

PA News

Autumn 2021

PRIMARY
AUTHORITY

Welcome to the new look PA News

By Niall Boyle

Our Local Delivery Team (LDT) within OPSS welcomes you to our new look PA News. We hope you will enjoy it and find it useful.

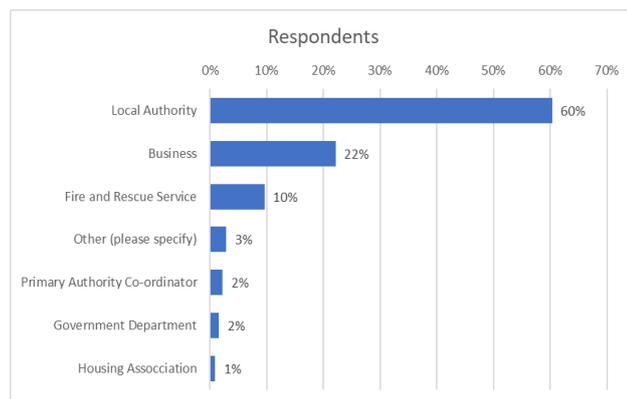
The team is growing. Pictured below, from left are: Caroline Clarke, Stuart Brough, Kathryn Preece (Head of LDT), Jackie White, Nicole Jordan, Niall Boyle, Kate Harris, Jackie Fitzsimons and Khudeja Begum, Nick Sangha and Daniel Pearson.



Who responded to the PA News Survey and what they said

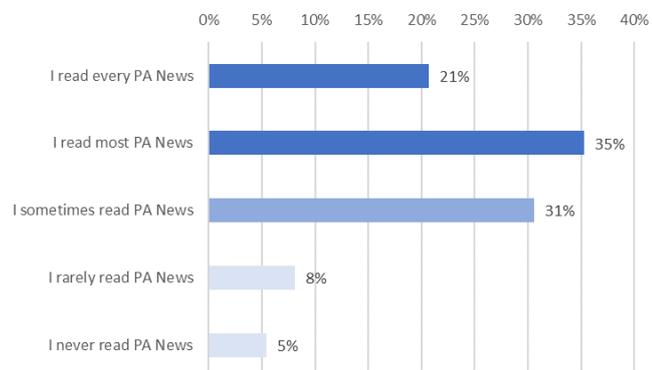
Comment: Most survey respondents were from Local Authorities (60%) followed by Business (22%).

This is roughly what we expected, and this represents the breakdown of our actual readership well.



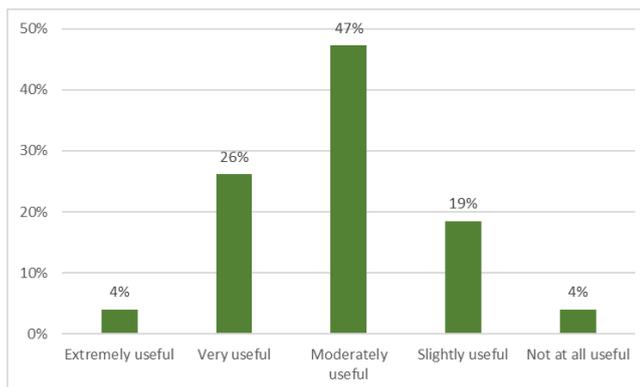
How often do you read PA News?

Comment: It was positive to find out that 56% of respondents read most or all issues and that 87% read PA News at least sometimes. There is room for improvement here and this finding has encouraged us to keep publishing PA News in the future.



