

11th January 2018**Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR PLACE AND COMMUNITIES.****UPDATE ON KEY TRADING STANDARDS & COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Committee on key Trading Standards and Community Safety matters, to agree the reporting frequency for future reports, and the frequency that progress reports regarding certain key threats are provided to Members.

Information and Advice**Trading Standards:**

2. **Doorstep Crime** – Between July and September 2017 Trading Standards received 35 reports of doorstep crime were received; 7 from the Police, 1 from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the remainder from individuals. Officers have supported 15 vulnerable victims and dealt with two offenders who were arrested and interviewed. This intervention prevented a further £9,000 from being paid to criminals.
3. Trading Standards Officers have given a presentation to Age UK Connect Team who visit and support elderly and vulnerable residents in the North Nottinghamshire and Newark area to increase awareness of doorstep crime and scams and to promote joint working to protect our most vulnerable residents.
4. Officers have also worked with the Alzheimer's Society and raised awareness of scams and doorstep crime with their volunteers and staff. Information is also being distributed via some of their Dementia Cafes that carers and those with dementia attend. Officers are also adapting the Service's Doorstep Crime and Unwanted Post leaflets to make them more suitable for people with learning difficulties and/or cognitive decline.
5. Trading Standards Officers continue to provide target hardening visits to Nottinghamshire residents that have fallen victim to doorstep crime to ensure they have the appropriate support in made. A number of referrals have been made to other agencies and charities that can continue to support the residents.
6. **Mass Marketing Scams** – officers continue to work with other agencies to intervene to protect Nottinghamshire victims of mass marketing scams, identified by lists supplied by the National

Scams Team or via referrals from social care and health colleagues etc. Some examples of our cases:

- An officer worked with Age UK Connect to arrange for a vulnerable visually impaired repeat scam victim to receive 2 hours a week help with their post, bills and shopping from the Adult Deaf and Visual Impairment team.
- After our intervention a deaf scam victim now has a loan call blocker to block unwanted nuisance calls and a more suitable smoke alarm from Nott's Fire and Rescue.
- A care agency reported finding a resident with dementia on the phone when they arrived for a routine visit. Due to our scam awareness raising they recognised it as a scam call and intervened. We are supporting the care worker to fit a call blocker.

7. Trading Standards managers are working with Social Care/Safeguarding managers to develop a Nottinghamshire County Council Financial Abuse and Scams Action Plan. The action plan will aim to:

- Ensure all Safeguarding policies and procedures include financial abuse and scams;
- Raise awareness of scams amongst the public, Councillors, Safeguarding Adults Board, Health & Wellbeing Board and local and regional safeguarding networks;
- Further develop prevention measures to ensure that those residents most at risk from scams don't become victims and
- Further develop and improve a multi-agency approach to identify, support and safeguard victims of scams.

8. The national Friends Against Scams initiative (www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk) will be a key vehicle for scams prevention action under this plan. In Nottinghamshire there are currently 348 "Friends" and 26 "SCAMchampions" registered, since the launch of the initiative in October 2016, and the actions under this plan aim to greatly increase this figure.

9. Under this national initiative (www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/callblocker) free call blockers are available to any resident with dementia who is experiencing unwanted calls. Officers have requested a call blocker via the new scheme for a Nottinghamshire resident and this has resulted in 80% of their incoming calls being blocked.

10. **Illicit Tobacco** –Officers continue to apprehend individuals and businesses that sell and distribute illicit tobacco. During July and August 2017 intelligence was received of individuals selling illicit tobacco from private houses and the following action was taken:-

- In Newark a female was found selling illicit cigarettes and unsafe cigarettes and 5,000 cigarettes were seized with a street value of £2,250.
- In Mansfield a male was found selling counterfeit cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco. 2,900 individual cigarettes and 260g of tobacco were seized with a street value of £2,345.

