

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013-2014

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item No. 3

10th March 2014

**REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR,
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

***Collaborative Delivery Arrangements
for Trading Standards in the Cwm Taf
Region – Progress Report***

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide Members with a progress report on the collaborative delivery arrangements for Trading Standards Service across the Cwm Taf Region.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Members:-

- Note the content of this report.
- Scrutinise and comment on the information provided.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Trading Standards provide a varied range of services which broadly fall under five core areas: metrology (weights & measures), food & agricultural standards, fair trading, product safety and consumer advice.

3.2 On 8th April 2013, the Service Director, Public Health & Protection informed Members of this committee that Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils had agreed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enable the collaborative delivery of Trading Standards Services across the Cwm Taf Region. The MOU was developed and agreed as part of the delivery of the Welsh Government and Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Compact Agreement concerning regional collaboration.

3.3 Members of this committee requested a further report on the outcomes delivered through the collaborative arrangements. This report presents Members with a summary of the work delivered to date, the outcomes of the collaborative arrangements and includes some specific examples of joint projects delivered.

4.0 PLANNED COLLABORATIVE WORK

4.2 In advance of the implementation of the MOU on 1st April 2013, the following opportunities for collaborative work were identified.

- Joint management and governance arrangements will be put in place.
- A single Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan would be produced for the Cwm Taf region.
- A joint work programme of proactive market surveillance will be developed and delivered, covering product safety, feed and farm enforcement, sales of age restricted products including alcohol and other proactive enforcement work.
- Trading Standards staff will be authorised to discharge the statutory duties of both local authorities in respect of trading standards across the Cwm Taf region.
- Both Councils will support each other to provide mutual aid in the event of staff absence or an emergency.
- Specialist or lead officers for particular functions will be shared across the region.
- Separate business inspection programmes will be joined up to ensure consistency and focus on compliance at high risk premises across the region.
- Wherever possible the costs of specialist equipment and vehicles will be shared across the region.
- Merthyr Tydfil's metrological testing equipment will be calibrated at the Rhondda Cynon Taf metrology laboratory.
- The provision of the animal feed official controls function will be reviewed to determine if Rhondda Cynon Taf can provide the function across the Cwm Taf region.
- The IT complaint systems and databases of both services will be reviewed to determine if a single shared IT system would bring efficiencies and improvements.
- Current separate and different arrangements for the procurement of Public Analyst and Laboratory Services will be reviewed to determine if a single arrangement will deliver efficiencies or service improvement.
- A joint training plan will be developed for shared priorities minimising costs and avoiding duplication of effort.
- Where vacancies arise recruitment will be considered across the region

4.0 BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 4.1 During the initial meetings of the Joint Management Board milestones covering various areas of collaborative work were set and, to date, these have been achieved as detailed below.
- 4.2 A Joint Management Board of senior managers has been established to oversee the collaborative work. This consists of the Service Director Public Health & Protection, Head of Community Protection and Trading Standards Manager from Rhondda Cynon Taf with the Public Protection & Housing Manager and Trading Standards & Licensing Manager from Merthyr Tydfil. The Board has approved the joint Trading Standards Framework Service Delivery Plan and meets on a quarterly basis to monitor the delivery of joint projects and the implementation of the proposals in the original collaborative delivery arrangements document.
- 4.3 Both Councils have met their obligation to provide a Trading Standards Framework Service Delivery by producing a single plan for the Cwm Taf region. This document demonstrates how the work of Trading Standards contributes to the delivery of various Welsh Government, Council and national Trading Standards priorities. It also includes a work programme to show how the Councils help:
- a) Promote informed confident consumers,
 - b) Enable informed successful businesses,
 - c) Deliver enforcement to promote a fair and safe trading environment, and
 - d) Deliver an efficient, effective and improving Trading Standards Service.
- 4.4 The joint plan was developed using the previous template used by Rhondda Cynon Taf, with appropriate modifications to reflect the joint arrangements and new developments in trading standards issues. Having one joint plan to work towards has given greater clarity to what joint work needs to be delivered during the year and ensures consistency across the region.
- 4.5 A joint work programme of proactive market surveillance was developed and included as part of the Trading Standards Framework Service Delivery Plan. It covered product safety, food, agricultural feed, fair trading, intellectual property and sales of age restricted products. A substantial part of this work programme has been delivered, even though some of the projects have not been finalised because analytical reports are still being awaited for some of the samples. The main advantage of this joint work is for a consistent approach to be delivered across Cwm Taf, with traders in both authorities receiving the same message and advice about their legal obligations in complying with the law. Larger pools of samples have been obtained, which on some occasions has reduced the unit cost of analysis. For some food sampling work the Councils successfully submitted a joint bid for funding from the Food Standards Agency, which enable us to take samples that we otherwise would not have been able to afford to take. Also by targeting our sampling and other work against known or suspected problem areas we have been able to reduce the detriment for consumers within Cwm Taf.