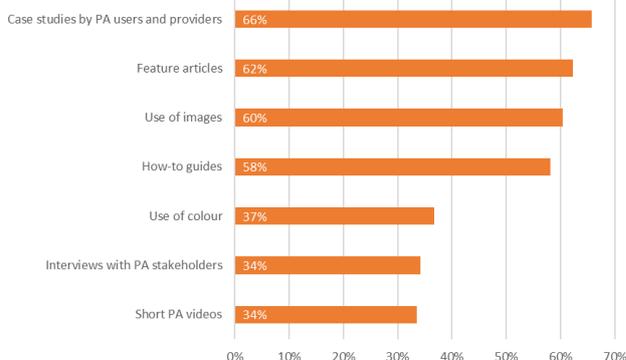
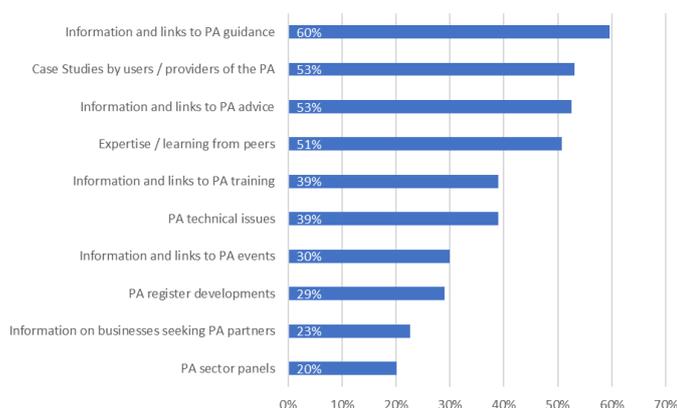
How useful do you find PA News?

Comment: 77% found PA News at least moderately useful, plenty of room for improvement here and this finding also has encouraged us to keep publishing PA News in the future, but with more of the type of content that respondents have requested (see other survey Q&As).



What content do you find useful and / or would you like to see more of?

Comment: We will endeavour to include as much of this type of content in this and future issues of PA News. In this issue we have a few PA case studies, learning from peers, news on events, businesses seeking PA partners, and PA sector panels.



Would you like to see any of the following in future issues of PA News?

Comment: We will include as much of this type of content in this and future issues. This revamped issue of PA News uses colour imagery, links to videos produced as PA support tools and includes a feature interview.

Primary authority partnership wins Regulatory Excellence Award

Earlier this year, OPSS was delighted to report that the Primary authority partnership between Wakefield Council Environmental Health and Cedar Court Hotels was the Primary Authority Winner at the OPSS Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021.

No event has impacted the hospitality industry greater than coronavirus. The impact is huge on income and on suppliers to the industry. Proactive steps to mitigate this impact were taken by EC4 Hotel Ltd and their PA to define a new delivery concept to seize an opportunity to utilise this less productive time.

Wakefield Council worked with the business on procedures for the provision of safe accommodation, facilities, and support for haulier drivers who test positive for COVID following a Lateral Flow Test and do not have a UK residence in which to self-isolate or access to a confirmatory PCR test.

Outside the Cedar Court Hotel at Bradford where the haulier accommodation was based.

From left, Allison Papaicovou, Group HR and Health & Safety Manager, EC4 Hotel Ltd; Helen Atkinson, Senior Environmental Health Officer, Wakefield Council; Andrew Jones, Hotel Manager of Cedar Court Hotel (EC4 Hotel Ltd) at Bradford



The Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021 are open to anyone involved in the delivery of regulation and compliance such as local authorities, fire services, businesses, and trade associations and this year recognise outstanding regulatory practice in challenging times. Wakefield Council are no strangers to the Regulatory Excellence Awards. Wakefield Council Environmental Health also won this coveted award in the Primary Authority category in 2019 for their submission with Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc for the ground-breaking work they carried out with the FSA on exploring National Inspection Strategies. They were finalists in the Primary Authority category in 2018 and 2017 and were Highly Commended at the 2015 Awards.

The big PA Interview

Niall Boyle, part of the Local Delivery Team at OPSS (the team responsible for managing Primary Authority), asked Helen Atkinson of the Wakefield PA Team about her experiences of the scheme.

Niall: Many congratulations Helen, can you tell us what was it about this PA partnership of yours that inspired you to put an entry in?

