

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member - Environmental

DATE: 20th October 2010

SUBJECT: **TRADING STANDARDS NORTH WEST ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10**

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REPORT OF: Peter Moore
Environmental & Technical Services Director

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**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To inform the Cabinet Member – Environmental of the Trading Standards North West Annual Report 2009/10.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

To advise the Cabinet Member – Environmental of the Trading Standards North West (TSNW) Annual Report 2009/10 and request support for Sefton Trading Standards to continue to fulfil the position of 'Lead Authority'

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Cabinet Member – Environmental

- a) Notes the content of this report; and
- b) Supports the Environmental Protection Department's Trading Standards Section in its continuing role as lead authority for TSNW and endorses co-ordination between the 23 North West Trading Standards Authorities in support of improved efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: N/A

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Immediately following the expiry of the "call-in" period for this meeting.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: N/A

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework: All Cost Implications are met from within existing budgets

Financial:

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £	2010/ 2011 £	2011/ 2012 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Funded by:	-	-	-	-
Sefton Capital Resources	-	-	-	-
Specific Capital Resources	-	-	-	-
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Funded by:	-	-	-	-
Sefton funded Resources	-	-	-	-
Funded from External Resources	-	-	-	-
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal:

The formal contractual arrangement defines the legal roles and responsibilities of the 23 North West Authorities.

Risk Assessment:

The Council has a statutory duty to provide Trading Standards Services. TSNW establishes the mechanism for co-ordinated operations and improved effectiveness and efficiency for Trading Standard Authorities. Failure to carry out this duty effectively could risk the claim that the Council has failed its 'Best value' obligations in this area.

Asset Management:

N/A

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community	√		
2	Creating Safe Communities	√		
3	Jobs and Prosperity	√		
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability		√	
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	√		
8	Children and Young People	√		

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

N/A

Background

1. The Cabinet Member, Environmental will recall the report presented on 4th October 2006 entitled “*Co-ordination of Trading Standards in the North West*”. This report advised of the development of a regional partnership between the then 22 North West Trading Standards Authorities called Trading Standards North West (TSNW).
2. The Trading Standards Service is a statutory service provided by all 205 upper tier authorities in the UK. Although provided locally for the benefit of local residents, activities will inevitably lead to cross border issues where greater co-operation is required, particularly with neighbouring services.

Trading Standards North West (TSNW) Partnership Contract

3. Trading Standards professionals and their legal advisors considered the issue of governance in relation a regional partnership and this led to the establishment of a contractual relationship between the constituent authorities. Sefton agreed to act as the lead authority for TSNW.
4. The strengthening of the TSNW Partnership as a result of this contract has allowed the member local authorities to coordinate those activities that are progressing at a local or sub regional level and those that are progressing at regional level. This helps to ensure there is no duplication of effort. It is however unlikely that all aspects of the work currently done locally could be done regionally or sub regionally because of service adjustments made to cater for local political and demographic needs.
5. It was agreed that the TSNW Partnership, once established, would report annually and so be accountable to the elected members in the constituent authorities. A copy of the TSNW Annual Report 2009/10 is appended to this report as Annex 1.

The TSNW Annual Report 2009/10

6. The content of the report is self-explanatory and highlights the key issues affecting Trading Standard's Services in the region. The report provides a brief introduction to TSNW before focusing on projects such as
 - Food Safety
 - Regional Intelligence
 - Dealing with Problem Traders (Case Study)
 - Consumer Direct
 - Tackling Illicit Tobacco & Tobacco Controls
 - Illegal Money Lending and
 - The Public Protection North West Pilot Project
7. The level each individual authority contributes to an individual activity is dependent upon local priorities.

8. The cost of Regional Coordination and Regional Intelligence has to date been funded by contributions from TSNW members, the Office of Fair Trading, Local Better Regulation Office and project sponsors.

Implications for the Trading Standards Section

9. The publication of the TSNW Annual report will raise awareness of consumer law issues and lead to an increase in the level of demand for Trading Standards Services.
10. TSNW has increased regional coordination that has led to more targeted and effective enforcement of criminal Trading Standards law creating Gershon efficiency savings and the report cites examples of how the work of partnership offsets costs to the member local authorities.
11. The 'cross cutting' nature of TSNW also supplements other services, e.g. Community Safety, Environmental Health.
12. It is envisaged that the TSNW authorities will need to continue to subsidise the cost of coordination if funding from Central Government Agencies is cut / reduced. The Annual Membership Subscription for 2010 was £500.