- 4.6 Each local authority has assessed the competencies and qualifications of enforcement officers in the other authority and has then given those officers the necessary legal authorisations to discharge the statutory duties relating to Trading Standards in their area. This means that each officer is enabled to carry out enforcement duties across the Cwm Taf region. The existence of these authorisations will provide us with extra support and resilience during wide-ranging operations or during the absence of some specialist officers. For example, during one joint operation a Rhondda Cynon Taf officer used his powers to suspend the sale of unsafe cars that he had examined on garage forecourts in Merthyr Tydfil. This type of action also benefits Rhondda Cynon Taf residents who might choose to purchase their vehicles in Merthyr.
- 4.7 Both Councils agreed to support each other to provide mutual aid in the event of staff absence or an emergency and this action was facilitated by the cross border authorisations described above. An example where this arrangement has been beneficial is a project where both authorities set up a static site in Abercynon for a joint operation during which the police stopped and checked vehicles used by potential rogue traders who operate across any boundaries.
- 4.8 Specialist or lead officers for particular functions are shared across the region, so that an individual officer can take the lead in a particular function and be supported to develop specialist skills. For example a specialist officer from Rhondda Cynon Taf assisted Merthyr Tydfil Council on aspects such as vehicle examination and the creation of animal feed policies and sampling plans. Similarly, Rhondda Cynon Taf has benefited from Merthyr Tydfil Council officers' experience in particular aspects, such as e-cigarettes, to prevent the need for duplication of research.
- 4.9 A programme of business inspection has been developed, where each Council uses the same risk rating scheme to assess the frequency of inspections for each type of business. This ensured that there is consistency in assessing which businesses are of higher risk and so allowed inspections to focus on the compliance of those businesses in order to protect local residents across the region.
- 4.10 It has been agreed that wherever possible equipment and vehicle costs will be shared across the region, because the range of specialist equipment and vehicles can be costly to purchase and maintain. Full inventories of the available equipment have been exchanged. So far few opportunities to share equipment have arisen, however it is planned to jointly purchase a mechanical feed separator to meet new sampling requirements.
- 4.11 Merthyr Tydfil officers now utilise the metrology laboratory facilities at Ty Elai, whereby Rhondda Cynon Taf officers calibrate their testing equipment, measures and weights on a yearly basis or as necessary. This calibration took place for the first time in August 2013 reducing costs to both Councils.
- 4.12 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have identified that animal feed official controls need to be improved across Wales. Currently many of the inspections of animal feed at farms are done at the same time as animal health inspections, so both functions are closely interlinked. A review of the provision of animal feed and animal health services has been undertaken and it has

been agreed that a joint feed and animal health service plan will be developed and we will utilise shared procedures and forms and share relevant equipment across the region.

- 4.13 The Wales Procurement Consortia (WPC) are undertaking a scoping exercise across Wales to develop a procurement framework for IT systems for Public Protection Services. 19 local authorities have expressed an interest in this exercise including Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil Councils. It is anticipated that this exercise may realise significant financial savings in the future.