Helen: “This year I believe that the benefits of the Primary Authority scheme have been more apparent than ever. We have fully embraced the opportunity to support our partner businesses through the COVID pandemic especially in the hospitality sector which has been severely affected by COVID. The Department for Transport were very specific in their requirements and protocol and what the role of the hotel would be in relation to providing the accommodation and fulfilling the terms of the contract. But the requirement to be ‘COVID secure’ was left up to the business to implement and that is where they turned to the Primary Authority to assist them.

We were very optimistic about winning because the work we completed with EC4 Hotel Ltd ticked a lot of boxes and illustrated the diversity and multiplicity of the Primary Authority Scheme, for example:

- Ensured they had an income during lockdown which prevented the business facing financial hardship
- Less of an impact on their suppliers
- Less staff on furlough
- Developing the workforce to deliver a new delivery concept
- Protecting public health in relation to COVID infection
- Saved the local authority time as we verified the procedures and issued PA advice, so the local authority did not have to carry out verification for the Department of Transport that the COVID procedures were suitable and sufficient”.

Niall: “How did you and your PA partner feel when you heard that your entry was a winner?”

Helen: Both us and EC4 Hotel Ltd were ecstatic about winning. It made all the hard work worth it and felt good to know that the work we completed was of a standard to win such a prestigious award.

Niall: "What would you say were the most challenging parts of this work?"

Helen: "The two main challenges were that we were dealing with people who we knew were tested positive for COVID and that Public Health legislation was not included in the scope of RESA.

"Under normal circumstances, we were working with businesses to prevent COVID in the workplace – but in this instance we were welcoming people who had tested positive and had to devise policies and procedures to contain the infection and ensure it did not spread.

"We used health and safety legislation to issue PA advice, and this ensures that we are keeping employees and non-employees safe - Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Sections 2(1), 2(2)(c) &(e), 3(1) Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulations 3(1)(a) & (b), Regulation 5(1)."

Niall: "What benefits or positive outcomes resulted from this work? In terms of keeping people safe, offering help to drivers who tested positive? Benefits to the business? Benefits to the hotel employees."

Helen: "To survive the impact of the pandemic, we had to assist EC4 Hotel Ltd to innovate by developing and deploying new ideas. By being awarded the Department for Transport contract, the business avoided closing over lockdown and therefore boosted productivity to reduce the number of staff on furlough and lower the negative impact on suppliers. We implemented best practice in relation to COVID controls to ensure that the business was productive throughout the pandemic and at the same time protecting the health of the public (by providing accommodation to drivers with Covid) and protected staff who were working in the hotel to provide the accommodation and food for the drivers.

"The drivers were provided with individual rooms for self-isolation, parking for lorries, full catering delivered outside of their rooms, information provided in their own language, daily welfare calls to the haulier to check they were well and whether they needed anything."

Niall: "Lastly Helen, can you describe what Primary Authority means to you and your business partners?"

Helen: "I am responsible for a very wide range of partnerships in terms of the size of businesses and the scope of legislation, some well-established and others more recent. I am a great advocate of PA and I work with both new and existing partnerships, looking for practical solutions to regulatory issues and actively seeking to co-ordinate with other primary authorities to ensure consistency across each sector.

"Our partners are facing an increased regulatory challenge which has escalated during the pandemic and there is a need to diversify to survive. Guidance that is available is often highly technical and difficult for businesses to implement. As a primary authority supporting our business partners, we can achieve compliance.

"Due to Covid, I feel proud that we have used and developed the PA scheme to support our businesses by using health and safety legislation to address the impact of a public health crisis.

"I gain personal satisfaction that our collaborative and highly productive primary authority partnerships assist businesses to achieve compliance and to develop and survive in the current financial climate.

