

**REPORT TO:** ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – 27<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015  
**REPORT ON:** TRUSTED TRADER PROGRESS REPORT  
**REPORT BY:** DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT  
**REPORT NO:** 112-2015

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Committee on the Dundee City Council Trusted Trader scheme and seek approval for the addition of a formal Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service to the scheme.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that committee note the contents of this report and remit the Director of Environment to accept the offer from Ombudsman Services as detailed below to provide the required ADR service.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The initial setting-up cost is £5,000 and the annual cost of the ADR service is £3,350. Approximately 50% of these costs will be recharged to other authorities operating the scheme under a Memorandum of Understanding with Dundee City Council. The Director of Corporate Services advises that Dundee City Council's share of these costs can be met from the Trusted Trader scheme membership income.

## **4.0 MAIN TEXT**

- 4.1 Launched in 2005, the Dundee City Council Trusted Trader scheme is in its tenth year, and provides a supportive framework to over 160 local businesses as well as helping protect local consumers. Article IV of the Minute of Meeting of the Environmental Services and Sustainable Committee of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2005, (Report No. 145-200 refers).
- 4.2 The Trusted Trader scheme has been promoted as a model of good practice and eight other Scottish councils currently operate the scheme in their own council areas under a Memorandum of Understanding.
- 4.3 Complaints are occasionally received from consumers who have used members of the scheme and are dissatisfied in some way with work or services provided by scheme members. The current dispute resolution process involves mediation by trading standards staff. In the main, these are resolved amicably, but inevitably some consumers remain dissatisfied. Around 20 complaints of varying seriousness are received each year.
- 4.4 As of July 2015, the UK Government is required to implement the EU ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) Directive and this is intended to provide consumers and businesses with a faster, less costly and more straightforward means of obtaining redress.
- 4.5 Appointing an ADR service provider to make determinations on Trusted Trader complaints that cannot be resolved by mediation would be an effective and economic means of dispute resolution, without resorting to the court system, and would satisfy the obligations of the ADR Directive.
- 4.6 Competitive quotes were sought for ADR services via the Council's Procurement section and the following offer was received:

<b>Company Name &amp; Address</b>	<b>Initial Setting Up Fees</b>	<b>Est' Annual Charge *</b>
Ombudsman Services, Warrington, WA4 6HL	£5,000	£3,350

The single quotation received from Ombudsman Services meets the specification of the tender issued.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Democratic and Legal Services and Director of City Development have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.

Ken Laing  
**Director of Environment**

Kenny Kerr  
**Head of Environmental Protection**

8<sup>th</sup> April 2015