5.0 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS & OUTCOMES

- 5.1 The Joint Management & Governance Board meets each quarter and assesses progress being made against the service delivery plan and the project plan presented at Appendix I.
- 5.2 In addition, Officers prepare a brief outcome report for each joint project delivered and some examples of these are presented for information at Appendix II.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The joint management and delivery arrangements have been successfully implemented during the first year of operation. The benefits from the joint arrangements have been predominantly of a more practical nature rather than financial. However, some financial savings have been made through the metrology laboratory work and successful bids for joint funding for food sampling work.
- 6.2 Joint sampling and enforcement operations have been successfully delivered across the region, producing more consistent enforcement and wider-ranging protection for consumers. The joint working arrangements have resulted in a better working relationship between the two Trading Standards services. The cross border authorisations will improve resilience across the region. Further opportunities for joint working are being considered, such as a single IT database, so over time this is likely to lead to further outcomes.
- 6.3 In the context of the recently published findings of the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery, the joint working arrangements already established within Trading Standards in the Cwm Taf region mean that the services are well placed to respond to more wide ranging organisational changes should they occur in the future.

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Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Cwm Taf Trading Standards Project Plan 2013/2014						
Quarter	Subject Area	Objective	Target	Achieved	Current Status	Outcome Template Produced
Quarter 1						
Pesticides/Tea Survey	Food	To take samples and submit for analysis to determine if tea is the correct quality and has satisfactory pesticide levels	RCT - 20 MT - 5	RCT - 20 MT - 5	Complete	Yes
Mycotoxins in Cereals	Food	To take samples and submit for analysis to determine mycotoxins levels in cereal products	RCT - 20 MT - 5	RCT - 20 MT - 5	Complete	Yes
PAT testing	Safety	Test and inspection of second hand electrical products	RCT - 10 MT - 10 premises	RCT - 11 MT - 6	Complete	Yes
Rogue Trader Day	Fair Trading	Multi agency operation targeting rogue traders across CWM Taf	One operation	1 joint operation	Complete	Yes
Quarter 2						
Speciation of Fish	Food	Sample and analysis of fish products to ascertain correct description	RCT - 20 MT - 5	RCT - 20 MT - 5	Complete	Yes
Speciation of meat	Food	Sample and analysis of meat products to ascertain correct description	RCT - 10 MT - 5	RCT - 10 MT - 5	Complete	No - Report to be combined with quarter 4 speciation survey
Garage Forecourt Checks	Safety	Inspection of cars on garage forecourts to check whether they are in a safe condition	RCT - 5 premises MT - 3 Premises	RCT - 7 MT - 4	Complete	Yes
Soft Drink authenticity	Food	Check for authenticity and correct labelling of foreign labelled soft drinks.	RCT - 20 MT - 5	RCT - 4 MT - 0	Sampling Ongoing - Difficult to obtain	No
Car Servicing Survey	Fair Trading	Checks to ensure accuracy and correct descriptions in relation to car servicing	RCT - 6 vehicles MT - 4 vehicles	RCT - 6 MT - ?	To be done in quarter 3	No
National co-ordinated food sampling programme	Food	Sampling and analysis of products identified as priorities by the FSA Agreed this would be DNA testing of cured meat	RCT - 20 MT - 20	RCT - 27 MT - 25	Complete	Yes
Rogue Trader Operation	Fair Trading	Multi agency operation targeting rogue traders across CWM Taf	One operation	One operation in each area	Complete	Yes
Quarter 3						
Allergen Survey	Food	Samples taken and analysed to ascertain allergens in products sold at catering establishments	RCT - 20 MT - 6	RCT - 20 MT - 6	Complete	Yes
Alcohol Authenticity	Food	Samples taken and analysed to ascertain alcohol levels and authenticity of product.	RCT - 20 MT - 5	RCT - 22 MT - 5	Awaiting results	No
Vehicle repairers IP Survey	Intellectual Property	Inspection of software used at vehicle repairers to ensure legitimate software being used	RCT - 20 MT - 10	RCT - 20 MT - 12	Complete	Yes
Cured meat products	Food	Speciation tests of cured meat products	RCT - 10 MT - 10	RCT - 10 MT - 10	Complete	No - Report to be combined with quarter 4 speciation survey
National co-ordinated food sampling programme	Food	Sampling and analysis of products identified as priorities by the FSA	RCT - 60 MT - 5	RCT 60 MT - 5	Awaiting results	No
Traceability of feed	Agriculture	Participate in a non-analytical traceability study as part of the Glamorgan Feed Group	To be agreed			No
Co-Products	Agriculture	Participate in a non-analytical co-product survey as part of the Glamorgan Feed Group	RCT - 3 MT - 2	RCT 3 - MT - 0	Still sampling and Awaiting results	No
Fertiliser	Agriculture	Samples taken to check the declared constituents of fertiliser	RCT - 10 MT - 2	RCT - 10 MT - 0	Still sampling and Awaiting results	No
Presence of animal protein in animal feed	Agriculture	Samples taken of compound animal feed to check it is free from any animal protein	RCT - 10 MT - 2	RCT - 10 MT - 0	Still sampling and Awaiting results	No
Heavy metals in locally grown forage	Agriculture	Samples taken of locally grown forage to ensure levels of heavy metals are within the legal limits	RCT - 10 MT - 2	RCT - 11 MT - 0	Still sampling and Awaiting results	No
Salmonella in animal feed	Agriculture	Samples taken of animal feed to check for the presence of salmonella	RCT - 10 MT - 2	RCT - 10 MT - 0	Still sampling and Awaiting results	No
Mycotoxins in animal feed	Agriculture	Samples taken of cereal used on farms in the Cwm Taf area to check for mycotoxin levels	RCT - 10 MT - 2	RCT - 5 MT - 0	Still sampling and Awaiting results	No
Quarter 4						
Speciation of meat	Food	Sample and analysis of meat products to ascertain correct description	RCT - 10 MT - 5	RCT - 0 MT - 5	Still sampling and Awaiting results	No
Rogue Trader Operation	Fair Trading	Multi agency operation targeting rogue traders across CWM Taf	One operation			

