

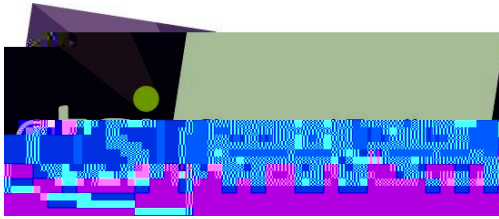
– in the business and consumer sectors as well as in local and central government. The Institute aims to promote and protect the success of a modern vibrant economy and to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of citizens by empowering consumers, encouraging honest business, and targeting rogue traders.

CTSI is extremely disappointed that government have decided not to publish their review of trading standards which took place last year. We understand that the conclusions and recommendations from that review will now be incorporated into the results of the current Red Tape review. However, these reviews have considerably different aims and focuses, with recommendations from the former unlikely to be affected by

st century, and CTSI welcomes the opportunity to contribute to that debate. We would ask that the review take full account of all the evidence supplied to previous reviews to help inform the outcome.

Role of local authorities in supporting businesses

It is vital that the review acknowledges the important role which local authority regulators play in supporting legitimate businesses in the UK and creating the conditions in which a sustainable and balanced economy can grow. There have been a number of reviews and reports examining this area in the past which we hope will be considered as part of the current review. There is plenty of evidence of how local authority regulation supports businesses in these reviews, and we would highlight in particular the work of the Institute for Local Government Studies at the University of Birmingham as recorded in their report, [The Impact of Trading Standards in Challenging Times](#). The researchers found that there was 'clear evidence of the commitment in trading standards to support business in facilitating compliance' (p33).



There is room for exploring the role of standards, accreditation and assurance schemes, and codes of practice in the area of product regulation. Voluntary standards for example can be used by businesses to demonstrate they are applying best practice for a particular product and complying with their obligations to ensure the safety of those products. Equally, recognised and accredited schemes could share data about the businesses they audit with regulators to build trust that they are fulfilling their obligations. Mapping out some of this landscape in theory and practice will form the basis of CTSI's work with BSI on deregulation in the future.

Reducing the burden on business from the regulation of place should focus on simplifying the process – for example joining up registration and licensing systems to take a whole place approach. Some of these processes are required by statute and are overly complex.

Twenty-first century regulation

Alongside these broad principles for revising the regulatory framework, it is necessary to recognise recent and future changes in the trading environment. One of the biggest challenges for consumer protection in the 21st century is the globalisation of trade and the role of the internet. This requires cross border policing of trade and cooperation with international partners.

A key issue that is frequently raised by our members in relation to the challenge of regulating online trading is the role of intermediaries. To what extent should intermediaries and platforms be responsible and liable for the products and services whose sale they are facilitating? Clearly this question has implications for a number of areas within the remit of trading standards, including age restricted sales and product safety. It has been discussed on multiple occasions by the Consumer Protection