

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

REGENERATION AND LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO

DECISION SCHEDULE



Friday 31st August 2007

at 9.30 am

in Training Room 2,
Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre,
Kendal Road, Hartlepool

The Mayor Stuart Drummond responsible for Regeneration and Liveability will consider the following items.

1. **KEY DECISIONS**
No items

2. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**
 - 2.1 Conservation Grant Scheme – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*

 - 2.2 Trading Standards Service Plan 2007/08 – *Head of Public Protection*

3. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**
 - 3.1 Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 – Quarter 1 Monitoring Report – *Director of Regeneration and Planning Services*

 - 3.2 Family Intervention Project Update – *Head of Community Safety and Prevention*

4. **REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**
No items

**REGENERATION AND LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO
REPORT TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER
31st AUGUST 2007**



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: CONSERVATION GRANT SCHEME

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This year a Conservation Grant Scheme was agreed with a budget of £50,000. This report provides an update on the current budget position and possible criteria to be used for assessing applications.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

2.1 The report outlines the existing budget position, the current levels of grant and proposed criteria for applications.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

3.1 Conservation policy falls within the Portfolio.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

4.1 Non-key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

5.1 Portfolio Holder only.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

6.1 That the Portfolio Holder approves the proposed selection criteria for conservation grant applications.

Report of: Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: CONSERVATION GRANT SCHEME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This year a Conservation Grant Scheme was agreed with a budget of £50,000. This report provides an update on the current budget position and possible criteria to be used for assessing applications.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The current Conservation Grant Scheme started in the financial year 2006/07. The scheme experienced a high level of interest and the budget of £50,000 was offered to fourteen properties over the year.

2.2 The scheme was continued this financial year. Within the first four months of the scheme £30,235 has been offered to seven properties. It is anticipated that further applications will be forthcoming for works to buildings and the scheme is likely to be oversubscribed.

2.3 Given the high demand for the scheme it is suggested that criteria are introduced for the selection of schemes. This will offer some guidance to those applying to the scheme as to the likelihood of being successful when a number of applications are competing for a small budget.

3. CRITERIA FOR THE GRANT SCHEME

3.1 The previously agreed criteria for the grant scheme will remain. These are outlined below.

3.2 The grants would continue to be aimed at pre-1919 residential properties that are located in one of the eight conservation areas or listed residential properties both inside and outside the conservation areas.

3.3 Grant will still be offered to undertake repairs to the structure and external fabric of the buildings together with reinstatement and restoration of important architectural features. For example structural repairs would include roofs, timber repairs, stonework and repointing. Works to external fabric would include reinstatement of traditional features including windows and doors. No internal works would qualify unless they were a result of eligible structural repairs.

3.4 It is suggested that the level of grant remains the same with offers of 50% of the total value of the works up to a maximum of £5,000 in any one year.

- 3.5 Properties that have in the past benefited from grant funding would not be eligible to claim grant on works that have been grant aided before. In addition grants would not be offered retrospectively for completed works.
- 3.6 Grants are available to properties which have carried out some unauthorised works to the building but would only be eligible where enforcement action has not been taken against the owner as the works are historic or if the works were carried out by a previous owner.
- 3.7 Previously grants have been issued on a first come first served basis however due to the high demand for grants and the little budget remaining it is suggested that further selection criteria are introduced. These are outlined below.
- 3.8 First priority would be given to properties which are listed buildings followed by properties covered by an Article 4 Direction. Such properties experience restrictions on the type of materials that can be used therefore it is suggested that in this instance the offer of grant assistance would encourage the use of appropriate traditional materials.
- 3.9 Further to this it is suggested that large scale schemes such as the re-roofing of a building or the renewing of windows throughout a property should have priority over small scale works which could, in some circumstances be construed as repair or maintenance, in particular where the property in question has already made extensive changes to the building, for example leadwork to a bay window which has uPVC windows in.
- 3.10 It is proposed that in future financial years similar criteria be used. To ensure the budget is spent it is suggested that applications are accepted at intervals throughout the year and reviewed against the criteria. Should it be clear that the budget will not be spent on priority projects the applications from non-priority properties will be brought forward.

4 CURRENT APPLICATIONS PENDING A DECISION

- 4.1 There are currently five applications pending a decision. Two of the applications are for works to listed buildings including re-roofing works and replacement windows. These applications would be given priority.
- 4.2 Further to this the remaining three applications are from properties covered by an Article 4 Direction. Two of these are for extensive works to the property including re-roofing. The third is a small scheme of leadwork to a bay window which had UPVC windows fitted prior to the designation of the conservation area. It is suggested that this scheme should be held back and considered only when it is clear that no other priority applications are likely to be received.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That the Portfolio Holder approves the proposed selection criteria for conservation grant applications.

REGENERATION & LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
31st August 2007



Report of: Head of Public Protection

Subject: TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2007/08

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Portfolio Holders approval for the Trading Standards Service Plan.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report gives details of the Trading Standards service and the service plan for 2007/08.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Liveability has responsibility for this service.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Regeneration & Liveability Portfolio.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Approval of the Trading Standards Service Plan.

Regeneration & Liveability Portfolio

Report to Portfolio Holder



Report of: Head of Public Protection

Subject: TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2007/08

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2007/08, which is a requirement under the national performance framework for trading standards.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) National performance framework for trading standards provides guidance and information on how local authority enforcement service plans should be structured and what they should contain. Service plans developed under this guidance will provide the basis on which local authorities will be monitored.
- 2.2 The service planning guidance ensures that key areas of enforcement are covered in local service plans, whilst allowing for the inclusion of locally defined objectives.
- 2.3 The draft Trading Standards Service Plan for 2007/08 is attached as appendix 1 and takes into account the guidance requirements.

