

ANNUAL UPDATE FROM CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH TRADING STANDARDS SHARED SERVICE

To: Economy and Environment Committee

Meeting Date: 17th October 2019

From: Adrian Chapman, Service Director People and Communities

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To update the Committee in the form of an annual report, on the work being delivered for the County Council by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards Shared Service.

Recommendation: The Committee is invited to comment on any aspect of the service being delivered by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 1st April 2017 Cambridgeshire County Council's Trading Standards Service merged with Peterborough City Council's Trading Standards Service to become 'Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards', overseen by Peterborough City Council's Head of Regulatory Services. This followed a unanimous resolution to approve this merger at the January Committee meeting.
- 1.2 It has been agreed that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards bring an annual update report to this Committee to keep Members informed of its activities, and to provide the opportunity for Members to steer priorities and direction of the service within Cambridgeshire. Appendix 1 contains the annual report.

2. MAIN REPORT

- 2.1 The Shared Service has proved to be a tremendous success to date, delivering the anticipated savings for Cambridgeshire County Council, this being £35,000 in 2018/19, whilst also continuing to build on its national reputation for excellence.
- 2.2 The Service has continued to enhance its national reputation for the delivery of Primary Authority advice services to businesses. In January it was recognised by the Office of Product Safety & Standards (OPSS) the Government department that oversees the Primary Authority Scheme, as one of the national leaders in the field, the Service being a finalist in their 'Regulatory Excellence Awards'. There is now a strong collaboration between Trading Standards, Peterborough's Environmental Health and Peterborough's licensing team providing a streamlined, co-ordinated regulatory advice service for businesses. Increasingly officers are having to go through a competitive interview processes in order to attract some of the largest businesses in the UK as clients. We are keen to continue to grow our client base, and to increase our competitive edge, and as a consequence have developed a brand for this combined Primary Authority advice service 'Regulatory Companion'. The logo can be found in the accompanying appendix.
- 2.3 Our work to support local businesses goes beyond Primary Authority Advice, with the Service making a substantial contribution to the delivery of the Better Business for All agenda across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Our aim is to make business support services, including regulatory support services, easier to navigate; and also to increase our respective knowledge of each other's support services in order that we can more effectively signpost businesses to additional support.
- 2.4 In terms of protecting the vulnerable, the Service brought a major prosecution against a Peterborough furniture company which had preyed on elderly and vulnerable people across the UK. Such was the nature of their crimes, it resulted in 6 prison sentences as well as a successful Proceeds of Crime confiscation order of £350K. The efforts of the Service to protect the vulnerable against crimes such as these has been recognised in its shortlisting for 'Team of the Year' in the prestigious Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) awards.
- 2.5 Clawing back the proceeds of crime is an equitable punitive measure for those convicted ensuring crime does not pay. In many cases it has a greater impact on the lives of those convicted than the substantive sentencing. It is something the Service is dedicated to

pursuing, and the benefit is that it is cost neutral for the Authority due to the percentage share the Authority is awarded in each case. In 2018/19 the Service has invested in the training of two additional officers to undertake these cases, increasing its capacity to take cases both for the Service and for other local Authorities. Successful confiscation orders have already been obtained for South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdon District Council's Fraud teams, and a major case is underway for Peterborough's Housing team.

- 2.6 In terms of the final stages of implementation of the Shared Service, the merger of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's databases has now taken place, being the last major step in cementing the Shared Service. In addition, Peterborough based officers have now adopted Microsoft 365, with Cambridgeshire based officers to follow imminently, which will provide a shared network area for the Service.
- 2.7 Trading Standards continues to provide good value for money, and has been successful in obtaining grant funding as well as selling services to bring in additional revenue.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Continuing to invest in services that are vital to a thriving economy

Section 1 of the annual report highlights Service contributions towards corporate priorities.

3.2 Nurturing health communities

Section 2 of the annual report highlights Service contributions towards corporate priorities.

3.3 Keeping vulnerable people safe

Section 3 of the annual report highlights Service contributions towards corporate priorities.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. Contractual implications were considered before the implementation of the Shared Service. The annual report does not result in any new implications.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. Legal implications and risks were considered before the implementation of the Shared Service. The annual report does not result in any new implications. Risks associated with pursuing complex legal cases through the court system are considered as and when such cases arise, and where necessary appropriate mitigation measures will be taken, such as securing Counsels advice.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. Investigatory outcomes from the work of the Service are promoted to local and national media by the Councils Communications Team, both to deter criminal activity as well as help inform the public of potential risk and harm.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category, the work of the Service does however help promote public health outcomes.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus De Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Elsa Evans
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Eleanor Bell
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Iain Green
Source Documents	Location
n/a	