Cllr Jack Hemingway, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change at Wakefield Council

"We are delighted to receive this award, which shows the strength of our Primary Authority partnership work. This year more than ever it is important to celebrate outstanding regulatory practice that has achieved positive outcomes in supporting businesses and protecting consumers. The awards also demonstrate to the public the vital role that regulation can play in supporting and rebuilding the economy. All involved have worked extremely hard and fully deserve the recognition achieved."

Wayne Topley, Managing Director of The Cedar Court Hotels Group, Yorkshire

“The relationship between our Hotel Company and our ‘Primary Authority’ has been more important than ever over the last 12 months, we have repurposed our business to support the Covid19 challenge on a number of occasions and Helen Atkinson from the Wakefield PA team has been unwavering in her support and guidance. The challenge of turning a commercial Hotel into a Covid19 care facility would have been simply impossible if it had not been for the Cedar Court Hotels team commitment and focus to supporting the new need and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Allison Papaicovou who leads our H&S commitments and Andrew Jones, Hotel Manager who led the team throughout this process.”

Cedar Court Hotel and Wakefield Council have worked together in a Primary authority partnership since 2011. The team at Wakefield Council provides advice and guidance on food safety, health and safety, Covid and other compliance matters to allow the business to operate with confidence. For more information, visit

www.wakefield.gov.uk/hereforbusiness

Making food hygiene inspections digital

Elmbridge Borough Council Food Team, Highly Commended, OPSS Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021

Congratulations to Ian Tucker, Andy Martin, Chris Brown, David Lock, and their colleagues in Elmbridge Borough Council Food Team on receiving Highly Commended in the Innovation and Technical category at the Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021.

Background

The normal way to document local authority food hygiene inspections and provide reports to food businesses is to use paper. A self-duplicating form is used where one copy is taken back to the council for scanning and filing and used to generate a letter, and the other copy is left with the food business.

However, officers handwriting can be variable and sometimes the carbon copy doesn't come through as well as it might. Overall, it can be a little cumbersome and doesn't always convey a modern way of communicating. There is also a lot of paper used up in the process. So, for all these reasons, at Elmbridge Borough Council, they started thinking, could there be a better way of doing this.

That's when they had the idea of using Granicus, an IT platform already used by hundreds of local authorities, including Elmbridge, for a wide variety of functions such as allowing residents to pay parking fines, renew garden waste collections, etc. They initially had no idea that it could be used for creating food hygiene inspection forms, but they tried it, and it seemed to work.

The idea was to create something that could be used on any tablet or phone during the inspection during the inspection and for officers to carry out their visit as normal, making their usual observations, but for those details not to be recorded with a pen on a traditional paper inspection form, but instead for the information to be noted directly on a tablet on a new digital form.

From left: David Lock, the digital form in use on an iPad and Chris Brown (David and Chris of Elmbridge BC worked on the new digital inspection forms together)



Watch their video to find out more

You can view a video that Elmbridge Borough Council produced to explain their new automated processes and how they adapted these processes to include virtual inspection visits during Covid as well as to document pre-inspection work, e.g. whether the business is active in Primary Authority and whether assured advice has been provided -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRq0aKiC258>

If you would be interested in directly discussing this with Elmbridge, you can email David Lock at dlock@elmbridge.gov.uk

Focus on workplans: an introduction to the work of the Local Delivery Team

By Kate Harris

The OPSS LDT formed around 2 years ago, when the teams that worked on Better Business for All and Primary Authority merged. We are now a team of 12 members, from a range of backgrounds, led by our team manager Kathryn Preece. Our team is passionate about making regulation work, and we consider ourselves advocates of local authorities and business. Amongst our responsibilities are Primary Authority, Better Business for All, and the Regulators Code.

We plan and manage our team's work by developing workplans annually, with each team member taking responsibility for developing and delivering their plans each year. Our workplans can be grouped into four key themes – see right.



Primary Authority Training for local authorities

Primary Authority is all about 'Making Regulation Work'. The scheme supports business to drive up compliance, thus protecting people. It enables businesses to have confidence to invest and grow and gives local regulators and consumers' confidence that a business is working to do the right thing. Primary Authority training promotes the use of the scheme, and aims to ensure that local authorities, whether they are primary authorities or enforcing authorities, are utilising the scheme to its fullest potential.

