



Cultural and Community Services Department

Trading Standards Division

Service Plan 2010-2014

2011-2012 Refresh

Policy Context

The role of Trading Standards is to help local people to get a fair deal when buying goods and services. We support Derbyshire businesses to ensure that they comply with a wide range of consumer protection legislation which is intended to ensure a fair and safe marketplace. Supporting legitimate local businesses and helping them grow is combined with tackling the minority of rogue traders who seek to gain a competitive advantage by exploiting consumers, particularly those who are vulnerable.

Since 2005, advice to local people with consumer problems has been provided in conjunction with Consumer Direct, which provides initial consumer advice to all callers. More complex issues and those where a criminal investigation is required are referred to Derbyshire Trading Standards for further enquiry. Following the establishment of Consumer Direct, there has been a steady increase in contacts from Derbyshire consumers; peaking at approximately 18,000 in 2008-09. Consumer contacts have recently begun to decline to a forecast of 15,000 for the current financial year. The main reason for this is thought to be a reduction in the national promotion of the Consumer Direct service. As part of the spending review the Government has proposed a transfer of the management of Consumer Direct from the Office of Fair Trading to Citizens Advice from April 2012. This may affect the type and extent of the service available in the future.

In October 2010 the Secretary of State for the Department of Business Industry and Skills (BIS) announced a Consumer Landscape Review. As part of this review, he envisaged that 'Trading Standards will be given responsibility for enforcement of almost all consumer law'. Since that announcement BIS have confirmed funding for the continuation of teams to tackle illegal money lending and 'Level 2' trading standards crime – that is tackling rogue traders who commit offences in more than one local authority. The Secretary is also proposing the transfer of the enforcement responsibilities of the Office of Fair Trading to the 'Trading Standards community'.

The Comprehensive Spending Review and subsequent reduction in resources will require Trading Standards to give greater priority to tackling the minority of rogue traders that cause the most consumer detriment. There is likely, therefore, to be less routine market surveillance in terms of visits to local businesses and testing of products on sale in the county particularly where the risk of non-compliance is low. There is also likely to be a reduction in the level of assistance to individual consumers. Another consequence of the Spending Review is a rationalisation of Local Government Regulation, which will lead to a reduction in the support that trading standards has previously benefited from.

The direct funding from the Department of Food and Rural Affairs has come to an end. This coupled with a reduction in the Formula Grant allocation will result in the need for a reassessment of animal health enforcement priorities.

Meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the new public duties, is an important priority for the next year and beyond. The department will achieve this by contributing to the development of a meaningful, but proportionate, set of equalities objectives for the Council, consulting on proposed changes to services and considering the impact of such changes on different groups.

Operational Context

Derbyshire has experienced an increase in rogue traders operating in the county. The most complained-about trade sector is the selling of mobility products (such as scooters and rise and recline armchairs). During 2010-11 we tackled the 24 businesses generating the most complaints and responded to some 70 complaints from local residents about doorstep traders. The Division will continue to focus on those traders who deliberately flout the law. Not only do they prey on vulnerable local residents, but they also gain an unfair competitive advantage over the vast majority of traders that comply with legal requirements. Supporting vulnerable people, maintaining the Derbyshire Trusted Trader Scheme and tackling the rogues will continue to be priorities for the Division. This will contribute to Confident and Safe Communities.

2011/12 will be the first of a four-year programme of significant budget reductions with initial savings made through changes to the senior management team. Additional savings will be made by restructuring the Division over the forthcoming 12 months with emphasis on maintaining front line service delivery and focusing on key priorities.

The Derbyshire Trusted Trader Scheme, which contributes to Giving People the Choice and Flexibility to Live Independent Lives, continues to thrive. It now has over 1,000 members and attracts positive feedback from both trade members and local residents who have used a Trusted Trader. In terms of Customer Feedback 92% of the respondents rate the service they've received from the Trusted Trader as very good; 99% felt that they were charged a fair price; and 98% felt that Trusted Trader gives them more confidence about finding a trader they can trust. Feedback from members is equally positive 72% of traders thought that membership of Trusted Trader had a beneficial effect on their business; 66% thought that their membership had generated more business; and 91% thought that the Trusted Trader branding gave their customers more confidence about using them.

Protecting the rural economy contributes to Confident and Safe Communities. Reducing the threat of animal disease and tackling any incidents of unnecessary suffering to farm animals will continue to be a priority. The Division will continue to attend livestock markets and to inspect 'high risk' premises to provide advice and information to the local farming community.

Protecting the food chain from 'farm to fork' is a priority for the Division and contributes to Encouraging Healthy Active and Rewarding Lifestyles. We will target our food sampling programme to ensure that food composition and labelling is accurate and complies with legal requirements. We will work with local businesses to reduce the salt, fat or sugar content of locally produced food and encourage consumers to make the link between food labelling information, diet and health. We will also continue to play an active role in attempting to reduce young people's access to cigarettes and reduce smoking prevalence by tackling illicit tobacco.

In terms of Achieving More With Partners, we will continue to support local businesses by providing them with advice to prevent illegal sales of age restricted products. Sharing information with Police, District Council Licensing and Community Safety colleagues will enable the Division to continue to target resources in intelligence led ways. The Division has currently achieved a compliance rate of over 90% for 'off-trade' premises and is now working with a seconded police officer to share best practice and support with a view to assisting the police in reducing the risk of underage alcohol sales in pubs and clubs.