3. THE TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN

- 3.1 The service plan for 2006/07 has been updated to reflect last years performance.
- 3.2 The Service Plan covers the following:
 - (i) Service aims and objectives.

- (ii) The background to the authority, including the scope and demands on the health and safety service.
- (ii) Service delivery, including inspection programmes, service requests, complaints, advice, liaison and promotion.
- (iv) Resources, including financial allocation, staff allocation and staff development.
- (v) Quality assessment.
- (vi) Details of the review of the plan.

4. ISSUES

4.1 2006/07

The number of programmed trading standards inspections carried out was on target with 100% of high risk premises inspected and 74 % of all other premises that were due for inspection. In total 522 inspections were carried out with 98% found to be compliant.

4.2

The Trading Standards Team experienced significant staffing difficulties throughout 2006-07. There has been one long-standing Trading Standards Officer vacancy. Whilst all programmed and reactive work has been carried out the loss of staff had significant effect on service improvements.

4.3 Work on age restricted products continued to be a priority during 2006/07. Young volunteers attempted to purchase alcohol on 46 occasions with nine sales taking place.

4.4 Doorstep crime was an issue for the Trading Standards Team which produced a display covering this subject, which was used at several locations where talks were provided by members of the Team, along with the local Police Crime Prevention Officer, the local Target Hardening Officer and Victim Support. The Team was also an active member of "Operation Strongbow", whereby incidents and intelligence was gathered and distributed amongst its members.

4.5 2007/08

During 2007/08 we will focus our resources into dealing with our three high priority areas

- Age related products
- Safety
- Rogue traders

4.6 During 2007/08 the sale of age-restricted products to children is a high priority as part of a coordinated approach to the problem. All premises

licensed to sell or supply alcohol are being encouraged to adopt a "Challenge 21" approach.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the Portfolio Holder approves the Trading standards Service Plan for 2007/08.

Hartlepool Borough Council

Trading Standards Service Plan

2007/08

TRADING STANDARDS, SERVICE PLAN 2007/08

This Service Plan accords with the requirements of the Department of Business Enterprise and Regulatory reform (DBERR) National Performance Framework for Trading Standards, and the Council's aims in respect of its Trading Standards Service and the means by which those aims are to be fulfilled.

1 Background Information

Hartlepool is situated on the North East coast of England. The Borough consists of the town of Hartlepool and a number of small outlying villages. The total area of the Borough is 9,390 hectares.

Hartlepool is a unitary authority, providing a full range of services. It adjoins Easington District Council to the north, Sedgefield District Council to the west and Stockton on Tees Borough Council to the south. The residential population is 90,161 of which ethnic minorities comprise 1.2% (2001 census).

2 Service Aims & Objectives

Hartlepool Borough Council aims:

- To carry out our enforcement duties and deliver high quality services through the efficient and effective use of resources.
- To supplement our enforcement role by providing targeted education and advice
- To encourage innovation through actively seeking out best practice and working in partnership with other agencies

In its delivery of the service the Council will have regard to directions from the Department of Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR), the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), the Trading Standards Institute (TSI), approved Codes of Practice, the Enforcement Concordat, and guidance from Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS).

Service delivery broadly comprises of:-

- Programmed inspection of business premises on a risk based system.
- Alternative forms of intervention.
- Test purchasing of goods and services including age related goods
- Provision of trader advice whilst carrying out an inspection or telephone request or via the Teams web site.

- Provision of advice and educational material to business and public.
- Investigation of complaints from the public and trade.
- Promotional and advisory work.
- Participate in National and Regional initiatives.

Effective performance of the Trading Standards service necessitates a range of joint-working arrangements with other local authorities and agencies such as the Joint Working arrangement of Tees Valley Measurement, membership of the North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA), Cleveland Police Hartlepool Financial Inclusion Partnership, and North East Consumer Direct.

The Council aims to ensure that effective joint-working arrangements are in place and that officers of the service contribute to the on-going development of those arrangements.

3 **Policy Content**

This service plan fits into the hierarchy of the Council's planning process as follows:

- Hartlepool's Community Strategy - the Local Strategic Partnership's (the Hartlepool Partnership) goal is "to regenerate Hartlepool by promoting economic, social and environmental wellbeing in a sustainable manner"
- Corporate (Best Value Performance) Plan
- Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan
- Public Protection Divisional Plan
- Consumer Services Service Plan
- Trading Standards Service Plan - sets out how the Council aims to deliver this statutory service and the Consumer Services section's contribution to corporate objectives

The Council's Community Strategy sets out its vision for:-

'A prosperous, caring, confident and outward looking community realising its potential in an attractive environment'. This Trading Standards Service Plan contributes towards the vision and the Council's seven main priorities in the following ways:

Jobs and the Economy

By providing advice and information to new and existing businesses to assist them in meeting their legal requirements with regard to Trading Standards law requirements, and avoid potential costly action at a later stage.

Lifelong Learning and Skills

By providing and facilitating training for Traders and their staff and promoting an improved awareness of Trading Standards issues more generally within the community.

Health and Care

By ensuring that businesses offering goods for sale ensure that what they offer are safe, comply with the necessary safety standards and comply with the description applied to them.

