

LONDON BOROUGHS OF BRENT AND HARROW

TRADING STANDARDS ADVISORY BOARD – 13th MARCH 2007

REPORT NO. 8/06 OF THE DIRECTOR OF TRADING STANDARDS

FOR INFORMATION

TITLE OF REPORT: **TRADING STANDARDS BUDGET FOR 2007/2008**

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides Members with the latest information concerning the Trading Standards Budget for 2007/2008 together with the implications on service delivery.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Members consider this report and comment where appropriate.

3.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The whole report concerns the finance of the Trading Standards Service.

3.2 Although this report does not itself have financial implications, it reflects the position following a major reorganisation within the Service carried out to provide substantial savings to each borough and further developments since then. Report No 6/06 concerning the reorganisation was presented to Members at the Advisory Board on 28th November 2006. Since then, the reorganisation has been implemented, but each borough has taken further decisions to reduce the establishment of each borough by one Enforcement Officer. The Brent budget, as detailed below, provides resources to fund the new Brent establishment. At the time this report was written, the budget for Harrow had not been confirmed, but unless there are reductions in the budget detailed below, there are no further staffing implications for Harrow. Full implementation of the reorganisation is subject to completion of reimbursements to the pension fund

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Although this report does not itself have staffing implications, it reflects the position following a major reorganisation within the Service carried out to provide substantial savings to each borough and further developments since then. Report No 6/06 concerning the reorganisation was presented to Members at the Advisory Board on 28th November 2006. Since then, the reorganisation has been implemented, but each borough has taken further decisions to reduce the establishment of each borough by one Enforcement Officer. The Brent budget, as detailed below, provides resources to fund the new Brent establishment. At the time this report was written, the budget for Harrow had not been confirmed, but unless there are reductions in the budget detailed below, there are no further staffing implications for Harrow. Full implementation of the reorganisation is subject to completion of reimbursements to the pension fund

5.0 DETAIL

5.1 At the Trading Standards Advisory Board on 28th November 2006, Members considered report No.5/06 concerning the Trading Standards Budget for 2007/2008.

Members also considered report 6/06 concerning a reorganisation within Trading Standards with a view to achieving savings in year 2007/8 and beyond. At that meeting, Members raised concerns that the Service was being presented with many more important areas of work and that there was a danger that current funding levels would not be able to support all this work. Concern was also expressed about the diminishing income and the effect on the Service. Since then each Council has implemented further budget cuts on the Service including the deletion of an Enforcement Officer post in each of the two boroughs.

- 5.2 The budget for Brent has now been approved, which reflects the budget outlined in report 5/06; the savings outlined in report 6/06 and the deletion of the Enforcement Officer post. The budget is detailed in paragraph 5.5.
- 5.3 Confirmation of the budget from Harrow for 2007/8 has not been received yet, but the latest position is detailed in paragraph 5.6.
- 5.4 This report should be read in conjunction with report No. 5/06, which is attached as Appendix 1 and report 6/06. As Harrow has not yet notified the Service of the budget allocation for 2007/8, the budget details in this report in relation to Harrow could be subject to change. A verbal update of Harrow's agreed budget will be given at the Advisory Board meeting.
- 5.5 Brent is providing a total budget of £963,000 (which will include all the notional rent for the Trading Standards accommodation). This is reduction of £78,869 from the 2006/7 budget. This will result in a reduction of service delivery, and the Service will have to heavily prioritise the demands placed on it.
- 5.6 The required budget from Harrow, to reflect report 5/06; savings identified in report 6/06 and the deletion of an Enforcement Officer would need to be £798,827. This is a reduction of £45,256 from the 2006/7 budget. This will result in a reduction of service delivery and like Brent, a great deal of prioritisation will occur, with some duties inevitably taking a lower priority.
- 5.7 If Harrow approves this amount, the total available budget for the Service would be £1,761,827 .
- 5.8 If the final budget is approved as above, the overall work output will be as detailed in report 9/06, later on the agenda for this meeting. Although the service delivery will be reduced in each borough, it is anticipated the Service will achieve the upper level of each authority's Comprehensive Performance Assessment performance indicators as applied to the Service.

6.0 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

6.1 2007/2008 Budget File.

Any person wishing to inspect the above should contact N Bilon, First Floor, 249 Willesden Lane, London NW2 5JH, telephone 020 8937 5500.

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