PA training has been delivered to local authorities for many years. Until 2020, training was delivered face to face, typically by independent trainers, who worked as contractors for OPSS. 2020 saw the training delivery being brought back in-house, and due to the pandemic, it has also moved online.

In 2021, our work has been to focus on:

- Reviewing and revising the existing training products to ensure they meet local authorities needs, namely:
 - The Essential Skills course - this is best suited to those new to PA, enforcing authorities, and those in need of a refresher
 - Making an Impact through your partnership course - this is aimed at those working on partnerships, or those who have recently signed up a new partnership
 - Inspection Plan workshops - for those partnerships who are considering developing an inspection plan
- Exploring development an additional product which is intended to cover practicalities such as establishment and setting up new partnerships, marketing your PA offer, and cost recovery

In short, we want to make sure that all local authorities, both enforcing and primary authorities, have access to up to date information about PA so that the value and impact of the scheme can be realised.

If any local authority wishes to discuss PA training, needs further information on the courses we offer, has suggestions for how we could improve training, or would like to discuss a bespoke course for your authority or region, please get in touch via pa.training@beis.gov.uk. We would love to hear from you.

Comments from delegates at recent online training

“A very good refresher”

“Really useful overview delivered at a good clear pace – thank you

“Excellent sessions. It has been a good refresher I’ve not revisited PA since BRDO days.”

“Very well presented. Thank you.”

“Very interesting and informative.”

“Excellent session for someone who had no ideas about PAs before starting! I have learnt a lot.”

“Very useful, thank you. Gained a greater understanding of the PAs and how they sit

Updates from the Strategic Regulatory Networks (SRN) and PA Regional Groups (PARG)

By Nicole Jordan

North West

The theme at the last North West Primary Authority Regional Group was the role of supporting regulators which was attended by BEIS, the Health and Safety Executive, and the Food Standards Agency who outlined their roles of support as national regulators. The group will be looking at devolved nations and how Primary Authority can work there. The North West SRN continues to grow, focusing on allergens training for businesses, and tourism support, piloting an event with Visit England offering access to the Pink Book and other business support advice and tools.

North East

The North East SRN met for their launch SRN meeting, with conversations started around Net Zero and Building Back Better to be explored further later this year. The North East SRN, Yorkshire, and Humber currently make up the North East Primary Authority Regional Group, who have met twice and discussed topics including Growth Hubs, HSE Spot Checks, and FOI requests.

West Midlands

The West Midlands SRN continues to grow, with Growth Hubs in the area sharing their experiences and best practice when supporting businesses across all sectors, from accessing finance to innovation and diversification. The region is also working towards the Commonwealth Games, which are being hosted in Birmingham in 2022. Host Authorities' regulatory services are currently engaging with each other, using the Better Business for All framework, to consider how they can collectively support businesses, including discussions around joint regulatory approaches.

The West Midlands PARG network has met twice, and received presentations from HSE on Spot Checks, and continue to explore the direction of the regions PARG.

East Midlands

The Department for International Trade joined the SRN to update strategic leads on support to East Midlands businesses in export of goods. OPSS facilitated a 'Meet the Regulator' event for Growth Hub advisors in the D2N2 region which was supported by local authority regulators across the East Midlands and Department for International Trade, giving an overview on local regulation of environmental health, trading standards and fire safety too!

South West

At the South West SRN, the Professional Association of Self-Caterers presented on their roles in tourism in the South West, sharing their experience as a newly developed association.

Through the SRN, Bath and North East Somerset utilised their experience from their Behavioural Insights Training to help develop tools and resource for the Alternative Strategy Tourism Training in the South West. The West of England Combined Growth Hub has further developed its project on providing 'Effective Digital Entrepreneurship & Business Support' (EDEBS).