- In Mansfield a female was found selling illicit cigarettes and unsafe cigarettes and 800 cigarettes were seized with a street value of £360.
11. In all cases the individuals admitted the offences and received a written caution. The seized goods will now be destroyed.
12. Intelligence was also received regarding business premises selling illicit tobacco and cigarettes as follows:-
- 3 separate shops in the Sutton in Ashfield and Beeston areas have closed as a result of our enforcement.
 - A shop in Mansfield has continued to distribute illicit cigarettes and tobacco. 13,600 cigarette sticks and 2.5kg of hand rolling tobacco have been seized with a street value of £6,736. 6 individuals have now been charged with various offences.
 - Following a test purchase from a shop in Worksop, 3 individuals have been charged with various offences relating unsafe and counterfeit cigarettes and tobacco. 5,300 cigarette sticks were seized and 4kg of tobacco with a total street value of £3,976.
 - An investigation continues regarding the seizure of 9,460 individual cigarettes and 400g of tobacco with a street value of £4,417 from another shop in Worksop.
13. Intelligence reports from Crimestoppers have increased with a total of 10 referrals being received for the period between July and September 2017.
14. In October, officers attended a premises within the County, which Nottinghamshire Police had secured. Inside the premises tobacco manufacturing was taking place and 3 tonnes of tobacco leaf, with a street value of £1.2 million, was seized and subsequently handed to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). The investigation continues.
15. **Food Enforcement** – Food safety concerns have been identified at some premises selling illicit tobacco in the Mansfield, Netherfield and Mapperley areas. Our illicit tobacco team conducted joint visits with a food officer to tackle various food safety issues, including out of date food and food incorrectly labelled for allergens. Officers also inspected alcohol in the premises to ensure that none was counterfeit; none was found.
16. Following a routine inspection, officers have been working with a large sandwich manufacturer to ensure the labelling of their products, which are intended for UK supermarkets, is correct along with their internal quality systems.
17. Following an Environmental Health referral, we have been advising a pie manufacturer regarding product labelling requirements. Whilst the food was not intrinsically unsafe the labelling of the products was non-compliant.
18. **Product Safety** – Officers will be conducting two proactive Product Safety projects in the coming months:

- Part Worn Tyres: project will include advice to suppliers of part worn tyres in the county about their legal obligations under product safety legislation. Appropriate communication channels will be used to raise the public's awareness of the importance of tyre safety.
- Second Hand Electrical "White" Goods: project will include advice to second hand electrical goods retailers in the county to advise them of their legal obligations under product safety legislation. The public's awareness of the key issues involved will be raised via appropriate communication channels.

19. **Explosives Programme 2017-18.** Officers conducted their annual inspection programme, to ensure fireworks were being stored and supplied safely in October and November. Intelligence-led activity focussed on higher risk and newly licensed premises. 24 premises across the County were inspected in Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Ashfield and Newark and Sherwood.
20. 5 premises inspected were found to be selling fireworks which were no longer permitted. These were removed from sale and advice given to ensure that only CE marked fireworks were being sold.
21. **Regional Investigations Team – Operation Strut**-the investigation into a Leicestershire based organised criminal gang who fraudulently sold motor vehicles reached a conclusion in November with sentencing at Leicester Crown Court. The gang sold defective and dangerous second hand motor vehicles to consumers, they also bullied and intimidated customers who tried to complain.
22. Three men were sentenced for their involvement in the fraud which netted £80,000. Paul Hanna the main man behind the operation was sentenced to 3.5 years in prison and ordered to pay £69,000 in compensation. This was taken from the cash that was found hidden on his premises. Jignesh Manani received 2 years in prison and Justin John was sentenced to 120 hours of unpaid work. The Judge commended the Regional Investigation Team for the hard work that went into the investigation.
23. **Operation Spinnaker**- Members will recall the investigation into the Wyvern Group, one of the largest and most complex investigations ever carried out. This was an intricate web of over 150 publishing companies that were set up to con businesses into paying for advertising in publications that were effectively non-existent. Johnathon Rivers, the sole controller of the group was jailed for 6 1/2 years for his involvement and ordered to repay £1.2 million from the proceeds of his crime.
24. Rivers was a lifestyle criminal and his personal wealth included property, a holiday home in the Caribbean and a private plane. I am very pleased to report that due to the hard work by the regional investigations team and financial investigators, Rivers recently paid over the £1.2 million pounds stripping him of the assets and money he illegally obtained through criminal activity. This represents one of the largest recoveries following a Trading Standards investigation and again shows that crime doesn't pay.
25. **Legal Update – Hucknall Mini Market** - Sherzad Mohammad of Annesley Road Stores and Hucknall Mini Market, had his case regarding counterfeit and dangerous cigarettes sent to the Crown Court, where he entered guilty pleas. Further offences have since been identified, and his new case was listed for trial for October of 2017.

