OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

2023

BUDGET & PLAN

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

12th September, 2022

The Honourable Leo Cato
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Office of the Houses of Parliament
Mt. Wheldale
ST. GEORGE'S

Dear Mr. Speaker,

Pursuant to Section 19(2) of the Ombudsman Act No. 24 of 2007, I have the honour to present to the House of Representatives, the Ombudsman Budget and Plan for fiscal year 2023 for its approval.

I thank you.

Yours sincerely,

.....
Ronnie I. Marryshow
Ombudsman

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Introduction

Having been established in 2009, this is the thirteenth Budget and Plan for the Office of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is expected to prepare and present a Plan for the activities and funding of the Office and submit same to the Speaker to be placed before the House of Representatives by 15th September of each year as required by Act #24 of 2007.

The Ombudsman is an independent, impartial investigator of complaints from citizens and visitors alike about incidences of maladministration experienced in Government Ministries and Departments, and all other Public Authorities in Grenada.

High on our agenda for 2023 is the resumption of community outreach activities, and the Office becoming actively engaged in more public relations work, which was curtailed largely because of Covid-19 and associated decreased public expenditure. In order for this to be realized, there is the urgent task to fill the vacant post of Complaints Officer. Provision for this is outlined in our 2023 Budget.

The Plan intends to capture all activities the Office of the Ombudsman hopes to execute over the next year. Using fiscal prudence, it hopes to establish the necessary framework to undertake efficient investigations and provide sound recommendations for the timely resolution of complaints. The Plan also alludes to the scope of its relationship with the various Public Authorities in the furtherance of good governance.

Strategic Intent

Vision Statement: The furthering of good governance by protecting the individual from injustice and unfairness.

Mission Statement: To provide effective service through complaints-handling procedures that are timely, while ensuring that the highest levels of confidentiality and impartiality are always maintained.

Our Purpose and Core Values: To serve the Grenadian community through the independent and impartial resolution of complaints and investigation of mal-administration taken by or on behalf of Government Ministries and Departments or Boards, Commissions, Committees or similar Body providing a public function.

The Office operates with six (6) core values of Independence, Confidentiality, Impartiality, Integrity, Accountability and Transparency underpinned by the following principles:

External Principles

We are:

- Fair and impartial
- Professional and thorough

We:

- Listen with respect
- Seek resolutions that are principled and practical

Internal Principles

- We respect and support each other as a team
- We are committed to high standards of practice in our work
- We strive continuously to improve our services
- We value the expertise and knowledge of our staff

Priority Actions Include:

- ✓ Assessing and responding quickly to all complaints received; achieving full resolution where possible to ensure public trust in the Public Service;
- ✓ Continuation of our public outreach to children, parents, and teachers of selected secondary schools;
- ✓ Working steadfastly with the National Coordinating Committee for Human Rights (NCCHR) towards the eventual goal of transitioning the Office of the Ombudsman to a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI);
- ✓ Greater collaboration with the Caribbean Ombudsman Association (CAROA) and the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI).

Key Focus Areas For 2023

1) Resume and expand our public awareness campaign on the role and function of the Office of the Ombudsman;

2) Build the capacity of staff in providing better service delivery, through the employment of a new Complaints Officer;

3) Recommence our Community Outreach Services, to include a minimum of quarterly visits to Carriacou and Petit Martinique to receive and address complaints of residents;

4) Improve our overall efficiency by using our limited resources to achieve the best possible results;

5) Strengthen our networking mechanisms locally, regionally, and internationally.

Focus Areas	Objectives	Outcomes	Responsible Officer	Performance Indicators
1. Continue public awareness campaign on the role and function of the Office of the Ombudsman.	To actively engage in a variety of appropriate promotional activities throughout the year.	Hold scheduled press conferences and public presentations. Quarterly update of website. Participation in quarterly radio/TV programmes to highlight work and image of Office.	Ombudsman and Team	Public better informed and educated on functions of the Office. Publication of Annual Report and other important material.

