

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List: Actions Arising from the 10th November 2014 meeting of the Committee**

<b>Action Requested</b>	<b>Date originally circulated for Members' consideration</b>	<b>Response</b>
Further information was requested about the figures referred to in the Committee papers relating to the management of meeting rooms and an explanation as to why there had been a significant increase in the budget for this purpose. Officers were also asked to provide details about repairs and maintenance costs in the feedback.	05/01/15 in the agenda pack.	The Management Meeting Rooms refers to the staffing costs that as associated with our landlord responsibilities for all meeting rooms including; Batchley, Winyates etc. These are caretaking and landlord related cleaning costs. Since 2013 the budgets have been adjusted to show the staffing costs against the management of the meeting rooms rather than against the individual property units. The budgets for the community rooms have reduced accordingly.
A breakdown of all IT licenses used by the Council, including costs and where these were used, was requested.	29/12/14 by email.	<p>The attached two files (appendices 1 and 2) are an extract from the Redditch Borough Council Cedar Finance system for 2013 as this is the last full financial year data that we have and covers the cost for licenses and maintenance as these two items are usually linked when purchasing or supporting technical systems.</p> <p>It does not include items that are purchased via the Agresso system and are then split separately so for example 'Xpress' is used for elections but is not shown as it will appear as a recharge as either the whole delivery of the ICT shared service or directly as a percentage share of the two Councils.</p> <p>It is worth Members noting that a single finance system will make the breakdown of data much easier in future as currently some costs are held in the Agresso Finance system at Bromsgrove District Council and are calculated as part of the single recharge."</p>
Members requested an explanation for the large variance for the figures provided for Print and Reprographics from 2012/13 to 2013/14.	17/11/14 by email.	Officers have confirmed that this variance in costs occurred due to a service review being completed during this period. As a result of this review the structure of the team changed and savings were achieved.

<p>Further information about the income that had been received from solar panels was requested.</p>	<p>05/01/15 in the agenda pack.</p>	<p>Income of approx. £28,000 per annum paid into :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crematorium (currently used to pay off Salix loan for installation)</li> <li>• Town Hall (currently used to pay off Salix loan)</li> <li>• Palace Theatre (currently used to pay off Salix loan)</li> <li>• All Sheltered schemes (includes Auxerre House, Beoley Road, Bredon House, Downsell House, Gorsey Close, Keats House, Retreat Street, Arthur Jobson House, Chiltern House, Harry Taylor House, Ibstock House, Malvern House, Mendip House and St. David’s House)</li> </ul>		
<p>Members asked for further information about why the overall spend on enabling services had increased by almost £600,000 between 2012/13 and 2014/15.</p>	<p>05/01/15 in the agenda pack.</p>	<p>The difference of £600,000 represents the difference between the actual position for 2013/14 and the budget for 2014/15. The underspend in 2013/14 was due to a number of factors including vacancies, unidentified savings that had to be delivered during the year and additional income received in services. An exercise has been undertaken to ensure that all recurring savings can be removed from future budgets in both 2014/15 and 2015/16.</p>		
<p>The Committee requested that the budget figures for 2013/14 be provided for comparative purposes (though with the capital costs removed) in future budget scrutiny reports.</p>	<p>05/01/15 in the agenda pack.</p>	<p>These are attached at Appendix 3.</p>		
<p>Further information was requested about how many businesses had been helped and had asked for help from the Council and whether the assistance provided had been successful, including through the provision of support grants. (This matter was discussed whilst considering the Strategic Purpose “help me run a successful business”).</p>	<p>01/12/14 by email.</p>	<p>Our main programme of support for new and growing businesses is Enterprising Worcestershire. The figures below are for the life of the programme, (i.e. April 2013 – to date). An “assist” is at least 12 hours of support from a business advisor. In addition to this figure there will be those that have enrolled on the scheme but not yet completed 12 hours (the enrolled figure includes those that have received at least 12 hours support).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1240 1289 1771 1358"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1240 1289 1675 1358">Start-up Grants</td> <td data-bbox="1675 1289 1771 1358">13</td> </tr> </table>	Start-up Grants	13
Start-up Grants	13			