26. Mr Mohammed pleaded guilty to the charges before the start of the trial and was sentenced on 2nd November. He received a custodial sentence of 13 months, suspended for 2 years and was ordered to carry out 100 hours unpaid work. A proceeds of investigation was also concluded for Mr Mohammed, the court agreed that the benefit from this crime was £20,000 and Mr Mohammed was given an available amount of £700. This is the value of his available assets that he now has to pay to the court.
27. **Outram General Stores, Ashfield** - Four individuals were charged with conspiracy to possess criminal property in the form of illicit cigarettes, following a joint investigation with Nottingham City Council. Following not guilty pleas, a trial was set for June 2017. Before trial, Al Khaldi, and Alain Ali, both pleaded guilty, whilst Hersh Mohammed and Mohammed Ali were both found guilty after the trial. The following sentences were imposed:

	Imprisonment	Unpaid Work
Mr Hersh Mohammed	2 ½ years	120 hours
Mr Alain Ali	12 months (suspended)	120 hours
Mr Khalidi	6 months (suspended)	150 hours
Mohammed Ali	9 months (suspended)	80 hours

28. Mr Hersh Mohammed the main defendant behind the offences was also subject to a Proceeds of Crime investigation, the benefit of his crime was £76,646, the available amount he has been ordered to pay is £700.
29. **Zam Zam, Eastwood** - In January 2017, Mr Sarbest Abdullah of Zam Zam, Eastwood, appeared in Nottingham magistrate's court charged with the supply of dangerous and illicit tobacco and was sentenced in October 2017 to carry out 40 hours unpaid work. This is the first occasion that anyone associated with this particular premise has been prosecuted
30. **Kubus, Mansfield** – In November 2017, four men Fakher Fathulah, Marwan Shaban, Nabaz Ahmadi and Amin Amin appeared at Crown Court charged with conspiracy to supply dangerous and counterfeit cigarettes. Three pleaded guilty before trial whilst the case against the 4th defendant was withdrawn. They are due to be sentenced on the 12th December 2017.
31. **John Paul Allen** – In May, Allen appeared in the Mansfield Magistrates court charged with offences of fraud to the value of £26,400. There is one victim in this case, who the Authority alleges has been defrauded by representations that she needed certain work carrying out on her property. Mr Allen pleaded not guilty, and his case is listed for trial on the 2nd January 2018.

Community Safety

32. **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Communities** – Work is continuing to develop a GRT chapter for inclusion in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This will provide a further evidence base to direct activities designed to reduce any inequalities that disproportionately impact these communities. When completed governance arrangements will need to be established, with partners, to ensure delivery against the recommendations included within this document. Key to this will be ensuring a wide range of voices from these communities are heard in shaping delivery and implementation, and work is progressing to secure this.

