,744,294
4.2 Informed, successful businesses: help traders with their responsibilities for avoiding activities that result in consumer harm or detriment, or other adverse impacts on the community.	
Activity area	Financial impact
Bespoke activity impact	£43,500
Other bespoke activity impact including Square Deal	£53,500
Total for 4.2	£97,000

Outcome Objective 5 To protect the public and improve safety	
5.1 Reduce sales of age-restricted items to underage people, reduce occurrences of underage sales of age sensitive products and reduce fear of crime connected with the illegal acquisition of alcohol by underage people.	
Activity area	Financial impact
NHS savings re alcohol	£1,504,450
ASB team savings re alcohol	£6,650
Licence reviews re alcohol	£15,000
Training income	£4,000
Total for UAS alcohol	£1,530,100
NHS savings re tobacco	£500,000
Other UAS area	£250,000
Total for 5.1	£2,280,100
5.2 Use all available intelligence to identify issues of consumer harm or detriment or adverse impacts on the community then target necessary resources to achieve satisfactory outcomes.	
Activity area	Financial impact
Intervention	£1,137,292
Disruption	£725,200
Doorstep calling	£6,603,619
Illegal money lending (based on one loan shark)	£2,200,000
POCA (estimate based on potential)	£250,000

Total for 5.2	£10,916,111
5.3 Communities use consumer goods safely	
Activity area	Financial impact
Child car safety week	£2,768,926
Electric blanket checks	£76,600
Christmas lights checks	£132,113
Total for 5.3	£2,977,639
5.4 Businesses supplying safe goods to consumers	
Activity area	Financial impact
Consumer safety	£540,000
Explosives and fireworks	£355,000
Business advice	£360,000
Total for 5.4	£1,255,000

Summary	
Activity area	Financial impact
4.1 Informed, confident consumers: give individuals confidence to make informed decisions about what goods and services they require whom they purchase them from.	£16,744,294
4.2 Informed, successful businesses: help traders with their responsibilities for avoiding activities that result in consumer harm or detriment, or other adverse impacts on the community.	£97,000
5.1 Reduce sales of age-restricted items to underage people, reduce occurrences of underage sales of age sensitive products and reduce fear of crime connected with the illegal acquisition of alcohol by underage people.	£2,280,100
5.2 Use all available intelligence to identify issues of consumer harm or detriment or adverse impacts on the community then target necessary resources to achieve satisfactory outcomes.	£10,916,111
5.3 Communities use consumer goods safely	£2,977,639
5.4 Businesses supplying safe goods to consumers	£1,255,000
Total	£34,270,144