Focus Areas	Objectives	Outcomes	Responsible Officer	Performance Indicators
2. Build the capacity of staff in providing better service delivery, through the employment of a new Complaints Officer.	Complete the staff team early in 2023, in order to better fulfil the Office mandate.	Easier access by the public to services offered, especially re complaints.	Ombudsman Complaints Officer Investigations Officer	More complaints are received and more quickly resolved. Services offered sustained and high visibility maintained.
3. Recommencement of Community Outreach Services.	Make quarterly visits to Carriacou and Petit Martinique and bi-monthly visits to outer parishes.	Greater, easier access to services for people from rural communities and sister isles.	Complaints Officer Ombudsman	Increased number of complainants from other parishes.
4. Improve our overall efficiency by using our resources to achieve the best possible results.	Consistently high level of efficiency in administration of Office.	Timely processing of payment vouchers. Accurate accounting for revenues received and expenditure incurred. Improve and quicken complaints-handling process.	Ombudsman & Executive Secretary	Office efficiency maintained. More satisfied complainants.
5. Strengthen our networking mechanisms.	Collaborate with local, regional and international Agencies/ Commissions through regular attendance at meetings, webinars, etc.	Expanded networking pool; shared best practices.	Ombudsman and Team	

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1st JANUARY – 31st DECEMBER, 2023

OBJECTIVE:

To provide efficient accounting services for the Expenditure of Public funds appropriated to the Office of the Ombudsman.

ACTION PLAN:

ACTIVITIES	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	RESULT INDICATORS
Prepare cash flow projections	Monthly	Executive Secretary and Ombudsman	Timely processing of payment vouchers
Prepare and monitor the payment of vouchers	Weekly	Executive Secretary and Ombudsman	Accurate accounting for Revenues received and expenditure incurred
Maintain internal accounts (both capital and recurrent) by: Recording all financial transactions and tallying all entries in the ledger	Ongoing	Executive Secretary To be checked by Ombudsman & Accountant	Early identification of potential problems Timely and accurate financial allocations
Review budget performance, ledger entries, totals and balances	Monthly	Ombudsman/Accountant	Management and control of expenditure
Prepare the next year's budget and plan for the Office of the Ombudsman	July – August	Ombudsman and Team	Proposed Capital expenditure and projected recurrent expenditure

Estimate of expenditure for 2023 is as follows:

Expenditure for the operations of the Office for the period 1st January to 31st December, 2023 is projected at three hundred and sixty thousand, eight hundred and forty-seven dollars (**EC$360,847).**

Balance in current/chequing Account at the Grenada Cooperative Bank as at 31st July 2022 is fifty-four thousand, seven hundred and sixty-four dollars ($54,764.00).

In accordance with ACT #24 of 2007, which was amended in 2013, Section 19 sub-section 2 outlines the procedure for the financing of the Office of the Ombudsman. The approved Budget is embedded in the Vote of Parliament and then disbursed.

Categories	2022 Budget	2022 Actuals (Jan-Aug)	2023 Budget	Remarks
PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS				
Ombudsman	$ 72,000.00	$ 48,000.00	**$ 72,000.00**	
Complaints Officer	$ 44,330.00	$ -	**$ 43,200.00**	**See Explanatory Note 1**
Investigations Officer	$ 45,510.00	$ 30,340.00	**$ 47,700.00**	**See Explanatory Note 2**
Executive Secretary	$ 35,670.00	$ 23,780.00	**$ 36,840.00**	**See Explanatory Note 2**
Office Assistant	$ 25,000.00	$ 16,800.00	**$ 26,400.00**	**See Explanatory Note 2**
Sub-Total	**$ 222,510.00**	**$ 118,920.00**	**$ 226,140.00**	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	**$ 3,000.00**	**$ 1,500.00**	**$ 3,000.00**	**See Explanatory Note 3**
Sub-Total	**$ 3,000.00**	**$ 1,500.00**	**$ 3,000.00**	
ALLOWANCES				
Telephone - Ombudsman	$ 1,200.00	$ 800.00	**$ 1,200.00**	
Telephone - Complaints Officer	$ 1,000.00	$ -	**$ 1,200.00**	
Telephone - Investigations Officer	$ 1,200.00	$ 800.00	**$ 1,200.00**	
Sub-Total	**$ 3,400.00**	**$ 1,600.00**	**$ 3,600.00**	
Transport - Ombudsman	**$ 7,200.00**	$ 4,800.00	**$ 7,200.00**	
Transport - Complaints Officer	**$ 6,000.00**	$ -	**$ 7,200.00**	
Transport - Investigations Officer	**$ 7,200.00**	$ 4,800.00	**$ 7,200.00**	
Sub-Total	**$ 20,400.00**	**$ 9,600.00**	**$ 21,600.00**	
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL				**See Explanatory Note 4**
Accommodation	**$ -**	$ -	**$ -**	
Air Fare	**$ -**	$ -	**$ -**	
Subsistence/Meals	**$ -**	$ -	**$ -**	
Sub-Total	**$ -**	$ -	**$ -**	
LOCAL TRAVEL				
Transport	$ -	$ -	**$ 2,000.00**	
Subsistence	$ -	$ -	**$ 1,000.00**	
Sub-Total	**$ -**	$ -	**$ 3,000.00**	**See Explanatory Note 5**
TRAINING				
Local Training	$ 1,000.00	$ -	**$ 1,500.00**	
International Training	$ -	$ -	**$ 1,000.00**	
Sub-Total	**$ 1,000.00**	$ -	**$ 2,500.00**	**See Explanatory Note 6**
UTILITIES				
Electricity	**$ 7,200.00**	$ 4,604.00	**$ 8,400.00**	
Telephone	**$ 5,700.00**	$ 3,044.00	**$ 6,000.00**	
Internet	**$ 2,820.00**	$ 1,880.00	**$ 2,820.00**	
Cable TV	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	
Sub-Total	**$ 15,720.00**	**$ 9,528.00**	**$ 17,220.00**	**See Explanatory Note 7**

