



**Trading Standards Annual Report  
2019-2020**

## **1. Supporting and maintaining confidence in the economy**

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### **1.1 Primary Authority & Business Advice – helping businesses to get things right**

The Service has always been a leader in positive regulation, recognising that in most cases businesses simply need advice to bring them into compliance – most do not willingly break the law. The law can be complex and for many years now the Service have offered a business advice service, helping businesses to interpret the law and offering advice on how to put this into practice.

The ‘Primary Authority’ initiative introduced by Government enhanced this approach, allowing businesses to enter a formal partnership with a local authority and thereafter seek regulatory advice direct from that Authority. This has marked a key change in regulation, aligning businesses and regulators as partners and working together to ensure ongoing compliance within the business. Advice is sought early on before decisions are made, allowing the business to make major commercial investments in the knowledge that they will be fully compliant and protected from challenge by other Authorities.

The Service is recognised by Government as a national lead in the provision of Primary Authority, with our team leader regularly being asked to speak at events held by the Office of Product and Safety Standards (OPSS) as well as our business advisers sitting on many of the national sector panels to assist the OPSS with policy development. In June last year the Service were a finalist in the national OPSS ‘Regulatory Excellence Awards’ for our leading work in this field and the Chief Executive of the OPSS wrote to our own Chief Executive and Council Leader to commend our work.

The Service have enhanced our offering to business further by partnering with Peterborough City Council’s environmental health and licensing teams to create a single point of regulatory advice and Primary Authority services. A brand has been developed for this collaboration – Regulatory Companion – to enable us to compete with other Authorities and continue to win business, giving a fresh, commercially minded image, breaking away from the more traditional perception of a regulator.

The Service has over 100 clients, including Aldi, B&M Home Stores, John West, Hotel Chocolat and British Sugar as well as small local businesses who recognise the benefits of getting up front advice. In 2019/20 the Service provided 1400 hours of Primary Authority advice.

It is worth noting this work is charged on a cost recovery basis and is fully self-funding.

#### **Covid-19 – advising and supporting businesses through the unprecedented challenges**

Enforcement powers for the business closure regulations were shared jointly between ourselves and environmental health departments at District level. It was agreed that Trading Standards would lead on advising businesses who were unsure

if the regulations required them to close, and environmental health would be responsible for enforcement. There were a number of grey areas which caused confusion for businesses. Advice was given to 266 businesses free of charge during this time, clarifying for them whether they could continue to operate and if so, how to do so safely.

In addition advice was provided to a wide range of businesses who were facing new compliance challenges as a result of Covid-19 e.g. break-down in usual supply chains affecting the labelling of their products, and also those who were looking to diversify as a result of Covid-19 for example importing face masks. Comprehensive FAQs were provided on our webpages to help businesses to address the many compliance challenges they were facing.

## **1.2 Better Business for All agenda**

The Cambridgeshire 'Better Business for All' (BBFA) collaboration, incorporating trading standards, environmental health from all 5 district councils as well as Peterborough, Combined Authority Growth Hub and the fire service, strives to ensure our regulatory approach supports growth within the County, and has links with a number of leading business organisations including Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Business & IP Centre and the Institute of Directors.

Early work streams have included a large networking event, enabling regulators and other business advice and support organisations to get a greater understanding of each other's services, thereby enabling us to provide more holistic support through more effective signposting. A series of short videos have been created aimed at start-up businesses, businesses looking to grow and large established businesses to make them aware of the array of support available to them. In addition 3 animations have been created; one for trading standards, one for environmental health and one for the fire service. These animations explain what is required of a business and where to go for further advice. The group are currently looking at the development of three projects, one of which falls within our remit as it looks to tackle allergens compliance issues through training provision. All of these work streams have been funded by the OPSS.

One of our own aspirations is that, through this group, we will be able to increase business awareness of our advice services, and over time change our image so that they see Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards as an approachable regulator, there to help them get things right at the outset.

### **Covid-19 and our role in supporting businesses**

Many food premises have struggled immensely during Covid-19 and this needs to be recognised in the way these premises are regulated in the forthcoming months. From August the Food Standards Agency are expecting our regulatory work to continue in this field, but in most cases the business will be initially assessed remotely, and only visited if those discussions give us cause for concern.