Community Safety

By encouraging awareness amongst businesses of their role in the local economy, the trade fairly and deal with complaints accordingly.

Environment and Housing

By encouraging businesses to be aware of changes in legislation which empowers consumers to deal with problems themselves, before resorting to obtaining assistance.

Culture and Leisure

By exploring ways to promote high standards of the provision of goods and services in respect of supplying the right quantity and product in hotels, other tourist accommodation, public houses and other licensed premises.

Strengthening Communities

By developing ways of communicating well with all customers, including proprietors of businesses whose first language is not English, and ensuring that we deliver our service equitably to all.

This Trading Standards Service Plan similarly contributes to the vision set out in the Neighbourhood Services Department Plan “to work hand in hand with communities and to provide and develop excellent services that will improve the quality of life for people living in Hartlepool neighbourhoods”. Within this, the Consumer Services Section has a commitment to ensure the safe, manufacture, importation, offering of consumer goods are safe and are properly labeled where necessary.

The Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity. The Trading Standards Service Plan consequently aims to ensure that the same high standards of service is offered to all, and that recognition is given to the varying needs and backgrounds of its customers.

4 **Legislative Powers and Other Actions Available**

The Trading Standards Service has responsibilities under some 80 major Acts, as well as hundreds of pieces of subordinate legislation, including secondary legislation introduced under the European Communities Act 1972.

The legislation covers a wide range of subjects encompassing, Fair Trading, Safety and Weights & Measures, i.e.

Children & Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991,
Consumer Credit Act 1974;
Consumer Protection Act 1987,
Hallmarking Act 1973,
Property Misdescriptions Act 1992,
Timeshare Act 1992,
Trade Descriptions Act 1968,
Trade Marks Act 1994,
Video Recordings Act 1984,
Weights and Measures Act 1985,
Poisons Act 1972,
Enterprise Act 2002.

The most effective means of checking compliance with statutory requirements is through the inspection of retail businesses. This is reflected in guidance issued by the Department of Trade and Industry and LACORS who require Councils to draw up and implement an annual programme of risk-based inspections, which now covers businesses as opposed to premises only.

It is recognised that whilst the inspection process is the primary means of securing compliance with Trading Standards legislation, this can be enhanced by the provision of advice, educational materials and training courses.

The service is obliged to investigate complaints relating to the provision of goods and services not complying with the relevant legislation, which will also relate to the requirements for adequate labeling, as required by the relevant legislation.

A national product warning system is in operation throughout the United Kingdom, which acts as a rapid alert system in respect of unsafe goods and product recalls. Some hazard warnings also originate from abroad. The Trading Standards Team response to the

receipt of these alerts is appropriate to the individual circumstances of the hazard alert.

There is currently a requirement to report to the Department of Trade and Industry annually on performance in relation to Trading Standards law enforcement activities. Annual performance statistics for all authorities are, in future, to be made publicly available by the Department.

Summary of the Powers of an Officer in the Trading Standards Team.

An Authorised Officer may on production of his credentials and at a reasonable hour, enter any premises other than premises used solely as a dwelling, in which he has reasonable grounds to believe there is any equipment or goods to which they enforce.

They can also require any person carrying on the business or employed in connection with the business, to produce any books or documents relating to the business.

An Officer can exercise their powers to seize books and documents, (but only if and to the extent that it is reasonably necessary for securing the provisions of the relevant Act, are duly observed), may require any person having authority to do so, to break open any container, and if that person does not comply, break it open himself.

An Authorised Officer may give written instructions suspending goods which are reasonably suspected of failing to comply with the Weights and Measures Act 1985 and can also suspend unsafe goods.

Where an Officer considers that a computer may contain information that could be used in evidence, he may require the information to be produced in a form that can be taken away and in which it is visible and legible.

5. Service Delivery Mechanisms

The trading standards service is responsible for a wide range of functions limited resources mean that work must be prioritised. The allocation of resources is therefore based around a matrix incorporating issues such as public concerns, trader concerns, and potential impact on public safety. For each area of responsibility significance of all of these issues is determined and a score allocated within a weighted maximum. The resultant total determines the priority.

High priority area

- Underage Sales
- Product Safety
- Rogue Traders

Medium priorities areas

- Scams
- Credit & loan sharks
- False description of goods

Low priority areas

- Misleading prices
- Weights & measures
- Counterfeit goods

The authority has adopted the six national enforcement priorities set out in the Rogers Review. In addition, local priorities will include underage sales.

Resources are directed allocated in accordance with this matrix and Rogers review priorities.

Inspection Programme

Inspections carried out in respect of Trading Standards legislation, are carried out in accordance with the Council's policy and procedures on Trading Standards premises inspections and relevant national guidance.

Information on premises liable for Trading Standards inspections is held on the ITECS computerised system. Premises due for inspection are allocated to staff and inspection carried out on a regular basis, in accordance with guidance issues by LACORS and its risk based inspection programme.

An estimated 10% of programmed inspections are of premises where it is more appropriate to conduct inspections outside the standard working time hours. Arrangements are in place to inspect these premises out of hours by making use of the Council's flexible working arrangements, lieu time facilities and, if necessary, paid overtime provisions. In addition, these arrangements will permit the occasional inspection of premises which open outside of, as well as during standard work time hours.

As a follow-up to primary inspections, the service undertakes revisits to bring businesses into compliance, accordance with current policy. A number of these premises revisits will be undertaken outside standard working hours and arrangements are in place as described above to facilitate this.