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APPENDIX II – Outcome Reports

MERTHYR TYDFIL AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC CWM TAF TRADING STANDARDS PROJECT TEMPLATE

PROJECT NAME:

Cwm Taf Trading Standards National Rogue Trader Day 2013

OBJECTIVES:

To undertake a Rogue Trader Day in line with the National Rogue Trader Week co-ordinated Nationally by Operation Liberal during the week of 22nd April 2013.

Due to the nature of Rogue Trading, the nominals committing Doorstep Crime are known to commit offences in the entire Cwm Taf area and utilise the A470 corridor in order to travel to commit these crimes.

In line with the Work Performance Indicators and collaborative working, this Operation fell in line with the proposed Rogue Trader Days that will be carried out on a Quarterly basis.

Deliver a strong enforcement message to rogue trading criminals to disrupt and enforce against rogue trading criminals and develop good collaborative working practices in dealing with rogue traders.

Develop intelligence of known rogue traders operating in both areas and promote partnership working including external Agencies within the Cwm Taf area.

Raise public awareness of doorstep crime and provide reassurance to the Cwm Taf area.

Demonstrate a 'Zero Tolerance' towards rogue trading within the Cwm Taf area.

TARGET/ACHIEVED:

Support and resources were secured from Internal Departments and External Enforcement Agencies for a static site and mobile patrols in marked Police vehicles on the Cwm Taf Rogue Trader Day on 22nd April 2013.

The static site was located in Abercynon, as this was identified as a central point between both areas and also due to the proximity to the A470 corridor, where Rogue Traders are known to travel.

Mobile patrols were utilised, with marked Police vehicles in the areas of Merthyr, Rhondda, Cynon and Taf. Each patrol consisted of an officer from South Wales Police, Trading Standards, Streetcare/Environmental Health and Department for Works and Pensions.

An awareness raising exercise was undertaken by Merthyr Tydfil Trading Standards who have visited all Banks and Building Societies within the area to raise awareness of Doorstep Crime and advise of the actions to take if a Consumer was to visit and withdraw an unusually high amount of money from

the account (that may be linked to payments to rogue traders working at the property).

Trading Standards have assisted SWP Neighbourhood Beat Managers and RCTCBC Community Safety Partnership in giving talks to Community Groups and Lunch Clubs throughout the week.

ACTION TAKEN:

Rogue Trader Day has taken place on 22nd April 2013.