Over the next couple of months a digital information packs will be developed for new and diversifying food businesses, providing them with easy to follow advice on the Food Standards (Trading Standards) and Food Hygiene (environmental health) requirements for their business. An online self-assessment will also be developed for them so that they can check their own compliance, giving them that confidence that they are doing things right ahead of any call or inspection by a regulator. By providing them with information and tools up front together with the offer of ongoing advice and support this should assist them to grow their business in confidence.

### **1.3 Brexit – providing clarity and support for local businesses**

The impact of Brexit is a concern for businesses nationwide, regulators have an important role in providing clarity for businesses on what it means for them in terms of their compliance.

In November, which felt like the peak of the turmoil and uncertainty for businesses, the Service participated in the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) "Get Ready for Brexit" day held in Cambridge. Officers from Trading Standards teamed up with colleagues from the Growth Hub, and worked alongside representatives from BEIS, to offer support and advice throughout the day. In addition supporting literature and links to online information were provided to allow delegates to research further and if necessary seek more bespoke advice from our Regulatory Companion team.

In terms of the area the Service regulates, for most elements there is a transition period giving businesses a lead in time for any changes. On those areas requiring immediate change on 1<sup>st</sup> January (generally related to products of animal origin and 'importer' details) the Service have already dealt with a number of enquiries from businesses and expect these enquiries to increase in number as the autumn approaches. The Service are expecting a raft of guidance to be issued in the forthcoming months and will be linking to this from our webpages.

### **1.4 Protecting legitimate businesses**

The importance of a level playing field for business should not be underestimated, and where businesses are deliberately thwarting the rules, a hard line is taken.

In July the Service successfully prosecuted a major car dealer in Peterborough for selling clocked cars, with the Director receiving a suspended prison sentence and a costs order of £6500, and the company receiving a fine of £4000 and costs order of £10,000.

In December a counterfeiter was ordered by the Courts to pay back the proceeds of her crimes following her conviction for selling counterfeit fashion goods at the Bourn Bank holiday market in 2016. Being unable to satisfy the order at the time, Trading Standards Financial Investigators placed an order on a property she owned in the north west of England. This has now been sold, and, in line with the Court order, she has had to put the sale proceeds towards satisfying the court order, amounting to

£31,571. Trading Standards will receive one third of the order, which the Service is required to re-invest in further crime detection/prevention work.

In a similar counterfeiting case, an individual was convicted of possessing and selling counterfeit goods and, again, confiscation proceedings were commenced by Trading Standards Financial Investigators. The Courts ordered him to pay £95,000 representing the proceeds of his crimes. The equity value in the Peterborough property owned by the defendant should have been used to pay his order in full but he chose not to pay it. Following a series of enforcement hearings at the regional confiscation court the Magistrates activated the default term of imprisonment, handing down a 459 day term of imprisonment. After serving this sentence this individual will still owe the ordered sum of £95,000.

The Service also have two large scale counterfeiting cases, one illicit tobacco case and five rogue trader/fraud/money laundering cases in the court system at present, awaiting the lifting of the Coronavirus restrictions in order that the court process can proceed.

### **Covid -19: tackling the rogues taking advantage of the pandemic**

Officers shut down the website of a sham business offering 'Covid home testing kits' in the first few weeks of the disease outbreak at a time when no approved kits were available to the public. Officer intervention also led to another website being shut down that had mirrored the genuine website of a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) business in Cambridge.

## **1.5 Ensuring accuracy in the application of weights and measures**

Weighbridges play an important role in many trades that buy or sell produce by weight. If incorrect, they can lead to significant financial losses over time. They are also used by the public, and by the police for road traffic enforcement purposes. In June Trading Standards tested all public weighbridges and 7 trade weighbridges across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Rutland to check that they were within permitted limits of error.

Over one fifth of the weighbridges were found to be outside permitted tolerances. Additional problems with markings and sightlines were also identified, as well as 3 disqualifications and 3 official notices, a further 4 weighbridges were subject to advisory notices for minor faults.

