

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT (PROTECTIVE SERVICES SUB COMMITTEE)		Subject: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS – TRADING STANDARDS PLANNED INSPECTIONS
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 5 th October, 2004	Ref: DA/MMacP/002	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the efforts made by the Trading Standards Service to address issues raised as a consequence of consultation with the recipients of planned visits which involve enforcement of legislation.

2. Background

- 2.1 During the period April 2003 to March 2004 a 100% survey of all routine planned enforcement visits made to traders, finalised during this period was selected from visits carried out by the Council's Trading Standards Service.
- 2.2 It was decided to select a sample of all visits for a period of April 2003 to March 2004, which would give an insight into the performance of all the staff involved. This meant that the survey could focus on all inspection work which had been completed during the past year. A total of 370 questionnaires were issued with 166 returned, representing a return of 44.86%.
- 2.3 Of the returned questionnaires a total of four expressed criticism of the service whilst the overwhelming majority were satisfied with the service provided.
- 2.4 Every trader who had registered a negative comment was contacted to establish how the Service could improve its standards.
- 2.5 On two occasions it emerged that the traders concerned, both coincidentally Asian shopkeepers, had misunderstood the rating system and, by allocating a rating of one, had intended to appraise the officer concerned as being first class. Both gentlemen considered the officers as courteous and very helpful.
- 2.6 One trader rated the two categories dealing with the quality of the information provided during the visit and further information provided as low. It transpired that the officer had gone about her work saying very little about what she was doing or why she was doing it. It was explained to the trader that the officer involved was relatively new to enforcement and would have been concentrating on the work in hand. The trader accepted this explanation and the officer, having had several months experience in enforcement, is now more comfortable in her new role.

- 2.7 The final negative report originated following the visit of an officer to a hairdressing establishment. The officer drew the attention of the trader to contraventions of legislation of a technical nature. The trader appears to have taken issue with the fact that the offences were discussed in the salon but did not suggest to the officer that another room could be made available.

During the audit visit by the Team Leader Trading Standards Northern Enforcement and Projects, the salon manager accepted that the information provided was accurate and indeed had taken steps to implement the advice given. She was happy to be offered the assistance of the Department in addressing any future problems.

- 2.8 Background papers detailing the analysis of returned questionnaires is available in the Members Library under Stakeholder Analysis – Trading Standards Planned Inspections.

3. Sustainability Implications

There are no sustainability implications.

4. Proposals/Considerations

- 4.1 That the exercise be repeated in order to build on what is clearly perceived by the users as a service which delivers good value for service users.
- 4.2 In order to attempt to eliminate any future misunderstanding of the scoring system, the layout of the questionnaire be altered to highlight the rating scale used.

5. Corporate Considerations

There are no corporate considerations.

6. Recommendations

That the committee note the contents of the report.

C. Morgan

Ap **David M. Porch**
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
1st September, 2004

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