

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS & CUSTOMER SERVICES****CLLR JAN-VIRMANI****PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR:  
SAYYED OSMAN  
DATE: 30 MAY 2012****CHANGES TO THE CONSUMER PROTECTION LANDSCAPE**

The newly formed Trading Standards Policy Board (NTSB) has taken over responsibility from the Office of Fair Trading for allocating funding to projects (such as the Scambusters and the Illegal Money Lending Teams) which are aimed at tackling trading standards crime which has a regional or national impact. The NTSB is currently reviewing the activity of these teams, with a view to improving intelligence and support which is available to local trading standards services.

Funding arrangements for local trading standards services remain unchanged, and participation in regional and national projects remains optional for local services.

**SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS****SHADSWORTH WITH WHITEBIRK BIG LOCAL**

At the end of May, Community Business Partners undertook the selection and recruitment of local members of the community to become members of the Big Local Community Board. Following their appointment to the Board, the Resident Board members will meet to select a further four Board members from the Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) sector to join them. Their next step will be to develop a community plan for the next twelve months together, informed by the consultation activities that took place in the area earlier in the year.

**DIAMOND JUBILEE STREET PARTY PLANNING WORKSHOPS**

Six workshops were held across the borough in April, with 45 residents attending, to support local people to plan and run events and activities in their neighbourhoods safely when celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The workshop was designed to meet the needs of large and small scale event organisers, people who have organised events in the past and residents who have no previous experience. Participants also had the opportunity to seek further support from their local Community Officers and access additional further funding and training to support their activities. This included food hygiene and first aid.

Despite the mixed weather, over 40 parties took place in almost every ward in the borough. Representing community cohesion at its best, the weekend saw people from all ages and backgrounds come together to share food and fun. Celebrations ranged from small-scale street party style celebrations with neighbours (eg residents of Blackamoor Road and Devonport Road) to large-scale community events attracting residents from far and wide. These included Roe Lee Park, East Rural Network, Hoddlesden Millennium Green, Tockholes Village and Ivy St Community Centre, with local churches and Children's Centres also joining in the celebrations.

## **PLECKGATE BSF COMMUNITY USE**

Pleckgate was the first school to open under the ambitious BSF programme in September 2011 and boasts fantastic 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities which are open to the whole community. The extension of the school's state of the art facilities outside traditional school hours is a key element of Blackburn with Darwen's BSF strategy. The Council was awarded Community Use Provider status for Pleckgate High School in December 2011. Alongside our colleagues in Leisure Services, Sustainable Neighbourhood Services are managing community use in the school. Activities currently being delivered include adult learning classes, karate, table tennis, a wide range of fitness classes, community walks and one-off activities, including 5-a-side football, netball and basketball. Plans are underway to provide further activities including youth provision, more adult learning, sports activities, community open days, etc. with ongoing consultation with parents and the local community to ensure provision is meeting local need and that services are at the heart of the community.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICES**

A Programme Board has been established to consider and plan for the impact of Welfare Reform. Customer Services is represented on the Board and will have a major role to play in the delivery of the Localisation of Council Tax Support and the Social Fund.