## **1.6 Animal disease control: protecting British farming and the reputation of British exports**

Members will, without doubt, remember the devastating impact of Foot & Mouth disease in 2001 on our rural economies and the impact this had on the reputation of British meat exports at that time. Trading Standards is a primary responder for all notifiable animal diseases including Swine Fever, Foot & Mouth, Avian Influenza,

Rabies and African Horse Sickness. The Service is responsible for delivering the local response in terms of containing the disease and eradicating it. To this end the Service have a comprehensive Animal Disease Contingency Plan, based on the national template, covering Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Rutland, with clear lines of communication between the senior management structures of each Local Authority as well as the respective Local Resilience Forums. The plan is tested every three years with a very successful multi-Authority exercise held in November last year based on Foot & Mouth disease.

### **1.7 Upholding animal welfare standards across Cambridgeshire's farms**

Following a successful conviction in 2017 and a number of interventions subsequently, the Service successfully prosecuted a farmer in Cambridgeshire for a second time for animal welfare and animal by-products offences. His pigs were found to have no dry-laying areas nor sufficient drinking water, and he had failed to dispose of dead pigs as he should have done, carrying a risk of disease and jeopardising the health of the remaining stock. Peterborough Magistrates Court issued a suspended prison sentence, disqualified him for keeping livestock for life and awarded the Service £5000 in costs. He has lodged an appeal which is waiting to be heard.

## **2. Protecting health and wellbeing**

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Trading Standards has a statutory duty to enforce almost 200 pieces of legislation, and a large number of these statutes are there to protect the health and wellbeing of consumers. Below are a number of examples of work carried out last year that demonstrate the breadth of these interventions which help to keep residents safe on a daily basis.

### **Covid-19: cracking down on non-compliant PPE**

Non-compliant PPE has become widespread during the pandemic and the Service have proactively been searching online for local companies selling products to check the compliance of their products, and providing them with advice and guidance or referring products of concern to the Health & Safety Executive for further investigation where appropriate.

To help care homes and businesses identify genuine, compliant PPE the Service also published guidance on our webpages, giving them step by step instructions on what to look for.

### **Covid-19: checking the compliance of PPE being sourced by CCC for staff**

Although technically the Health & Safety Executive leads on the safety of PPE supplied for use in a business environment, Trading Standards was able to build on its existing product safety expertise and rapidly up-skill in the field of PPE. With this they were able to work alongside the County Council's PPE procurement team,

vetting all products before purchase as well as on delivery to check compliance with the standards, ensuring those staff who remained operational at the height of Covid-19 were given the expected level of protection from their PPE. At a time when non-compliant PPE was widespread, this role was vital.

## **2.1 Protecting consumers from unsafe products**

Product safety complaints have been increasing at a steady rate over the last 18 months, with the ports increasingly referring matters of concern to us. Products are usually signed over to the Port for destruction and the business advised by us of their obligations as importers. Last year the majority related to unsafe electrical products and travel adapters, posing a risk of electrocution and fire. As an example of a more unusual case, officers were also notified of a local business selling slime which contained Borax – a chemical that can in the short term cause diarrhoea, vomiting and cramps and long term potentially infertility. 1275 products were seized but the business closed down, making further investigation impossible.

Safety continues to be a priority of the Service and a number of safety projects were carried out a number of safety projects in 2019/20 including looking at electrical items being sold in charity shops to check they had been appropriately safety tested; a nursery and baby equipment safety project looking at items such as high chairs and booster seats which is ongoing, and a second hand tyre safety project, further details of which are below.

The increase in safety complaints is mirrored nationally and is believed to link to the fact that more and more people are setting up businesses from home, importing goods from abroad and selling them directly from online platforms, unaware of the extensive safety legislation they must comply with.

### **Covid-19 – dealing with the increase in product safety issues**

During Covid-19 there has been a steep increase in product safety complaints, which is likely due to the fact that more people are buying from online retailers and greater inspection levels at Ports. Unsafe products have included soft toys, trampolines, teepee tents and electric fires. It is anticipated these issues continuing long term as remote purchasing habits become engrained.