It is anticipated that consistent, high quality programmed inspections by the service will, over time, result in a general improvement in standards (brought into compliance), reducing the frequency for recourse to formal action.

The performance against inspection targets for all trading standards inspections is reported quarterly as part of the Neighbourhood Services Department internal performance monitoring. In addition this, performance against inspection targets is reported quarterly to the Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder as part of the Neighbourhood Services Department plan update.

Alternative Enforcement Strategy for Low Risk Premises

From April 2005 an alternate enforcement strategy may be employed for low risk premises, based on selected trade sectors, i.e. hairdressers and fast food establishments, Self-assessment will usually consist of questionnaire being sent to these businesses and a subsequent evaluation of the results of this self-assessment by Authorised Officers.

A percentage of those businesses returning questionnaires will be visited to validate the information received, as well as businesses not responding. Inspection visits may also be made where a low risk business is the subject of complaint and where notification of change of business use or proprietorship is received.

Product Inspection and Testing

The purpose of inspection of businesses is to check that products which are manufactured in the UK or are imported, comply with safety requirements and are safe. Also that services which are provided are as described. The Trading Standards Team has a monthly allocation of resources for the examination or testing of test purchases at the jointly run Tees Valley Measurement laboratory.

Trading Standards Inspection/Sampling Plan 2007/08

Trading Standards Officers whilst they are carrying out general inspection and other duties will examine a large range of goods. Some goods will be seasonal or be in retail premises for a very short time scale. The Officers of the Trading Standards Team will therefore concentrate on specific goods at particular times. Officers always are allowed to use their discretion whilst carrying out their duties to make test purchases.

The reasons for examination or test purchasing are as follows.

- There has been a problem with this type of product in the past. (from past experience, or there has been a safety warning or recall).
- It is a new type of product and little or nothing is known about it.
- It has or is suspected of having a problem i.e. non-compliance with a standard.
- The product is subject to a complaint, (safety or description).
- Part of the inspection and sampling plan.
- Subject covered by a local/regional initiative.
- Being offered for sale by an itinerant seller.

The plan for 2007/08 will take account of the above criteria.

Trading Standards Inspection/Sampling Plan 2007/08

April Electrical Products	May Electrical Products Screw drivers	June Sunglasses Sports goods packaging
July Sunglasses Sports goods packaging	August Sunglasses Back to school products Electric products suitable for holidays	September Back to school products
October Halloween products	November Toys Electrical products	December Toys Electrical products
January Sales items Internet good (joint with food officers)	February Valentines day goods	March Mothers day products

Tees Valley Measurement

Hartlepool, along with the other three Cleveland District Councils, jointly fund Tees Valley Measurement. It carries out verification and inspection duties, mainly on industrial sites and petrol stations. It also provides a calibration service to industry. An informal screening and testing laboratory is also provided along with the maintenance of the weights and measures standards for the Unitary Councils.

In November 2006 a review of this service was undertaken by the four district councils. The outcome of the review will provide a continuation of provision of all statutory services and sample testing; however there will be a reduction in commercial calibration and verification with the probable removal of commercial tanker testing. The review will maximize savings and further secure the future of the service.

Age Restricted Products

Legislation prohibits the supply (sale or hire) of specific products to persons under certain ages. The Trading Standards Team treats age restricted goods as a high priority and due to its commitment to reducing crime and disorder, has concentrated on the reduction of the supply of alcohol to young consumers. It is our policy to prosecute suppliers and to institute a review of the premises licence under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003.

Officers advise retailers of legal requirements whilst carrying out inspections. Test purchases, prosecutions are also reported in the media.

A table showing penalties for supplying products to persons under certain ages

PRODUCT	SUPPLY ONLY TO THOSE AGED:	MAXIMUM PENALTY
Tobacco products	16 and over	£2,500
Offensive weapons/knives	16 and over	£5,000 & up to 6 months
Caps, cracker snaps, novelty matches, party poppers, serpents and throwdowns	16 and over	£5,000 & up to 6 months
Fireworks	18 and over	£5,000 & up to 6 months
Videos, video and computer games: Classification 12	12 and over	£5000 & up to 6 months; imprisonment
Videos, video and computer games: Classification 15	15 and over	£5000 & up to 6 months; imprisonment
Videos, video and computer games: Classification 18	18 and over	£5000 & up to 6 months; imprisonment
Volatile substances/solvents	18* and over	£5,000 & up to 6 months
Cross bows	17 and over	£5,000 & up to 6 months
Airguns and pellets	17 and over	
Lighter refills containing butane	18 and over	£5,000 & up to 6 months
Lottery tickets/Instant Win cards	16 and over	£5,000 & up to 2 years
Aerosol paint	16 and over	£2,500
Alcohol	18 and over	£5,000 & forfeit of licence

Investigation of Complaints

The service receives complaints regarding a wide range of goods and services, all of which are subject to investigation. Based on 2006/07 we would expect 170 such complaints. An initial response is made to these complaints within two working days. Whilst many complaints are investigated with minimal resource requirements, some more complex cases may be resource-intensive. Complaints may also require the need for test purchasing of goods or services and subsequent inspection or analysis or the obtaining of an experts opinion.

The investigation may also involve other organizations and Trading Standards Authorities. Some complaints are referred onto these other organizations as the most appropriate means of resolving them, and to the other Trading Standards Service as part of the Home Authority

principal. Government Departments such as the Office of Fair Trading and Department of Trade and Industry, are also contacted where there are wider issues involved.