MEMBERSHIP FEES				
Caribbean Ombudsman Association	$ 816.00	$ -	**$ 1,378.00**	**See Explanatory Note 8**
International Ombudsman Institute	$ 544.00	$ -	**$ 544.00**	
Sub-Total	**$ 1,360.00**	$ -	**$ 1,922.00**	
OTHER				
Maintenance Equipment	$ 1,000.00	$ -	**$ 1,000.00**	
Community Outreach Services	$ -	$ -	**$ 4,000.00**	**See Explanatory Note 9**
Public Relations	$ 2,000.00	$ -	**$ 3,000.00**	**See Explanatory Note 10**
Rent	$ 50,100.00	$ 31,000.00	**$ 50,000.00**	**See Explanatory Note 11**
Cleaning & Supplies	$ 2,750.00	$ 1,000.00	**$ 2,900.00**	**See Explanatory Note 12**
Office Supplies	$ 7,500.00	$ 1,455.00	**$ 7,500.00**	**See Explanatory Note 13**
Office Equipment	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	
Social Security Contributions	$ 6,411.00	$ 3,802.00	**$ 9,105.00**	**See Explanatory Note 14**
Insurance	$ 1,661.00	$ 1,209.00	**$ 2,360.00**	**See Explanatory Note 15**
Admin/Sundry Expenses	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,100.00	**$ 2,000.00**	
Sub-Total	**$ 72,422.00**	**$ 39,566.00**	**$ 81,865.00**	
GRAND TOTALS	**$339,812.00**	**$180,714.00**	**$360,847.00**	

Explanatory Notes to 2022 Budget

Note 1:
Provision is being made for the salary of the Complaints Officer.

Note 2:
Contract renewal is due for the remaining three (3) Officers; budgetary allocations reflect the new salary arrangements.

Note 3:
Provision made for the purchase of professional accounting and legal services.

Note 4:
No international travel anticipated in 2023.

Note 5:
Provision made for travel to Carriacou and Petite Martinique to conduct Community Outreach services.

Note 6:
Small allocation is budgeted for useful in-person or online training, which may be suitable for staff.

Note 7:
Increased allocation for utility bills is required.

Note 8:
Provision is made for the payment of overdue membership fees increase to the Caribbean Ombudsman Association.

Note 9:
This allocation is to facilitate the rental of office space in Carriacou and Petit Martinique and other parishes outside St. George's.

Note 10:
A slight increase is made in the allocation for Public Relations work.

Note 11:
Provision made for the rental of office space from the Public Workers' Union (PWU).

Note 12:
Allocation is made for janitorial services and purchase of cleaning materials.

Note 13:
This is allocated for the purchase of toners for Xerox WorkCentre.

Note 14:
Provision is made to facilitate the payment of Social Security for staff.

Note 15:
Provision includes medical insurance coverage for staff.