The project is now in its second quarter and has added English to Speakers of Other Language courses to their support offer. The project aims to provide support to existing businesses or pre-start-up entrepreneurs who are newly arrived migrants or third country nationals. For further information on the EDEBS project [click here](#).

The South West PARG had a marketing session, delivered by David Elverson, showing how to commercialise regulatory services, supporting an authorities Primary Authority offer. The feedback from the South West PARG on the BI training was "[it was] the best [I have] ever had" from the Commercial manager at Exeter City Council. The group also had a presentation on the national cost recovery survey by the Michele Manson, South East PARG chair.

London

The London SRN launch event held on 21st May was attended by 120+ people, representing Local Authorities, Fire Service, Police and London Business Hub. OPSS presented on the structure of SRNs and how they fit in with our other networks including PARGs and Expert Panels. The next steps for the London SRN includes an introductory session for London colleagues with the Growth Hub advisors - this is planned for October

2021. The group is also progressing its work on Diversity and Inclusion and will be recruiting support for project research in this area.

The next London PARG meeting was held in September 2021. Agenda topics included how PAs in London might support one another via a peer review approach, how PA might contribute to net zero, and a discussion as to whether OPSS are meeting providers expectations in terms of PA support being offered.

We are delighted that one of the London boroughs, the Royal Borough of Greenwich, was awarded at the Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021 for their work with FareShare. Congratulations to colleagues at Greenwich and FareShare for the excellent work delivered during the pandemic.

South East SRN

Paul Hobbs is Chair of the South East Strategic Regulatory Network.

The Hertfordshire Growth Hub updated on their Wellbeing Project where they provided business support, including central points of access for information and live webinars. The Hertfordshire Growth Hub also developed a mental health guide for business owners and employers, detailing the local and national support that is available to them.

The New Anglia Growth Hub presented on their project around Tourism, which was a collaborative project between environmental health and trading standards including New Anglia, Great Yarmouth and their local Destination Management Organisation Eastbourne and East Sussex also delivered a collaborative tourism project. The Growth Hubs will continue to update the group on the progress of these projects and share their learning and experience.

The South East PARG Chair is Michele Manson (Bucks & Surrey Trading Standards), supported by Helen Woods (Hampshire County Council Trading Standards) as Vice Chair and Niall Boyle, Local Delivery Lead for the South East. The South East PARG wants to encourage local authorities who haven't already joined the group to sign up. South East PARG includes some regulators who are experienced in PA and who are willing to share expertise and support regulators who want to start providing the service.

A video, 'Marketing Your PA Offer,' was produced by Niall Boyle who gathered valuable contributions from Michele Manson (Bucks & Surrey Trading Standards), Mark Peacock (Devon, Plymouth, Somerset & Torbay Trading Standards Service) and Ruth Rhodes and Paige Cottan (Wakefield Council).

This first module of a series of recordings received its first airing at a recent SE PARG meeting. It is hoped that this will be a valuable PA support tool for those local authorities and fire and rescue services wishing to learn from the marketing approaches of other PA providers.

Wales

The PA Wales Group is chaired by Ellis Roberts, Business Engagement Officer, Shared Regulatory Services (Bridgend, Cardiff, and the Vale of Glamorgan) with support from Niall Boyle, Local Delivery Team, OPSS. About 20 to 30 local authority and fire and rescue service representatives attend the meetings to share their experiences and expertise in Primary Authority. Local authorities not active in PA are encouraged and do attend, some in their capacity as enforcing authorities and others as they are interested in joining the scheme.