51 vehicles have been stopped and checked by Trading Standards throughout the day, with Trader Advice being issued – namely WHOTS doorstep crime packs –to 43 companies that were stopped and checked. These varied between potential doorstep criminals to apparently legitimate local businesses who carry out work at private addresses. The other officers took appropriate action for any breaches of their legislation.

51 Intelligence Logs were sent detailing those stopped and checked.

Follow-up letters issued to traders that were unaware of the Doorstep Legislation and had been provided with Trader Advice on the day of action. The letters warned of future conduct and the effect of a breach of legislation referred to in Advice issued.

Press Releases were issued by Rhondda Cynon Taf Trading Standards and also by Merthyr Trading Standards. These were also published on each Council's Website.

An article was published in Merthyr CBC Council Newspaper.

Banks and Building Societies visited by Merthyr Tydfil Trading Standards. Issue raised by Prinsipality for their Referral Protocol is being addressed on a regional level further to referring the issue to WHOTS Lead Officer for Doorstep Crime.

COLLABORATION BENEFITS:

Some of the same targets identified for Rogue Trading throughout the region were stopped within both areas.

Traders were stopped and advice given for traders that operate in both areas, ensuring a consistent joint message and advice has been provided for any future action against the Traders as necessary. This will also serve to ensure that in complying with the legal requirements, there will be less detriment to Consumers living within the Cwm Taf area.

Intelligence picture of those operating within both areas has been developed further.

Cost saving for Merthyr Tydfil in respect of the use of a single joint static site in Abercynon.

Disruption of doorstep crime in both areas and enhanced partnership working with external Agencies.

**MERTHYR TYDFIL AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC
CWM TAF TRADING STANDARDS PROJECT TEMPLATE**

PROJECT NAME: UK Food Surveillance System – FSA Grant to support Food Sampling

DNA Testing of Cured Meats for horsemeat

OBJECTIVES:

Market surveillance of cured meat products to include products such as chorizo, salami, pepperoni, etc. The products were sampled from local retailers, supermarkets and other food establishments. Analysis was for DNA presence of horse.

TARGET/ACHIEVED:

20 Samples taken

ACTION TAKEN:

No further action as samples all satisfactory
Results shared with FSA

COLLABORATION BENEFITS:

A joint bid enabled funding to be secured from the FSA to carry out sampling.
Increased number and range of samples achieved.

**MERTHYR TYDFIL AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC
CWM TAF TRADING STANDARDS PROJECT TEMPLATE**

PROJECT NAME:

Egg Allergen Survey

OBJECTIVES:

Identify if there is a poor understanding of the risks associated with allergenic ingredients and if incorrect advice or information is being given to customers by sandwich makers.

Take 25 samples of sandwiches, baguettes, rolls which are made to customer order. Officers to explain that they have an egg allergy and that the sandwich cannot contain egg. Analyst then to test for presence of egg.

Protect consumer rights, maintain a fair trading environment, and to establish compliance with the Food Safety Act and the Food Labelling Regulations.

TARGET/ACHIEVED:

20 Samples taken in RCT
6 Samples taken in Merthyr

ACTION TAKEN:

Each LA had 3 sample failures. Advice will be issued to the businesses regarding allergens. Where appropriate site visits will be made to look at production methods and try to establish where the contamination has happened.

COLLABORATION BENEFITS:

Increase sampling numbers
Improve compliance across the Cwm Taf region
Increased consumer protection and trader awareness of the legal requirements.

**MERTHYR TYDFIL AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC
CWM TAF TRADING STANDARDS PROJECT TEMPLATE**

PROJECT NAME:

Garage Forecourt Survey

OBJECTIVES:

To carry out an assessment of the safety of second hand cars offered for sale at various garage forecourts in the Cwm Taf region and to take any necessary appropriate enforcement action . To provide expert assistance to allow Merthyr Tydfil CBC to carry out inspections of second hand vehicles found on forecourts and to suspend any infringing vehicles and to provide witness statements to facilitate prosecutions of traders.

TARGET/ACHIEVED:

The three forecourt inspections that were to be carried out in Merthyr Tydfil were achieved on 4th September 2013.

The RCT authorised vehicle examiner carried out the physical examination of these vehicles and provided witness statements and photographic evidence.