## **2.2 Protecting road users from unsafe tyres**

Latest government figures show there were 17 people killed and 719 road casualties – nearly two a day – in reported accidents in the UK in 2017 where illegal, defective or under-inflated tyres were a contributory factor. With 5 million part worn tyres being sold in the UK each year, it is an industry that needs to be monitored carefully. With the use of regional funding, Trading Standards provided written guidance to all suppliers in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Rutland, and subsequently test purchased 8 tyres. It was found that 5 out of 8 were unfit for use on the road. 3 tyres had started to deteriorate due to age, one being 17 years old. Faults included deep cracks in the sidewall allowing a small part of the reinforcing cord to be exposed, a



patch used outside the repairable area of a tyre, and a screw in the shoulder area which had penetrated the tyre deep enough to expose the steel reinforcing. Warnings were issued where concerns were found and we will be looking to re-visit this project in the near future to ensure the issues have been addressed long term.

### **2.3 Protecting consumers from allergens in food**

Trading Standards has regulatory responsibilities from farm to fork, ensuring that the food we ultimately consume is safe, and each year a comprehensive inspection regimes is undertaken to ensure the standards are upheld. In terms of our food work, Allergens have recently come to the fore, driven by successive tragedies. In May the Service successfully prosecuted Arundel Hotel in Cambridge following a complaint from a customer who had ordered a meal described as 'nut free' but which was found to contain nuts - an error which could have proved fatal. The Service subsequently carried out a sampling programme to test allergen compliance at other food establishments. It found that 26% of foods described as 'free from' certain allergens did in fact contain the specified allergens. Many businesses had good systems but some failed to have adequate controls to ensure they could give customers the information they required about allergens. Most failures were found with burgers, chicken nuggets and kebab meat.

Allergens remains a priority for the Service for this year and will be rolling out a more comprehensive programme of work to look at this in more depth, coupled with the dissemination of advice and guidance.

### **2.4 Protecting spectators at major sporting venues**

After an internal appointment, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards have taken the lead role for public safety at sports grounds for Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, building on its many years of experience in an inspection/liaison role. Comprehensive safety requirements and inspection regimes were introduced following the Hillsborough tragedy. The Authority is responsible for the issuing of Safety Certificates to the football league grounds and to any sports grounds with covered stands that hold 500 or more, without which the grounds cannot legally open. Safety at these grounds is assessed through a combination of periodic inspections at the sports grounds as well as the Chiring of the multi-agency Safety Advisory Groups where the police (resilience and operational), fire service (resilience and operational), ambulance, building control, environmental health, Highways and venue representatives come together to discuss the necessary safety requirements have been met and offer advice to the Authority on their specialist areas.

Of course, these days sports grounds are diversifying with many now using the grounds as live music venues bringing with it additional challenges in terms of spectator safety. For such events the Authority will need to issue a Special Safety Certificate, authorising the event to go ahead, after careful consideration of all the proposed safety measures. Thousands of people attend these events and the safety of those spectators is paramount.



## **Covid-19 – ensuring public safety is optimized in the modified use of sports grounds**

As sports ground have begun to lift restrictions and allow limited numbers of people into the stands, officers have been working closely with them to ensure the safety of those entering the ground is still upheld and issuing new Safety Certificates to reflect the limited use of such stands. For instance, at horse racing tracks some of the interior of the stands have been converted into jockey changing rooms, and owners have more recently been able to attend for an allotted amount of time. At the time of writing, the football grounds remain closed to spectators, but all the usual 'back office' safety measures are being worked through with them, such as the electrical safety certification and gas safety certification. The first draft of the Government advice on the return of spectators has been issued. A new version of the Safety Certificate (once grounds are permitted to open to spectators again), will be issued and will be continually reviewed taking into account the latest Government advice.

## **2.5 Tackling Illicit and unsafe tobacco**

Smoking, of course, has serious health implications for the consumer, but illicit cigarettes pose an additional safety risk to users and the wider public as many of them don't self-extinguish as is the requirement for legitimate cigarettes, leading to a risk of house fires. Aside from the health and public safety risks these crimes pose, annual national losses resulting from illicit tobacco are estimated to be in the region of £2.4bn so these crimes also have a significant impact on the countries fiscal revenue.