Support and advice to new authorities considering entering the scheme is provided by the active LAs in Wales and by OPSS. Topics covered so far at PAWG include setting aims, discussing how devolved matters are handled in the scheme, cost recovery and scheme training. If you are a local authority or fire and rescue service representative interested in attending, you can email: eroberts@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or niall.boyle@beis.gov.uk

Contact details for the Local Delivery Team regional / country leads at OPSS

North West: jackie.fitzsimons@beis.gov.uk

North East: nicole.jordan@beis.gov.uk

West Midlands: stuart.brough@beis.gov.uk

East Midlands: caroline.clarke@beis.gov.uk

South West: jackie.fitzsimons@beis.gov.uk

London: kate.harris@beis.gov.uk

South East: niall.boyle@beis.gov.uk

Wales: niall.boyle@beis.gov.uk

PA Sector Panel Focus

by Caroline Clarke

The LDT has met over 90 local authority and fire and rescue Primary Authority officers to develop PA Sector Specific Panels. Colleagues share experience and expertise to support businesses and further promote consistency and quality in PA delivery. The panels have been utilised by local authority colleagues to raise issues impacting local authority regulation during the emergency period which were fed into wider government to help inform policy changes.

Terms of Reference for the panels are being developed and discussions around how best to include business representatives are underway to further strengthen the panels. If you would like to be involved in the PA sector panels, please contact localregulatorydelivery@beis.gov.uk for further details.

Current members of the panels have been emailed a survey to help develop the panels going forward.

The current panels are:

- Hospitality including leisure, hotels, restaurants and licensed premises
- Car and vehicle sales
- Caravans and holiday parks
- Non -food retail
- Warehousing and distribution
- Housing and Care – **New January 2021**
- Construction products/building supplies/home improvements – **New January 2021**

At the request of regulatory colleagues, we are in the process of setting up a food retail sector panel. If you are a regulator with a PA partnership active in any of the above sectors and would like to join the panel, please email localregulatorydelivery@beis.gov.uk

PA Business Group

by Niall Boyle

The PA Business Group (PABG) meets quarterly and is attended by businesses active in PA who are interested in sharing experiences and expertise relating to the use of the scheme.

The PABG is co-chaired by Melissa Thompson of Safer Food Scores Ltd and by Denise Din of the Bannatyne Group and is supported by LDTs Business Lead, Niall Boyle.

Government departments as well as PA providers (as guest speakers) and users attend to discuss PA issues of interest. Topics of interest are proposed by the attendees and cover a wide range of subjects, for example HSE Covid spot checks offer to businesses (provided by Health Safety Executive), Environmental Protection and PA (Co-operative Group) and Use of Inspection Plans (Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd).

Businesses active in the PA scheme are most welcome to attend. if this interests you, please email niall.boyle@beis.gov.uk .

Fire Safety Focus

by Caroline Clarke

Since the introduction of Fire Safety to the Primary Authority scheme in 2014 there has been a steady increase in the number of partnerships covering the regulated function of fire safety

There are currently 304 active fire safety partnerships across different sectors, 35% of these partnerships are in are housing and residential care sector and there is an Increasing demand for Fire Safety partnerships

OPSS facilitated the development of a PA Housing and Care Forum with 18 fire and rescue services representing 70+ housing and care providers. The PA panel is chaired by National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and supported by the Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

NFCC were a finalist in Primary Authority category of the Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021 and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service were winners at the awards in the Primary Authority category for their **partnership with NatWest.**



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Case Study: Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and The Salvation Army

Essex County Fire & Rescue's (ECFRS) first steps into the world of Primary Authority were created in January 2016 when we signed our first and major partnership with The Salvation Army (TSA). The organisation is a worldwide Christian church and registered charity which has been fighting against social inequality and transforming lives for over 150 years.



TSA assists the vulnerable and anyone that requires assistance across its portfolio of 650 churches and community centres, over 80 life houses, and numerous charity shops.

Because of our partnership, ECFRS has a position on Safe Mission Council that gives us a voice at the heart of the organisation to assist and guide the fire safety requirements of TSA and has assisted throughout the pandemic to ensure that not only all staff of the organisation but also any relevant person remains as safe as we can possibly make them.

