

Further to your letter of the 21 September 2017, I apologise for the delay in being able to provide you with a substantive response.

I have attached a spreadsheet showing a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with producing Waltham Forest News, which totals £390,500 and delivers a net income of £125,500 after factoring in advertising income of £516k. The advertising primarily relates to mix of public sector, education, care providers and local events for the public and I can confirm that such advertisements fully comply with the Council's advertising policy which remains extant (having been last amended in 2009) and is on the web site.

Currently our advertising income is generated from long serving internal notices and public sector organisations such as the NHS and educational services. Our advertising rates are higher than competing local titles and we purposely refuse any advertising enquiries from estate agents, new home developers and car dealers. These sectors are the core income areas for local commercial titles.

We have a part time member of staff who manages all of process around advertising and we are not overly proactive in our approach, instead we process inbound (reactive) enquiries and contact past advertisers on an ad hoc basis. Our internal advertising is from services like adoption, planning, highway and public notices.

As we have outlined in great detail in previous communications, Waltham Forest News also serves as a free listings service which allows local community groups and businesses to promote their activities to the community at no cost. This 'What's On?' section of Waltham Forest News is extremely popular with readers, businesses and the community sector, and one of the many benefits that Waltham Forest News provides to the public that would be lost by a reduction in frequency.

In the latest edition of Waltham Forest News dated 9th Oct, we have raised awareness of the Council's London Borough of Culture bid, promoted the Black History Comedy Night, and the Walthamstow High Tide Pop up Theatre, provided information on voter registration, and a piece about Zero Emissions Delivery, consulted on TMOS and CPZs, and a piece on improving facilities at Whipps Cross Hospital, and finally an article promoted foster carers. All these articles provide information for all our residents on what we are doing and how they can get involved.

Waltham Forest News also continues to provide excellent value for money to our residents as it allows us to carry our own statutory advertising at a far lower cost than would be the case were we to advertise in another local paper.

Regards

Mark Hynes
Director of Governance and Law
London Borough of Waltham Forest