As a result of a complaint, one of the considerations made is whether it is a widespread issue which needs to be looked at on a wider scale or by the trade sector, locally or regionally. The Hartlepool Trading Standards Team is one of the twelve members of the North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA) and as such it can either raise issues with its Executive or via one of its Focus Groups, i.e. Fair Trading, Safety or metrology etc.

From these referrals the Executive or Focus Groups can decide to undertake initiatives which will be to the benefit of the majority of its members and which have a regional aspect to them.

The procedures for receipt and investigation of complaints are set out in detailed guidance and internal policy documents.

Provision of Advice and Education.

The Trading Standards Team carries out a wide range of advice and education activities. These activities include:-

- Maintain the Trading Standards web site with advice to the public and trade.
- Participate in national awareness weeks, i.e. Child Safety Week, National Consumer Week and the OFT Scams Awareness Month.
- Educate the trade regarding current and proposed changes in legislation, i.e. regarding "Cold Calling".
- Provision of trader advice whilst carrying out an inspection or telephone request
- Provision of consumer advice via the national Consumer Direct service.
- Issue press releases to educate and warn the public and trade.
- Attend education events and participate via the use of displays and talks
- Educate the public, particularly the vulnerable, by the giving of talks and other initiatives regarding doorstep crime.
- Participate in National and Regional initiatives.
- Provide advice and assistance to new traders.

- Educate and warn the public and trade regarding scams which are aimed at them specifically.

Home Authority arrangements

The Trading Standards Team has no formal arrangements with any businesses to act as Home Authority. Informal arrangements are in place with some businesses.

General

The delivery point for the food law enforcement service is at:

Civic Centre
Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Members of the public and businesses may access the service at this point from 08.30 - 17.00 Monday to Thursday and 08.30 - 16.30 on Friday.

A 24-hour emergency call-out also operates to deal with emergencies, which occur out of hours.

6 Resources

Staffing Allocation

The Director of Neighbourhood Services has overall responsibility for the delivery of the Trading Standards Team. The Head of Public Protection has responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the Council's Trading Standards Service and its service plan. The Consumer Services Manager, will consult with the Principal Trading Standards Officer regarding the exercising of its Trading Standards function, who also has responsibility for the day to day management of the service.

The resources determined necessary to deliver the service in 2006/07 are as follows:

One x 0.25 Consumer Services Manager (with responsibility also for Health & Safety, Licensing and Trading Standards)

One Principal Trading Standards Officer (with responsibility for the day to day operation of the Trading Standards service).

Three (Senior) Trading Standards Officers (with requisite qualifications and experience) (Note: only two currently in post). We have been unable to fill the vacant TSO post and have therefore appointed one of the trainees as a technical officer until she obtains her professional qualifications.

One Senior Enforcement Officer

One Trainee Trading Standards Officers

The Consumer Services Manager has responsibility for planning service delivery and day to day management of the Trading Standards, Food Law service, Health & Safety at Work, Licensing, Public Health, Water Quality, Animal Health & Welfare and IT, as well as general management responsibilities as a member of the Public Protection and Housing Management Team.

The Principal Trading Standards Officer has responsibility for the day to day supervision of the Trading Standards Service.

The Trading Standards Officers, have responsibility for the performance of the Trading Standards inspection and sampling programmes as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the service. The Trading Standards Officers will deal with the more complex investigations, complaints and supervision of the Trainees.

The Senior Enforcement Officer is also responsible for inspections, as well as revisits, investigation of less complex complaints.

Administrative support is provided by Support Services within Neighbourhood Services department.

All staff engaged in the Trading Standards Team enforcement activities will be suitably trained and qualified and appropriately authorised in accordance with guidance and internal policy.

Staff undertaking educational and other support duties will be suitably qualified and experienced to carry out this work.

Financial Resources

The annual budget for the Consumer Services section in the year 2006/07 is:

	£000
Employees	732
Other	253.7
Support Recharges	120
Income	(166.3)
Net Budget	939.2

This budget is for all services provided by this section, i.e., Health & Safety, Licensing, Trading Standards and resources are allocated in accordance with service demands.

Equipment and Facilities

A range of equipment and facilities are required for the effective operation of the Trading Standards service. The Team is developing a documented procedure that ensures the proper maintenance and calibration of equipment. The Working Standard equipment, (weights, scales, alcohol measuring equipment) is examined and tested on a six monthly basis at the premises of Tees Valley Measurement. Other equipment (solid fuel scales) are obtained on a when needed basis. Officers from Tees Valley Measurement, carry out inspection, testing and verification of petrol pumps, weighbridges and large capacity weighing and measuring equipment, as part of its joint agreement with the four ex Boroughs of Cleveland.

The Trading Standards Team as part of the Public Protection Division has a computerised performance management system, ITECS (to be shortly replaced by the APP system). This is capable of maintaining up to date accurate data relating to the activities of the Trading Standards Team. A documented database management procedure has been produced to ensure that the system is properly maintained, up to date and secure. The system is used for the generation of the inspection programmes, the recording and tracking of all businesses, the production of statutory returns and the effective management of performance.

Training Plans

The qualifications and training of staff engaged in Trading Standards enforcement are prescribed and this will be reflected in the Council's policy in respect of appointment and authorisation of Officers.

Officers are encouraged to maintain their professional competency, through the attendance at accredited short courses, seminars or conferences. Training is also provided via the Trading Standards Institute, Northern Branch. This is also consistent with the requirements of the relevant professional bodies.

The Council is committed to the personal development of staff and has in place Personal Development Plans for all members of staff.