The six forecourt inspections that were to be carried out in Rhondda Cynon Taf were achieved between 7th and 11th October 2013.

ACTION TAKEN:

On 4th September 2013 2 x RCT staff members (including authorised vehicle examiner) assisted Merthyr staff in carrying out forecourt inspections at 3 garages. Suspension notices were issued in relation to 5 vehicles at 3 of the garages.

Trade Centre Wales:

Advisory notes issued for missing shock absorber sleeve, 2 x tyres with crazing, 1 x tyre with cracking in centre of tread.

1 x suspension notice issued for tyre with inner edge below 1.6mm.

Pant Trade Centre:

1 x suspension notice issued for 2 x dangerous tyres.

1 x suspension notice issued for tyre devoid of tread.

Evans Halshaw:

2 x Suspension notices issued for tyre below 1.6mm of tread.

Provision of 2 x witness statements and photographic evidence to facilitate Merthyr CBC investigations.

On 7th October/9th October/11th October 2013 inspections took place at 6 garages within Rhondda Cynon Taff. Suspension notices were issued in relation to 2 vehicles at 2 of the garages.

Edge Motor Company:

No problems found.

Hadfield Motor Company:

1 x advisory notice for tyre.

1 x advisory notice for split wiper blade and non-operational horn.

Evans Halshaw:

No problems were found.

JW Cars:

1 x advisory note for missing wiper blade.

M & D Cars:

1 x suspension notice issued for tyre below 1.6mm and non operational centre lapbelt.

Deano Paveltish:

No problems were found.

DG Weaver:

1 x suspension notice for tyre below 1.6mm.

1 x advisory notice for tyre close to legal limit.

1 x advisory notice for split wiper blade.

COLLABORATION BENEFITS:

Use of qualified officer by Merthyr Tydfil CBC enabled proactive market surveillance to be extended across the two local authority areas, resulting in the removal from sale and subsequent repair of unsafe cars before they were sold to members of the public. This led to improved legal compliance by local businesses.

Interesting to discover state of play of multi franchise outlets with branches in both areas i.e. Evans Halshaw and enabled consistent advice to be provided to the franchises.

Cost savings were made for Merthyr CBC as without this assistance they would either not have been able to undertake this work or else it would have required the buying-in of expert backup.

Thus I feel it can be demonstrated that service improvement and efficiency savings can be shown to exist as a result of this collaboration.

**MERTHYR TYDFIL AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC
CWM TAF TRADING STANDARDS PROJECT TEMPLATE**

PROJECT NAME:

PAT Test Survey - Charity Shops and Second Hand Shops

OBJECTIVES:

Pat Testing and visual examination of selected second hand electrical goods in a representative selection of outlets; to determine the level of safety afforded by such second hand items and to monitor the management systems existing at businesses to avoid the placing on the market of unsafe items; which could pose a risk of injury to local consumers and damage to their property.

TARGET/ACHIEVED:

It was planned to inspect up to 10 premises in each authority -

6 Premises inspected in Merthyr Tydfil CBC:

Cash Generator

St. David's Foundation

Green Horizons

Serendipity

ABC Exchange & Mart

Halfway Trading

(These premises represented all those trading in this area and selling this type of goods). Overall 24 items were examined.

11 Premises were inspected in Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC:

Treherbert Community Shop

Llanharan Community Shop

Cancer Research Wales

Rowan Tree Cancer Care

Wales Air Ambulance

St. David's Foundation (Aberdare & Pontypridd)

Cash Generator (Pontypridd & Aberdare)

YMCA

Barnados Donation Centre

43 items were examined.

ACTION TAKEN:

1 item was seized in Merthyr Tydfil CBC:

Electric Jigsaw - Cash Generator.

1 other appliance had correct fuse inserted. Advice and guidance was issued to all traders, especially in regard to checking fuse ratings, which seemed to be a problem area - Greater involvement was made with interrogating systems of one trader in particular. This trader has now introduced an

improved system

6 items were seized in RCT CBC:

Guitar Amp - YMCA
Baby Bottle Warmer - YMCA
Electric Shaver - Treherbert Community Shop
3 x Table Lamps - Llanharan Community Shop

9 other appliances had correct fuses inserted. Advice and guidance was issued to all traders with regard to fuse ratings inspection records. Two traders decided to revert to having their electrical items tested independently rather than by the shop staff. Further investigations was necessary in the case of 3 traders, but they have now introduced improved systems to prevent issues arising in the future.

