

<b>Mayor And Cabinet</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Matters referred by the Public Accounts Select Committee		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item Number</b>	
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Public Accounts Select Committee		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	8 July 2009

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report informs the Mayor and Cabinet of the comments and views of the Public Accounts Select Committee arising from discussions on the issues and implications for Trading Standards and Regulatory Services arising from the Economic Downturn. These are set out in section three below.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Mayor is recommended to:

- (i) note the views and recommendations of the Public Accounts Select Committee as set out in section three; and
- (ii) ask the appropriate Executive Director(s) to comment and provide advice on the comments of the Select Committee.

## **3. Public Accounts Select Committee Views**

- 3.1 On 15 June 2009, the Public Accounts Select Committee considered a report on the issues and implications for Trading Standards and Regulatory Services arising from the Economic Downturn. This followed a request by the Mayor that the Public Accounts Select Committee be asked to “assess the capacity of our trading standards and regulatory services to focus attention on a potential increase in operations of non-licensed / non-registered trades people”.
- 3.2 The Select Committee made the following comments and observations:
- 3.5 The Committee was impressed by the work being carried out by Lewisham’s Trading Standards and Regulatory Services Teams; but concerned about their capacity to deal with any further increase in workload. Whilst some expansion in work had already occurred as a result of the economic downturn, it was noted that the full impact of the recession on their work areas would not be felt until at least October 2009. The Committee therefore recommends that Mayor and Cabinet request further information on the issues and implications for Trading Standards and Regulatory Services arising from the Economic Downturn at an early stage of the 2010/11 budget process, when more data is available, to include commentary on staffing, outputs and productivity.

3.6 The Committee acknowledged that a case could be made for allocating additional resources to any service. However, given the specific issues that had been raised, consideration should be given to increasing the resources available to these teams as part of the 2010/11 budget process; and avoiding savings proposals in this area. The Committee was concerned that, previously, a number of savings proposals had been forward in relation to the Trading Standards and Regulatory Services Teams, some of which had been accepted and some of which had not. The Committee noted that, where the proposals had not been accepted, the teams had been able to carry out important and beneficial work (e.g. carry out a higher number of knife purchase attempts than would have been possible if the savings proposal relating to this activity had been accepted).

#### **4. Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to refer reports to the Mayor and Cabinet, who are obliged to consider the report and the proposed response from the relevant Executive Director; and report back to the Committee within two months.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore requested that a response is provided to the Public Accounts Select Committee at its meeting scheduled for 22 October 2009.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The Economic Downturn: Issues and Implications for Trading Standards and Regulatory Services – report to the Public Accounts Select Committee on 15 June 2009

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Charlotte Dale (ext. 49534), or Kevin Flaherty, Head of Committee Business (ext. 49327).

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<sup>1</sup> The constitution was amended following the implementation of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and states that:

*(a) When the overview and scrutiny committee or a select committee makes a report and/or recommendations to the Council or to the Executive, (whether in response to a councillor call for action or otherwise,) the overview and scrutiny committee/select committee may publish its report and/or recommendations and must give notice in writing to the Council or the Executive requiring the Council or the Executive, within 2 months of receipt by the Council or Executive of the report/recommendations, or (if later) the notice:-*

*1) to consider the report or recommendations*

*2) to respond to the overview and scrutiny committee/sub committee indicating what (if any) action it intends to take*

*3) if the overview and scrutiny committee/sub committee has published its report/recommendations to publish its response*

*4) if the overview and scrutiny committee provided a copy of its report/recommendations to a member referring a matter to it under the Councillor Call for Action, to provide a copy of the response to that member .*