Two multi-agency days of action were funded by Public Health where trading standards, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Fenland District Council, the fire service and the police simultaneously entered and searched a number of premises linked to these crimes, seizing 37,000 cigarettes and 7.5kg of hand rolling tobacco. Subsequently one warrant was executed resulting in a large seizure of illicit cigarettes, a license review was carried out resulting in a warning from the Licensing Committee, and 6 investigations commenced, one of which is currently awaiting trial.

The crimes are invariably linked to organised crime gangs, and what is increasingly finding is that these suppliers are only keeping small amounts of stock at their premises with larger stocks stored elsewhere to minimise losses in the case of raids. It appears fines are low and are not acting as an effective deterrent. The Service are looking to develop a new approach to tackling these crimes, working more closely with a broader range of partners - the police, environmental health, housing, licensing, fire service, waste (trade waste) and HMRC – so that we can share Intelligence, target those premises posing the greatest risk, and have a greater impact through combined enforcement and disruption activities

## **2.6 Tackling the sale of tobacco and alcohol to young people**

Public Health also provided funding to carry out some underage test purchasing work in Cambridgeshire. Officers took underage volunteers to shops in Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire, 24 in total, and unfortunately there was a 46% failure rate. These businesses received a formal letter advising them of the sale, the applicable offences and reminding them of their legal obligations. Their details have been added to our intelligence database for future monitoring.

## **2.7 Keeping the UK Rabies-free**

Trading Standards are responsible for enforcing animal disease prevention and control measures. One of these diseases is Rabies. Illegal importation of cats and dogs to the UK continues to be a significant threat to our 'Rabies-Free' status, and an issue that Trading Standards Authorities across the UK regularly have to tackle, both in terms of illegal importers who mislead the public into buying pets they think were bred in the UK, and also in terms of individuals who go to visit family elsewhere in Europe and bring a pet back with them.

Trading Standards has developed an effective alert mechanism whereby vets can alert officers of any illegal import suspicions. The animals in question are seized by Trading Standards Officers and quarantined until the presence of Rabies and other diseases can be ruled out.

In November officers detained a French bulldog puppy from a property in Ramsey and placed it in quarantine. The puppy had been illegally imported into the UK from Poland under a false passport and presented a rabies risk due to invalid vaccinations.

Puppies brought in from EU countries must be vaccinated against rabies and at least 15 weeks old. The practice of illegally importing animals not only increases the risk of spreading disease to the UK, but it also raises serious welfare concerns for the animals, and in many instances results in additional quarantine costs for the unsuspecting purchaser.

## **3. Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

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### **3.1 Tackling rogue traders that prey on the elderly**

This continues to be a high priority for the service. These gangs deliberately prey on the vulnerable, and once a victim has been scammed, the rogue trader invariably visits them time and time again, trying to illicit further money from them. They also share the details of victims with acquaintances who will also then target a victim. Tragically there are cases where victims have lost their life savings to these criminals, and the mental harm can be more damaging still.

Below are two examples of successful convictions of rogue traders last year;

The first came to the attention of Trading Standards following a complaint from an elderly, vulnerable client. Subsequent investigations uncovered many more victims, none of whom had had the confidence to challenge him or contact the Authorities. Their losses were extensive, as was the damage he had done to their mental wellbeing. After a complex investigation, Trading Standards successfully prosecuted him and at his sentencing on 3 February 2020 at Cambridge Crown Court, the Judge, HHJ Cooper, made the following statements:

**“ You have to be sentenced for 3 offences all arising out of your work as a builder and decorator, especially for elderly people living alone. You knew full well that they were vulnerable people. As you admit by your basis, you accept relentless overcharging of a number of clients over a significant period, often providing good work and work of a high standard, but nevertheless work did not justify the amount that you were charging to your clients.**

**The culpability is at the highest level because of the abuse of power and the confusion that you could exploit. It took place over a sustained period, it amounted to a course of conduct, and there were a large number of them.**

**Fraudulent trading is something which affects the whole community, not just the individual victims. It has an impact on all traders and all consumers because it diminishes confidence that members of the public are entitled to have in those whom they contract with. I take an extremely serious view of your offending.**

**”**

The defendant, who was from Chesterton, was sentenced to two years imprisonment, suspended for two years, ordered to carry out 200 hours of unpaid work, and ordered to pay £35,000 in compensation and £10,000 costs to be paid within 2 years.

