

***Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger
Communities - Monday, 12 November 2012***

Statement of Decision

Present: Councillor Mrs J. Heathcoat

Officers: R. Webb and M. Farthing (Trading Standards Service); N. Wilson (Oxfordshire Fire Service & Rescue Service); J. Dean (Law & Culture)

**Trading Standards Service - Age Restricted Products
Enforcement Report and Plan**

Documentation considered:

Report Trading Standards Service - Age Restricted Products
Enforcement Report and Plan

A copy is attached to the signed copy of this decision.

Cabinet Member's Comments

Councillor Mrs Heathcoat declared her satisfaction with the officer responses relating to the following questions:

Question - Do spot checks on the under-age sale of tobacco take place on a regular basis or is there a reliance purely on public information?

Response: The checks are intelligence – led (from, for example, members of the public, enforcement bodies, Health etc) rather than originating from purely speculative or routine visits. Essentially, evidence is required to obtain authorisation. The spot checks are carried out by volunteers, including Fire Cadets, whose work is proving to be very successful in relation to outcomes. The large retail companies have excellent systems and training in place to ensure staff compliance.

Question – How will controls on the display of tobacco products affect small retailers selling purely tobacco products and related items?

Response – After the legislation applying to smaller retailers is introduced in 2015, it will not be an offence for a specialist tobacconist to display tobacco products inside their shop, provided that tobacco products are not visible from outside the premises.

Question – Paragraph 12 suggests that retailers are less aware that craft knives could still be used for violence. Is there a problem here which needs to be addressed?

Response: No complaints have been received regarding the illegal sale of knives. The three premises referred to in paragraph 13 were, in fact, tests carried out by Trading Standards at a car boot sale, following a request made by Thames Valley Police to investigate.

Decision

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before me, the representations made to me and the further considerations set out above, I confirm my decisions on this matter as follows:

To:

- (a) approve the continuation of the practice of enforcement of the legislation controlling the supply of age restricted products, on the basis as set out in the report; and
- (b) thank the Community Safety Manager, his staff and the voluntary workers for all their hard work in implementing the enforcement of age restricted products.

Signed

Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities

Date

Response Standards Performance 2011/12

Documentation considered:

Report

Response Standards Performance 2011/12

A copy is attached to the signed copy of this decision

Cabinet Member's Comments

Councillor Mrs Heathcoat declared herself satisfied with the responses she received from officers in relation to the following questions:

Question: The table at paragraph 4 of the report indicates that the 11 minute incidence response times are down for the third quarter in comparison with the other quarters. Is this due to adverse weather conditions making it difficult to travel on the roads?

Response: Response times over this quarter have traditionally increased due to poor road conditions; poor visibility etc. This applies both to the appliance responding to the incident and to the retained staff responding to the fire station. All responses outside the 14 minute attendance times are presented to Senior Leadership Team and analysed on a quarterly basis.

Question: The anticipated date for the introduction of the Automatic Vehicle Location System is not until late 2014. Could it be brought forward?

Response: It is tied in with the plans for the new Control Room and associated infrastructure and will be implemented concurrently.

Question: What is the speed limit for fire pumps attending an emergency incident?

Response: Fire appliances are not bound by a speed limit when proceeding to emergency incidents. However, national guidelines, following precedents set by the Courts indicate that a driver proceeding on blue lights should not exceed the speed limit by more than 20 mph. If a driver is exceeding this guideline then they could be deemed to be driving without due care and attention. However this would be a matter for the court to decide in light of the circumstances.

Question: The response targets remain stretched often for reasons beyond your control, but how do we compare with other rural authorities of a similar size?

Response: The response times differ according to the different parameters that other local authorities set ie. lower response times for less calls. There are no national standards, therefore it is difficult to compare. A copy of the standards for other authorities will be forwarded to you for information.

Decision

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before me, the representations made to me and the further considerations set out above, I confirm my decisions on this matter as follows:

To;

- (a) note the performance information contained in the report and the actions taken to develop the service; and
- (b) thank the Operations & Resilience Manager and his staff for all their hard work in ensuring that the County Council's response times are improving.

Signed
Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities

Date