

## **Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards and Public Protection Service Update**

### Economic Crime – The City of London Trading Standards Service working in partnership

- The City of London Trading Standards Service is continuing with two large investigations; Operation Addams and Operation Curie with the assistance of the City of London Police, the Metropolitan Police and the Tri-Regional Scambusters Team; a third investigation, Operation Wade still under review.
- The investigations are into the fraudulent selling of alternative investment commodities such as diamonds, gold, wine and carbon credits. There are still over 500 victims involved and more than £1 million in consumer detriment, but the teams now have more than enough statements and evidence to take this forward to prosecution.
- Following arrests in Essex made in connection with Operation Addams (with assistance from the City of London Police and Essex Police), all seized evidence and recordings of interviews under PACE caution are currently being analysed and may result in further follow up actions in the New Year.
- Operation Rosa, a proactive initiative targeting criminality associated with Mail Forwarding Businesses across Greater London has now ceased, as no further funding was made available by the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB). However the NTSB has convened a special meeting in January to discuss most appropriate way forward to deal with the criminality associated with Mail Forwarding Businesses nationally.
- The City's Trading Standards Service is continuing to take part in Operation Broadway, a joint operation with the City of London Police, the Metropolitan Police, National Fraud Intelligence Bureau, the Financial Control Authority and HM Revenue and Customs.
- This operation is addressing the problem of "boiler rooms" that perpetrate these frauds and which are based at serviced and virtual offices across within the City of London. The operation is now being rolled out into other areas, with a pilot being conducted in the London Borough of Camden. The operation continues to be successful to date, and a full report is being submitted to the forthcoming Port Health & Environmental Services and Police Committees.

### Street Trading

- No further Street trading licences have been issued for temporary trading for New Year's Eve.
- Currently there is very limited street trading activity in City, mainly ad hoc ice cream sales on London Bridge to facilitate swift get away for the illegal trader, and occasional nut sellers on the south side London Bridge/Millennium Bridge.
- A second operation was carried out with City of London Police to identify and seize two nut sellers' stalls operating near Millennium Bridge on Sunday 30 November.
- Both stalls were returned the following week following written undertakings being given by the traders not to operate in the City, which will be cited in any subsequent prosecutions should they re-appear.

### Late Night Levy

- The Levy came into effect on 1 October 2014. 70% of levy goes to City of London Police for activities involving improving the impact of Licensing on the night time economy, and 30% to the City Corporation.
- As a result of the lower level of applications for minor variations to avoid the levy hours (and the numbers achieving the Safety Thirst Award, see below, to achieve a 30% reduction in levy) there has been an increase of approximately 30% in the funding available to City Police and the City for dealing with the Night Time Economy raised from the Levy in the first two months of operation.
- A report to Licensing Committee has been requested after six months of operation on 6 May 2015, and accounts will be the subject of public report after a year - October 2015.

### Safety Thirst

- It was agreed that 30% discount to late night levy would be given to applicants to the scheme who achieved membership of this year's Safety Thirst Award.
- 29 awards were made on 8 October, of which 25 are eligible for the Levy discount. The majority of these premises applied in order to try and achieve the reduction. Of the additional 26 late applications a maximum of five are expected to satisfy the criteria for the award. Most have indicated they will apply again after the Christmas period when they have more time to prepare.
- Following a review of the scheme further improvements are to be incorporated prior to seeking applicants for the 2015, which will commence in February. These include specific sections for different sectors, e.g. pubs, hotels and restaurants.

### Noise Service

- The Pollution Team dealt with 297 noise complaints between August and November of which 92.3% were resolved. In addition, they also assessed and commented on 342 Planning, Licensing and construction works applications and 276 applications for variations of work outside the normal working hours.
- The Out of Hours Service dealt with 30 complaints in November and response (visit) times were within the target performance indicator of 60 minutes in 95.2% of cases, and often only 30 minutes.
- Out of Hours service training, through monthly case reviews continued for Street Environment Officers (SEOs) from the Department for the Built Environment (DBE) who have provided first response for the City noise and other environmental concerns outside usual office hours since April 2014.
- The Safer City Partnership will facilitate the City's response to the new 'Community Trigger' under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act which can be sought by individuals affected by repeated incidents, and the Pollution Team will be represented on the panel considering case reviews as they arise.

- Further training for Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and SEOs has been arranged for 3 February 2015 to update practice and procedures for noise nuisance activities.

#### Night Time Economy

- A letter was sent to the Town Clerk, and Members have been involved regarding various licensed premises in Minorities and dispersal of their patrons. This was particularly in respect of the impact of temporary street works preventing through traffic, and the consequent noise/disruption from cabs at closing times of the establishments. Monitoring of activity on Saturday nights has been undertaken by EHOs, SEOs and Civil Enforcement Officers from DBE, and more visible policing has been instigated to assess and control matters. Visits have been paid to management of venues to ensure they have suitable dispersal policies and that their staff are actively enforcing them.

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