The second was a trader from Essex was ordered to pay £21,993.61 compensation after pleading guilty to money laundering offences. Officers were alerted to the criminal activity after a Cambridgeshire victim came forward. A financial investigation followed which uncovered a series of rogue trader incidents across Cambridgeshire, Essex and North London with victims being almost £54,000 out of pocket after being approached on their doorsteps with offers of gardening or building work that were unnecessary, incomplete or grossly over-priced.

### **Covid-19 – addressing the increasing numbers of rogue trader cases**

Once lockdown was lifted there was a fairly steep increase in the number of rogue trader incidents being reported to ourselves and the police. Rogue traders are notorious for be-friending elderly, lonely people to win their trust, and of course the lockdown had compounded the sense of loneliness for many elderly residents. Our best means of protecting our residents is through education around the tell-tale signs and who to report suspicious callers to, and reassurance that anything they share will be kept in the strictest confidence. As a result a communications campaign has commenced, this comprising of a series of ongoing messages that will be pushed out through our media teams and the Friends Against Scams Partnership. These crimes are hugely under-reported and residents must be given the information they

need to be able to turn suspicious callers away at the door, and the confidence to report the matter if they have not been able to do this.

### **3.2 Supporting the vulnerable through redeployment during Covid-19**

Three officers were redeployed to other roles to assist the Authority in delivering services to the vulnerable. One officer was redeployed to Adult Social Care and provided care to a range of elderly and vulnerable people living in Cambridge; another was redeployed to work in one of two hotels set up in Peterborough to house the homeless; and the third was redeployed to work at the Countywide Coordination Hub, dealing with an enormous range of enquiries from members of the public. It is fair to say these experiences have had a tremendous impact on them, emotionally but also positively through having a sense of having helped people in their time of need.

## **4. Value for money**

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For a number of years the Service has been proactive in generating revenue to offset the cost of the Service. Initially this was through Primary Authority which last year generated £110,000 and offsets the cost of our business advisers, making our business advice services cost neutral. Our proceeds of crime work also generates sufficient asset recovery that it is entirely self-financing.

In addition the Service strives to secure grant money to subsidise the cost of our activities. Public Health provided £25,000 in 2019/20 to fund the work on illicit tobacco and underage sales. Each year funding in the region of £12,000 is secured from Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs to deliver a certain number of feed inspections, and additional funding is available this year from National Trading Standards to trial a new remote system of feed inspections which the Service will also be looking to participate in. Funding secured from the OPSS is used to carry out product safety testing. Funding assistance on major prosecutions can be applied for from the Tri-Regional Tasking Group. Furthermore the Service have managed to secure successive grants from the OPSS via the Better Business For All collaboration, enabling us to drive forward innovation without cost to the Authority.

## **5. Challenges for the forthcoming year**

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### **5.1 Recruitment and training**

In 10 years the Service will have lost a quarter of our team to retirement. The issue is compounded by the increasing shortage of officers available to recruit which has made recruitment very difficult in the last couple of years. The picture is mirrored across the Trading Standards profession as a whole, as well as the environmental health profession. As a result the Service are in the process of designing a comprehensive succession planning strategy to upskill those within the team in readiness for them stepping up to these senior roles in the future. Last year one apprentice and one

trainee were recruited in place of people who had left the service, and the Service are also hoping to be able to recruit an additional apprentice this year with the money saved through merging a management post, with a view to 'growing our own' experts as opposed to relying on external recruitment.

## 5.2 Legal budget

Our legal budget continues to be a challenge as it has been for many years. It comes down to the unpredictability of cases, with some defendants pleading guilty early on making legal action relatively cheap, whilst others go to trial for weeks at a time. As mentioned above, for major cases of regional interest where the costs of trial may otherwise be prohibitive, contributory funding can be bid for from the Tri-Regional Tasking Group, but the majority of cases must be funded within the existing budget.