The staff Personal Development Plan scheme allows for the formal identification of the training needs of staff members in terms of personal development linked with the development needs of the service on an annual basis. The outcome of the process is the formulation of a Personal Development Plan that clearly prioritises training requirements of individual staff members. The Personal Development Plans are reviewed six monthly.

The details of individual Personal Development plans are not included in this document, but in general terms the priorities for the service are concerned with ensuring up to date knowledge and awareness of

legislation, building capacity within the team, and training and development of new staff joining the team.

Detailed records are maintained by the service relating to all training received by officers.

7. Service Review and Quality Assessment

Quality Assessment

The Council is committed to quality service provision. To support this commitment the Trading Standards Team seeks to ensure consistent, effective, efficient and ethical service delivery that constitutes value for money.

A range of performance monitoring information will be used to assess the extent to which the Team achieves this objective and will include on-going monitoring against pre-set targets, both internal and external audits and stakeholder feedback.

Specifically the Principal Trading Standards Officer, will carry out accompanied visits with officers undertaking inspections, investigations and other duties for the purpose of monitoring consistency and quality of the inspection and other visits carried out as well as maintaining and giving feedback with regard to associated documentation and reports.

The Best Value Performance Indicator BV166, applicable to Trading Standards, is subject to scrutiny. The target for attainment by the service against BV166 standard, which includes the provision of written enforcement policies, planned enforcement activity and measurement of customer satisfaction levels, is 100%.

Review

It is recognised that a key element of the service planning process is the rational review of past performance. In the formulation of this service plan a review has been conducted of performance against those targets established for the year 2006/07.

This service plan will be reviewed at the conclusion of the year 2007/08 and at any point during the year where significant legislative changes or other relevant factors occur during the year. It is the responsibility of the Consumer Services Manager to carry out that review with the Head of Public Protection.

The service plan review will identify any shortfalls in service delivery and will inform decisions about future staffing and resource allocation, service standards, targets and priorities.

Any relevant amendments to the Council's Best Value programme will be incorporated into the service plan together with any matters identified through quality assessment audits.

Following any review leading to proposed revision of the service plan member approval will be sought.

Performance Review 2006-07

This section describes performance of the service in key areas during 2006-07.

The Trading Standards Team experienced significant staffing difficulties throughout 2006-07. There has been one long-standing Trading Standards Officer vacancy. Whilst all programmed and reactive work has been carried out the loss of staff had significant effect on, service improvements.

Inspection Programme

The Trading Standards Team achieved an inspection rate of 100% of its High Risk premises and 74% of all other premises. In total 522 inspections were carried out with 98% found to be compliant.

The Trading Standards Team has three high priority areas:-

- Age related products.
- Safety.
- Rogue traders.

Business and Customer Questionnaires

The Trading Standards Team has obtained high scores with the business and customers, when questionnaires were left following an inspection or an investigation of a complaint was completed.

Results

Business satisfaction index 98%.
Customer satisfaction index 91.4%.

Sampling

The sampling programme for 2006/07 has been completed. The results are:

Category	Number submitted	Pass	Fail
Safety	75	52	23
Trade	10	6	4
Total	85	58	27

Where unsatisfactory samples are identified, officers carry out follow up work and take appropriate action. A number of items were withdrawn from sale locally and nationally following routine sampling they included:

- Dinner play set a toy containing various imitation food articles representing a choking hazard to children under three years of age
- Santa sacks - eight different types of plastic toy bags from five different retailers which, due to insufficient ventilation, represented a suffocation hazard to children.
- Novelty candle - during testing the flame spread across the gel causing the glass holder to break and pieces of glass to be ejected.

Promotional Work

Child Safety Week

The Trading Standards Team as part of Child Safety Week in July 2006 undertook a project in relation to Seaside Safety, whereby retailers were requested not to sell inflatables to unaccompanied children. This was well supported by retailers and a partnership was developed with the local Life Guards and RNLI. The initiative was featured in the local press and radio.

Doorstep Crim.

Doorstep crime was an issue which produced a display covering this subject, which was used at several locations where talks were provided by members of the Team, along with the local Police Crime Prevention Officer, the local Target Hardening Officer and Victim Support. The Team was also an active member of "Operation Strongbow", whereby incidents and intelligence was gathered and distributed amongst its members

National Consumer Week

The team also took part in National Consumer Week when it issued the "Think Twice" booklets to the organisers of certain groups representing the vulnerable and the older person. The Team distributed the brochure in an audio version to the local blind centre. The distribution was part of its education and empowerment of consumers programme.

Loan Sharks

A display was prepared featuring the problem of "Loan Sharks" with the aim of increasing awareness of the problem and to gather intelligence. The Principal TSO also attends the Hartlepool Financial Inclusion Partnership Steering Group meetings. In September 2006 it was part of the local, "Money Matters" Conference, which was attended by a wide cross section of other agencies and interested parties.

Complaints

Consumer Direct

The team no longer provides a direct consumer advice service. The provision of this service is via the call centre delivery approach by Consumer Direct regionally.

Civil Complaints

The team does however deal with civil complaints and during 2006/07 dealt with 171 complaints and requests for advice. These investigations have been undertaken all within our target of two working days.

Enforcement

Age restricted goods

During 2006/07 work on age restricted goods has concentrated on alcohol. By working with young volunteers, the Team were able to test whether some retailers were prepared to sell alcohol to minors, (under 18's). During 2006/07 young volunteers were able to purchase alcohol on nine out of 46 separate occasions. In addition six test purchases of fireworks were carried out with two sales. Legal proceedings were instituted in nine cases.