COLLABORATION BENEFITS:

Provision of calibrated test equipment and use of qualified officer to Merthyr Tydfil CBC to enable proactive market surveillance to be extended across the two local authority areas. One trader with shops in both areas had similar issues, so the owner was given consistent advice.

Cash savings can be quantified as without this initiative Merthyr CBC would have had to have recourse to expenditure on an external test engineer to carry out the work.

Thus I feel it can be demonstrated that service improvement and efficiency savings can be shown to exist as a result of this collaboration.

**MERTHYR TYDFIL AND RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC
CWM TAF TRADING STANDARDS PROJECT TEMPLATE**

PROJECT NAME:

WHoTS Technical Information Software Survey

OBJECTIVES:

To protect the interests of consumers and reputable businesses, by taking enforcement action against persons using illegal technical information software in servicing garages which could be potentially putting consumers at serious risk, results of which will be publicised to reassure the public and deter businesses from engaging in this type of activity.

Garages will be visited that offer vehicle MOT and servicing to ascertain the extent of counterfeit technical information software being utilised by businesses. Remove counterfeit software with the assistance of French Solutions Limited.

To gather further intelligence on garages that are known to use this software, obtain details of person(s) selling such counterfeit software and any other counterfeited products that are being sold.

The inspections of the businesses will be Intelligence led and officers will be accompanied on the inspections by a representative from French Solutions Limited, it's anticipated that each authority will carryout 12 inspections. There will not be any cost to authorities to participate in this project other than officer's time which can be incorporated into routine inspections for the authority.

Ahead of each visit French Solutions Limited will prepare a list of garages in consultation with each Trading Standards Service, using information provided by trade marks holders who specialise in technical information software. French Solutions will look for garages and service centres which offer MOT and servicing and predominantly look at those where technical information software has expired and those that have never held a subscription. Authorities may wish to generate lists of garages in their own authorities via internal systems to compliment information provided by French Solutions Limited.

French Solutions has found previously that it is useful to visit genuine subscribers to assure them that action is taken against those that are operating counterfeit copies of technical information software.

TARGET/ACHIEVED:

RCT conducted the survey on the 10th of September 2013. 20 premises were inspected and counterfeit software was found at 7 premises all the counterfeit software was removed from the PCs by employees' of French Solutions Ltd. Warning letters were sent to the 7 garages.

5 of the premises that had infringing software were members of RCT Motor Trade Charter. A global email has now been sent to all 53 Charter members

informing them of the disappointing findings from the survey and that all members will be visited to ensure compliance.

On the 11th November 2013 an Officer accompanied by a representative from French Solutions revisited the 7 non complying garages. All 7 garages had not reinstated illicit software to their equipment. 3 out of the 7 garages have actually purchased legitimate software.

During Merthyr's operation 12 garages were visited. 3 were found to have infringing copies and were removed. Following this warning letters issued to the 3 garages. It was not considered necessary for any revisits to be made.

Action Taken:

All infringing Software that was discovered was removed from the Traders computer equipment and advice/warning letters were given.

The inspection of Traders computer equipment will now form part of the routine inspection program for all motor trade / repair premises.

COLLABORATION BENEFITS:

Traders that were found to have illicit software had it removed from their equipment and advice was given to them, ensuring a consistent joint message to all traders in both Authorities. This will also serve to ensure that in complying with the legal requirements, there will be less detriment to consumers living within the Cwm Taf area.

Disruption of the use of illicit software in garages in both areas has led to a strong message being issued to the motor trader about the use of illicit software and the dangers that accompany the use of it when conducting motor vehicle repairs. It has also enhanced partnership working with external Agencies such as French Solutions Ltd and Autodata.

Intelligence picture of those operating within both areas has been developed and intelligence reports have been placed on the Memex system .

The training provided by French Solutions Limited to officers from both authorities will enable them to carry out detailed inspections of equipment at the traders premises during future routine inspections.