33. At a Countywide level there are moves to further organise a coordinated response from partners to unauthorised encampments. Within this work the Council will continue to ensure legal and statutory obligations are met in a timely and effective manner. A policy on the matter is currently being developed and will be brought to this Committee for endorsement in the New Year.
34. Consideration is still being given to how the functions carried out by the vacant Gypsy and Traveller Liaison post can be delivered in the most effective way going forward. All duties assigned to this post are currently being undertaken by a number of officers in the team, offering a more resilient and flexible response.
35. **Community Safety Needs Assessment** – To support the work of the Community Safety Partnerships in localities, and the Safer Nottinghamshire Board, a needs assessment process has been developed, led by the Council. This assessment will provide a firm foundation for the identification of priorities and actions, for improving community safety. The findings of this assessment will now inform the refresh of the Community Safety Agreement.
36. All two-tier local authority areas are required by law to publish a county community safety agreement that identifies:
- The countywide community safety priorities that arise from the strategic assessment and that require escalating to the county level;
 - The ways in which the Responsible Authorities in the county might more effectively implement the priorities set out in the strategic assessment through coordinated or joint working; and
 - How the Responsible Authorities in the county area might otherwise reduce crime and disorder or combat substance misuse through coordinated or joint working.
37. The new Agreement will be implemented from April 2018.
38. **Youth Crime Prevention Education**– Two projects that were initiated, steered and seed funded by Nottinghamshire County Council continue to have a positive impact on the young people they are delivered to.
39. These are the “I Pledge to Keep on Track” youth crime prevention programme aimed at primary schools year five and six and the “Virtual Justice” Project, aimed at year seven and eight. These projects have been successfully evaluated over the last five years demonstrating significant impact on the knowledge, skills and behaviour of the young people attending. They have also been nationally and locally recognised and received awards.
40. The following Aims were previously developed to inform evaluation of both projects by the National Centre for Citizenship and the Law and the Council:
- Improve children’s understanding of the consequences of their actions as citizens;
 - Improve knowledge and understanding of the legal and criminal justice systems;
 - Increase understanding of the law and how to live within it;

- Engage children in active citizenship in their community through Citizenship models of learning and activity;
- Improve children's education attainment by learning inside and outside the classroom; and
- Increase aspirations and social mobility

41. A strength of both projects is that they have been measured against consistent Learning and Social outcomes and have demonstrated impact across all these over a number of years:

42. More specifically the evaluation results show evidence that learning has taken place across five Generic Learning Outcomes in the Arts Council England's adapted 'Inspiring Learning for All' (ILFA) framework. These include: Knowledge and Understanding; Attitudes and Values; Activity, Behaviour and Progression; and Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity. Results also show learning has taken place across three Generic Social Outcomes in the ACE's ILFA framework have been met. These are: Stronger and Safer Communities; Strengthening Public Life; and Health and Well-being.

43. The above aims and learning and social outcomes fit well with the new Strategic Priorities of the Council Plan. To build on this success and take this work forward the Community Safety Team are currently working with a range of partners; including; the National Justice Museum, Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire Crown Court and the Youth Commissioners.

44. The proposed shared vision for the new "Justice Project" is to incorporate the learning from the above projects and develop links between the National Justice Museum and Nottinghamshire Crown Court. This would create opportunities for young people aged 14+ to observe trials and engage in Question and Answer Sessions with the Judges. The new proposal will be presented to the Youth Crime Prevention Advisory Group meeting on the 5th December.

Other Options Considered

45. None

Reasons for Recommendations

46. To provide appropriate progress reports to enable Members to appropriately scrutinise and help steer the work of the Service.

Statutory and Policy Implications

47. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

48. This report contains no additional financial implications for the net budget of the service, with activity reported or that proposed being contained within existing service budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members agree to:

- 1) Receive a follow up report at every second Committee meeting on key Trading Standards and Community Safety Matters, in the same format as the report considered by Committee at this meeting and that this is included in the work programme;
- 2) Receive updates on progress regarding the specific key threats of Illicit Tobacco, Mass Marketing Scams and Doorstep Crime as part of these follow up reports, at a frequency of not less than once every fourth Committee meeting;
- 3) Develop a financial abuse and scams action plan, including options for raising awareness with key stakeholders;
- 4) Receive an update report to scrutinise commercial performance as set out within the CDU process, as part of these reports, at a frequency of not less than once every fourth Committee meeting;
- 5) Officers using appropriate media campaigns to promote key messages regarding the product safety projects regarding part worn tyres and second hand electrical items.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 01/12/2017)

49. The Communities and Place Committee is the appropriate body to consider the contents of the report.

Financial Comments (RWK 04/12/2017)

50. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 'None'

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- 'All'