In 2006/07 the trading Standards Team requested reviews of 11 premises following successful prosecutions for underage sales. These were considered by Licensing Committee and actions taken included suspension of license and amendment of conditions.

IP Crime

The growth of counterfeiting is still on the increase and the Team has seized a number of garments, trainers, DVD's, (film and music), to protect legitimate trade and disrupt the activities of rogue traders.

Improvement Proposals 2006/07

The following areas for improvement are identified in the 2006/07 Trading Standards Service Plan.

Procedures

Due to staffing problems this work was not completed and remains as an area for improvement in 2007/08.

Peer Review

Training of staff was undertaken however due to staffing problems the review was not carried out and has been rescheduled for 2007/08

Rogue Traders

The Team supported the Regional Intelligence Officer, (RIO) and worked with the Regional “Scambusters” Team, which deal with rogue traders and practices.

8 Key Areas for Improvement 2007/08

In addition to committing the service to specific operational activities such as performance of the inspection programme, the service planning process assists in highlighting areas where improvement is desirable. Detailed below are specifically identified key areas for improvement that are to be progressed during 2007/08.

Review of Enforcement Matrix

During the year a review of the trading standards enforcement matrix will take place.

Challenge 21

The sale of age-restricted products to children is a high priority for the trading standards service. As part of a coordinated approach to the problem all premises licensed to sell or supply alcohol are being encouraged to adopt a challenge 21 approach.

Procedures

The Team recognises that it needs a robust documented procedure system, for all of its activities. This will be undertaken in this next financial year.

Peer Review

The Team will undertake a peer review of the Trading Standards service during the year.

REGENERATION & LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO
Report To Portfolio Holder
31 August 2007



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES
DEPARTMENTAL PLAN 2007/08 – QUARTER 1
MONITORING REPORT

SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Portfolio Holder of the progress made against Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 in the first quarter of the year.

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report shows details of progress against actions contained in the Departmental Plan and the first quarter outturn of key performance indicators. Several key departmental achievements in the first part of the year are also highlighted.

3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for performance management issues in relation to the Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan.

4.0 TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Portfolio Holder only.

6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Progress against actions and indicators be noted.

Report of: Director of Regeneration and Planning Services

Subject: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES
DEPARTMENTAL PLAN 2007/08 – QUARTER 1
MONITORING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against the key actions identified in the Regeneration and Planning Departmental Plan 2007/08 and the progress of key performance indicators for the period up to 30 June 2007.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability has responsibility for the Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan which was agreed in May 2007.
- 2.2 The Regeneration and Planning Departmental Plan 2007/08 sets out the key tasks and issues along with an Action Plan to show what is to be achieved by the department in the coming year.
- 2.3 The Council's electronic performance management database is used for collecting and analysing performance in relation to both the Corporate Plan and the five Departmental Plans.
- 2.4 Where appropriate more detailed service plans are also produced detailing how each individual section contributes to the key tasks and priorities contained within the Regeneration and Planning Departmental Plan and ultimately those of the Corporate Plan. These plans are managed within the department.

3. FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 This section looks in detail at how Regeneration and Planning Services has performed in relation to the key actions and performance indicators that were included within the Departmental Plan for 2007/08.
- 3.2 On a quarterly basis, officers from across the department are asked, via the Performance Management database, to provide an update on

progress against every action contained in the performance plan and where appropriate, every performance indicator.

- 3.3 Officers are asked to provide a short commentary explaining progress made to date and asked to 'traffic light' each section based on whether or not the action will be, or has been, completed by the target date set out in the plans. The traffic light system is:-

RED	Action / PI not expected to meet target
AMBER	Action / PI expected to meet target
GREEN	Action / PI target achieved

- 3.4 Within Regeneration and Planning Services Departmental Plan, there are a total of 169 actions and 52 performance indicators assigned to this portfolio. Table 1 below summarises the progress made at 30 June 2007 towards achieving these actions and performance indicators:-

Table 1 – Regeneration and Planning progress summary

	Departmental Plan	
	Actions	PIs
Green	23 (13.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Amber	140 (82.8%)	34 (65.4%)
Red	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.9%)
Annual	6 (3.6%)	17 (32.7%)
Total	169	52

- 3.5 A total of 23 actions have already been completed and the remainder are on target for completion by the milestone date. No 'red rated' actions are identified at this early stage in the year.
- 3.6 From Table 1 it can be seen that most of the PI targets set are also currently expected to be achieved with the exception being one LAA target relating to unemployment rates which is further described in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Performance Indicators not completed on target/not on target

Ref	Action	Target	Outturn	Comment
LAA JE6	Unemployment Rate (Neighbourhood Renewal narrowing the gap)	4.3%	6.2%	Whilst encouraging progress and significant improvement has taken place against the figure for March 2007 (7.2%) and reduction on NRS figures is better than for Hartlepool overall it is felt the target figure shown will be difficult to achieve by the end of the year

3.7 Portfolio Holder's attention is drawn to progress and achievements of the department in the first part of the year.

- The assessment of housing market and housing needs in the borough was completed in Quarter 1. Key findings were reported to Cabinet on 24 July.
- In Housing Regeneration, the main demolition contract on NDC Sites 1 & 2 commenced, the completion of the first residential units on HMR site 1 was achieved and vacant possession of North Central Hartlepool Ph1 site was secured.
- Key indicators for the processing of planning applications were all met or exceeded in the Quarter 1.
- Community safety indicators in relation to burglaries, violent crime, robberies and vehicle crime are all considerably better than the target figures set as at 30 June.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 That the progress against key actions and first quarter outturn of performance indicators is noted.