APPENDIX A: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS LINKED TO COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES

Performance data in relation to the indicators shown below are maintained in the council's corporate performance management system (CorVu) and reported quarterly to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Theme / Priority		Measure Description	CorVu Ref
LEADING THE WAY			
Giving local people better choice and more of a say			
1	Promote comprehensive information and advice services	Number of contacts for advice by trading standards division	CCS 216 Target 6,000
Achieving More In Partnership			
2	Address the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse	Percentage of businesses identified as High Priority that have received targeted intervention.	CCS 142 Target 100%
3	Support economic recovery and growth	Satisfaction of businesses with the Trading Standards Service	Target 76%
4		Percentage of members of Derbyshire Trusted Trader Scheme that believe it has had a beneficial effect on their business	CCS 222 Target 64%
RAISING ASPIRATIONS			
Encouraging healthy, active and rewarding lifestyles			
5	Promote healthy eating and physical activity, encouraging residents and employees to adopt healthy lifestyles	Percentage of trading standards inspections to food businesses identified as High Risk	CCS 073 Target 100%
6		Percentage of complaints about tobacco that are investigated	CCS239 Target 100%
7		Percentage of selected Derbyshire food businesses operating in priority sectors to have been provided with best practice guidance on reducing salt, sugar or fat content of locally produced food	CCS 238 Target 100%
8	Work with partners to tackle the growing problem of alcohol misuse	Percentage of alcohol licence applications evaluated	CCS 240 Target 100%

HIGH QUALITY PERSONALISED SERVICES THAT MEET INDIVIDUAL NEEDS			
Giving people the choice and flexibility to live independent lives			
9	Extend the Trusted Trader Scheme	Percentage of consumers using the Derbyshire Trusted Trader Scheme who rate the service from the trader as very good	CCS 210 Target 90%
PLACES WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO BE			
Confident and safe communities			
10	Tackle unsafe and unfair trading practices	Percentage of complaints about unsolicited calls from doorstep traders that are investigated	CCS 245 Target 100%
11		Percentage of Derbyshire Traders subject to a high degree of consumer complaints against whom action has been taken	CCS 246 Target 100%
12		Percentage of businesses found to be or brought in to compliance with trading standards and animal health and welfare legislation	CCS 144 Target 95%
13		Percentage of all 'high risk' non-food businesses operating in Derbyshire that are checked at least every two years to ensure compliance with trading standards requirements	CCS 244 Target 50%
14		Percentage of farm premises visited which are identified as "Critical Control Points" (Livestock Markets, Slaughterhouses, High Risk Farms and Dealers)	CCS 247 Target 100%
15		Percentage of complaints about animal welfare that have been investigated	Target 100%
Rich, diverse and protected environments			
16	Manage waste more sustainably to reduce waste sent to landfill and provide facilities for local residents to recycle their waste	Percentage of selected Derbyshire businesses operating in priority sectors that have been provided with best practice guidance on reducing packaging waste.	CCS 251 Target 100%

APPENDIX B: BUDGET SUMMARY 2011/12

The following tables show the approved departmental budget for 2011/12, including the main divisional services and budget headings. The budget currently includes £1.45m efficiency saving which have yet to be allocated. Proposals to implement the savings will be the subject of separate reports to Cabinet and/or Cabinet Member.

Under the Council's Financial Regulations Chief Officers have delegated authority to incur expenditure on routine or consumable items. These are wide ranging and examples include general office expenditure, computer software and maintenance, utility costs, vehicle hire, training courses, together with service specific headings. The identification of allowable items is being undertaken corporately.

Service Heading	Approved Budget 2011/12
Branch Libraries	£5,655,937.44
Mobile Libraries	£997,865.40
Stock Unit	£232,904.28
Local Studies	£112,574.00
Library Administration	£324,077.24
Materials Fund	£2,224,537.00
Total Libraries	£9,547,895.36
Other Services	£331,511.20
Arts	£361,975.32
School Library Service	£14,787.44
Total Library Service	£10,256,169.32
Derbyshire Record Office	£391,319.80
Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site	£168,459.84
Museum Service	£216,447.40
Total Libraries & Heritage Division	£11,032,396.36
Trading Standards Division	£2,335,965.16
Department HQ	£1,559,354.00
Unallocated Efficiency Savings	-£1,450,358.00
Total Net Expenditure	£13,477,357.52

K-WHS CACS Projects	£168,459.84
Branch Libraries	£5,694,273.12
K-SLS Schools Library Service	£14,787.44
K-MOBLIBS Mobile Libraries	£997,865.40
K-LIB-PRIS Prisons	-£38,335.68
K-LIB-MATF Materials Fund	£2,224,537.00
K-LOC-STUD Local Studies	£112,574.00
K-SERV-HDS Service Heads	£324,077.24
K-STOCK-UN Stock Unit	£232,904.28
K-LIB-PROJ Library Projects	£36,855.84
K-LIB-ICT ICT	£117,918.68
K-LIB-GEN Library - General	£176,736.68
K-HQ Headquarters	£1,559,354.00
K-ARTS Arts	£361,975.32
K-TS Trading Standards	£2,335,965.16
K-CNTY-REC County Records	£391,319.80
K-MUSEUMS Museums	£216,447.40
KX55555 Efficiencies	-£1,450,358.00
TOTAL	£13,477,357.52

NB Pay and Price inflation for 2011-12 is £85,870