Regional Safe Mission advisors can contact ECFRS directly and do so regularly to ensure they maintain safe environments within their own areas. We guarantee to respond to these actions within three working days, but most are acted on within hours of receipt.

The
Salvation
Army in
action in the
community.



In the past ECFRS staff have assisted with the completion and reviewing of a range of procedures and policies across the organisation and have given training on a range of subjects including identifying issues appertaining to risk assessment.

ECFRS hope that the productive and collaborative partnership between themselves and The Salvation Army carries on for a long time into the future.

John Knight, TSA Head of Safe Mission, said: "The partnership we have with ECFRS gives us access to speedy and accurate advice, helping us to ensure the safety of our people and everyone we work with. Their voice on our Territorial Safe Mission Council is always measured and authoritative, helping us to shape our fire safety strategy. They're always helpful, always approachable and a real benefit to the organisation and the work we do."



On 3rd September 2021 the [Protection Fire Standard](#) was launched at the NFCC Protection and Prevention Conference in Warwick. The approved standard includes Primary Authority as criteria for services to self-assess against the standard. The benefits of achieving the standard include improved regulatory compliance relating to fire safety, petroleum, and explosives.

For support in development of PA in your service, please contact:
localregulatorydelivery@beis.gov.uk

Primary Authority partnering: helping build longer relationships

by Stuart Brough

It's been just over 12 months since we began our new process for helping businesses find PA partners and thank you to everyone who has supported this. Our approach doesn't involve going to a villa in Mallorca or swiping left or right like some other partner finding processes but utilises the more practical Primary Authority groups we facilitate.

So far, we've been approached by 42 businesses asking for our help to find a PA partner. After trying to understand their needs we share their 'ask' with relevant PA groups that we hope will generate expressions of interest. We pass these along to the business and so hope to start the conversations that can lead to partnerships. There have only been three businesses which didn't get any interest; but we've been able to help all the rest have at least one PA conversation.

It's a big thank you to those members of the PA groups who can consider new partners, and for anyone who isn't connected to them please contact your regional lead. With the changes to PA News, we will now be including 'Businesses seeking PA partners' in the more frequent Local Delivery Bulletins.

If you've any questions on PA partnering speak to your regional lead or drop me a line. Stuart.brough@beis.gov.uk

eBay launches regulatory portal

by Chris Jolly, Senior Trading Standards Officer, Westminster City Council

Product safety is a key priority for eBay, ensuring it is a safe place to trade, and the cooperation with authorities such as Westminster Trading Standards plays a critical role

on this. Due to eBay's business model as a pure third party marketplace that does not possess or control any item that is offered on it, it faces a unique challenge when it comes to product safety. The longstanding collaboration with Westminster City Council Trading Standards (WTS) is vital to tackle this challenge head on, keeping eBay safe for consumers.

eBay recently launched their own Regulatory Portal which enables market surveillance, monitoring and law enforcement authorities to report non-compliant listings efficiently and effectively and securely request the automated removal of such listings.



The portal has been successfully trialed by Westminster Trading Standards. Any officers interested in using the Portal can please contact cjolly@westminster.gov.uk so onboarding sessions can be organised this winter, whereby virtual training sessions on how to effectively use the portal will take place.

The training session should last about an hour. At this stage can each LA nominate no more than one or two officers per authority to use the portal with a global shared login being acceptable to each trading standards department. It is envisaged that further roll-outs can take place in 2022 if more officers are interested.

Complaints procedure

by Kate Harris

Ensuring that Primary Authority is a quality scheme is important to us at OPSS. We appreciate that there will be occasions when users of the scheme have a concern that they would like to raise with us, and this could be to do with a particular partnership. We have been working on our internal processes concerned with how we manage such referrals to ensure that they are logged, investigated, and resolved for all involved. We work with stakeholders to encourage dialogue, and our regional contacts and groups are there to support this. If you wish contact us about a concern, or for more information about our regional groups and leads, please email localregulatorydelivery@beis.gov.uk.



Office for Product Safety & Standards