REGENERATION & LIVEABILITY PORTFOLIO
Report To Portfolio Holder
31st August 2007



Report of: Head of Community Safety and Prevention

Subject: FAMILY INTERVENTION PROJECT UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on the progress of the Family Intervention Project.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report outlines the work carried out to date in implementing the Family Intervention Project, (FIP), and how the links to the Hartlepool Intervention Project (HIP) have been developed.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Project aims to tackle anti-social behaviour.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Report for information only

6. DECISION REQUIRED

None.

Report of: Head of Community Safety & Prevention

Subject: Family Intervention Project

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress of the Hartlepool Family Intervention Project (FIP).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Portfolio holder agreed in October 2006 that an application for funding be made to the RESPECT Unit for £100,000 in both 2006/07 and 2007/08 to establish a Family Intervention Project in Hartlepool.
- 2.2 The grant was offered with an expectation that the FIP would be mainstreamed by the Council and partners at the end of the funded period.
- 2.3 This is one of 53 such schemes which have been set up across the country as part of the RESPECT agenda. The purpose of these projects is to address the fact that in some communities there are a small number of highly problematic families that account for a disproportionate amount of anti-social behaviour.
- 2.4 The main objective of a Family Intervention Project is to stop the anti-social behaviour of these families and restore safety to their homes and to the wider community. The project also tackles the causes of poor behaviour which involve issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, poor health, domestic violence, unemployment and debt. This work is targeted at those whose anti-social behaviour is threatening their tenancies, is putting their children at risk or is likely to lead to them facing further action. The project uses a dual approach which includes help for families to address the causes of their behaviour, alongside supervision and enforcement to provide them with the incentives to change.
- 2.5 The key tool in the Family Intervention Project is the Family Contract. The contract involves each family member and all the agencies who are already working with the family. It identifies areas where changes are needed for each family member and draws up actions with timescales and sanctions for each issue identified.

- 2.6 The project takes a 'whole family' approach which considers the needs of the whole household and assesses the underlying problems driving the family's behaviour. This can include a parenting element which ranges from the family worker providing intense one-to-one help to referring parents to structured, high-quality courses.
- 2.7 The threat of sanctions or use of sanctions provides both a way of curbing bad behaviour and also helps persuade people to accept and co-operate fully with the offers of support.
- 2.8 Sheffield Hallam University have recently conducted an evaluation of six FIPs in the North West. This study has found:
- 84% improvement in school attendance
 - 80% reduction in the threat of possession action
 - The projects are strong on their primary objective of reducing incidents and complaints about anti-social behaviour – an 85% reduction in anti-social behaviour was recorded.

3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 The funding application was successful and a project co-ordinator commenced in post on 23rd April 2007, who is now co-ordinating both the Hartlepool Intervention Project (HIP) and the FIP projects. Linked to this project are two smaller RESPECT grants. One provides funding for training for parenting provision across the town, not solely for FIP families, and the other for the creation of a RESPECT Parenting Practitioner. This latter role is being fulfilled by Barnardos North East.
- 3.2 A steering group has been set up, chaired by the Head of Community Safety and Prevention which includes senior level representatives of
- The Anti-social Behaviour Unit
 - The Youth Offending Team
 - Supporting People
 - The Department of Work and Pensions
 - Children's Services Department
 - Housing Hartlepool
 - HBC Housing Services Division
 - Barnardos (North East)
- 3.3 It was agreed early on in the project that referrals would come through the established multi-agency group which meets monthly as the Hartlepool Intervention Panel (HIP). To date seven referrals have been made and work is currently on-going with six families. All work is currently undertaken on an outreach basis- i.e. with the families remaining in their own homes. The seventh family is still being assessed prior to commencement of work.

3.4 The Table below shows the issues which affect each of the six families (A-F) currently being worked with.

Issue	Families Affected
Anti-social behaviour	A,B,C, E,F
Non / low school Attendance	A,B,E, F
Poor Home conditions- overcrowding	A,B,C,D,E
Mental Health issues- including depression	A,C
Lack of communication between family members	B,C,D,E,F
Poor control of Anger	B,C,D,F
Substance misuse	A,B,D,E,F
Poor Parenting	A,B,C,D,E,F
Large families (four plus children)	A,B,C,D
Single parent households	A,B,E,F
Disability	B,D
No-one in household economically active	A,B,C,D,E,F
Living in areas with high rates of crime and Anti-social Behaviour	A,B,C,D, E, F

4. IMPACT

4.1 In Hartlepool we have achieved so far

IMPACT	FAMILIES
ASBO not progressed	C,B
Reduced incidents of Anti-social Behaviour	B,C
Parenting Provision attended	A,C,D
Young person re-engaged with training	C
Family engaging with Healthy eating programme and other family activities	C
Communication within the home improved	C
Better control of anger	B,C,D
School attendance improved	B
Possibility that children in care may be returned to parental home	A
Parent accessing services of MIND	A
Parents completed Health and Safety Course	A,D
Parent completed Food Hygiene Course	A
Family engaged with PATCH for play therapy	D
Referrals to Children's Fund	B,D

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 The portfolio holder is asked to note the contents of the report.

Contact Officer Sally Forth, Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator

Background Papers RESPECT Action Plan