

To: Planning and Environment - Protective Services Sub-Committee		Subject: Doorstep Selling
From: Director of Planning and Environment		
Date: 5 th October, 2004	Ref: EmcC/	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise the Sub Committee of a formal consultation paper published by the Department of Trade and Industry, which sets out proposals to tackle the problem of doorstep selling.

2. Background

- 2.1 The proposed legislation aims to protect vulnerable householders by restricting activities of doorstep salesmen. The consultation paper which is lodged in the member's library invites a response to 49 specific questions and in summary the main proposals are:

- 1 A ban on cold calling to offer property repairs and maintenance
- 2 An extension of the 7 day cooling off period so as to apply to invited visits
- 3 Introducing a 7 day no work/no payment period for when salesmen call uninvited
- 4 To require cancellation rights to be more prominently displayed in contracts
- 5 To require traders to give more detail on pricing including price lists and written quotes

- 2.2 Clearly the most important of the proposals in terms of reducing doorstep crime and protecting vulnerable householders is a ban on cold calling property repair services.

- 2.3 Whilst North Lanarkshire Council Trading Standards Service welcomes the proposals, in our response we have highlighted that only the proposed ban would have any impact in protecting vulnerable householders as they are least likely to understand the technicalities of cooling off periods and cancellation rights. Such a ban would be straightforward to enforce and would self regulate the property repair and maintenance industry

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Sub Committee note the response of the Trading Standards Service to the DTI consultation particularly in relation to a ban on cold calling to offer property repairs

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