## 5.3 Reaching SME's with our business advice services

As explained above, the Service offer comprehensive advice services to businesses of all sizes, both Primary Authority (official, published advice which is difficult for other Authorities to challenge) and chargeable business advice charged on a cost recovery basis. The majority of the users of our business advice services are large companies, drawn by the protection afforded by Primary Authority. The Service are keen to reach small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) with our advice services as early advice can help them get off on the right footing and from there grow confidence in their compliance. A recent example of the positive input the Service can have is the work one of our business advisers has done with a consultant surgeon who designed a product to prevent finger crush injuries from household doors. The design has won them several national awards including the Design Council Spark finalist and awardee for the Best British product invention of 2018. Trading Standards supported the commercialisation of the product with advice on relevant legislation, safety standards and marketing materials. Certainly one of our aspirations in terms our work with the BBFA is that it will really drive this forward and position us alongside other advice providers for that sector as a trusted, valuable source of advice

## 6. Performance

### 6.1 Performance against target response times

Details	Target/Response	2018/19	2019/20
Request for information under the Freedom of Information Act	20 business days	100%	100%
Service Requests from businesses and other external organisations	First response within 5 business days	96%	93%
Consumer complaints about businesses	First response within 5 business days	99%	97%
Safety complaints involving serious injury or damage	First response within 24hrs from notification received and acknowledged by PCC.	100%	100%

Ongoing Doorstep crime	First response within 24hrs from notification received and acknowledged by PCC.	100%	100%
Livestock welfare issue	First response within 24hrs from notification received and acknowledged by PCC.	100%	100%
Illegal landing	First response within 24hrs from notification received and acknowledged by PCC.	100%	100%
Statutory returns	All statutory returns to meet statutory time periods or arrangements as agreed	100%	100%
Food Standards inspections/interventions	Completion of 100% of inspections detailed for a planned inspection within the FSA Food Plan	100%	100%
Feed Standards	Completion of 100% of inspections detailed for a planned inspection with the FSA Feed Plan	100%	100%

## 6.2 Performance against benchmarks

### 6.2.1 Rogue trading

Number of rogue trader reports/enquiries received and responded to in Cambridgeshire, e.g. installation of memo cam, investigation, prosecution, referral, disruption of criminal activity:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Consumer complaints/reports responded to	14	14	14	20
Business complaints/ requests for service responded to	37	33	20	24

Number of rogue trader interventions leading to a reduction in the amount of money lost by the consumer:

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
7 (£20,526)	12 (£56,670)	13 (£94,993)	10 (£117,702)*

\*combination of early interventions which stopped the consumer paying in the first place, or the recovery of compensation for them during trial

### 6.2.2 Other interventions

The Service operates a graduated enforcement policy, and as a result, in most cases of non-compliance business advice is the preferred method of bringing a business back into compliance. In some cases, warnings or notices may be required, but in



general prosecution is a last resort, used mostly to address deliberate criminal conduct such as rogue trading and counterfeiting.

As a result, the table below sets out the full list of interventions made by the service in 2019/20 in addition to commencing an investigation/prosecution.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Investigations	13	10
Business advice given	147	161
Food written warning	42	50
Feed written warning	6	6
Fair Trading written warning	8	9
Animal Health Improvement Notice	2	3

## **7. Conclusion**

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As highlighted throughout the report, Trading Standards has an impact at so many levels within the business sector – advising businesses on compliance to give them the confidence to grow; helping them adapt in times of turmoil such as Brexit and Coronavirus; and stamping out the rogues to ensure a level playing field for hard working, law abiding businesses. Trading Standards also plays an important role in protecting our vital rural economies, continually monitoring animal disease compliance measures and maintaining a disease contingency plan to help us to quickly suppress a disease if it were to arise.

Not only does the work of Trading Standards assist businesses and the economy there is also an impact at a consumer level, adopting a zero tolerance approach to the rogue traders who prey on our vulnerable residents, as well as ensuring our residents are protected from unsafe products coming on to the consumer market; addressing the allergens issues head on through enforcement and market surveillance ensuring those with food allergies are adequately protected when they consume food away from their homes; ensuring those that enter sports grounds in such large number to enjoy all the entertainment that offers are kept safe at all times; and that our younger residents don't suffer the life-long health impacts that can follow from underage smoking addiction and alcohol consumption through our work to enforce age restricted sales.

Across all of these functions Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards are proactive in ensuring the Service deliver excellent value for money and high levels of performance and customer satisfaction.



**Annex 1: Brand development for 'Regulatory Companion'**