		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Start-up Assists</td> <td>46</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Businesses Opened</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Growth Grants</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Growth Assists</td> <td>39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Referrals onto the Programme</td> <td>229</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Enrolments onto the Programme</td> <td>130</td> </tr> </table>	Start-up Assists	46	Businesses Opened	16	Growth Grants	17	Growth Assists	39	Referrals onto the Programme	229	Enrolments onto the Programme	130	<p>Redditch Borough Council has contributed £36,490.50 to the Enterprising Worcestershire Programme. The value of support received is £156,394; the difference being contributions from Worcestershire County Council and the European Regional Development Fund.</p> <p>In addition to Enterprising Worcestershire, we are also a delivery partner to the Business Development Programme. Our contribution is officer time and from this programme 6 Redditch businesses have received grants.</p>
Start-up Assists	46														
Businesses Opened	16														
Growth Grants	17														
Growth Assists	39														
Referrals onto the Programme	229														
Enrolments onto the Programme	130														
<p>The Committee asked Officers to provide an explanation for the reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour costs at a time when costs for Community Safety were increasing and whether there was a correlation between these two developments.</p>	<p>21/11/14 by email.</p>		<p>The reduction in the ASB budget reflects the reduction of the number of post holders within the service. In 2012 there was a Manager, 4 ASB Officers and 1 ASB Assistant, this reduced during 2013 and 2014 to a Manager and 3 ASB Officers, this was due to the approval of a voluntary redundancy and a post holder leaving the authority. In addition from 2013 onwards the ASB Officers were transferred to become Locality Officers (with an ASB Specialism) as part of the Housing Locality Transformation Trial.</p>												

		<p>In respect of Community Safety, there was historically a Community Safety budget and a separate Community Cohesion budget. These two budgets were merged during 2013/14, however, the community cohesion budget was not shown in the budget report presented to Overview and Scrutiny. Consequently the report looked like there had been a reduction in funding, whereas the overall budget has remained at £92,000 for the last three years.</p> <p>Therefore there is no correlation between the reduction in ASB costs and the increase in the Community Safety costs.</p>
Details of all street lighting in Church Hill, particularly in Sandhurst Close, was requested by Councillor Baker.	26/11/14 directly by email to Cllr Baker from the service Officer.	A plan of street lighting has been emailed to Councillor Baker. However, this contains confidential information. A copy of this plan can be provided to Members on request.
Members asked for further information about the number of enquiries that had been dealt with by the Housing Options Team and how effective this work had been.	Not yet available.	This information had not been provided by the date of publication.
The Committee asked for clarification regarding expenditure on consultants over the past two years for work on the Local Development Framework and the work that had been covered by the consultants.	18/11/14 by email.	<p>For the Local Development Framework - In the 2013/14 financial year the total consultancy spends was £11,400.30 and for this financial year is currently £3,447.71 (as of 18/11/14). This will increase during this financial year.</p> <p>This makes a total over the past two years of <b>£14,848.01</b> on consultancy spending.</p> <p>A breakdown of the spending is provided in confidential appendix 4.</p>
Further information about usage levels for Shopmobility, costs and the grant provided by the Kingfisher Shopping Centre was requested.	12/12/14 by email.	The usage levels for 2013/14 were 15,826 visits. The locality of Shopmobility users has not historically been collected in a report format. However, this information (contained in Appendix 5) was recorded as a snap shot for a month in April/May of this year. This information includes data on whether equipment was pre-booked, and the time the

		equipment was used. The cost of the Shopmobility service in 2014/15 is projected at £62,870. This takes into account the Kingfisher Shopping Centre grant of £30,000 per annum and a projection of £10,000 that will be received from user donations during the financial year.
A breakdown of the costs, including replacement and maintenance costs, for the Dial a Ride Service was requested.	12/12/14 by email.	<p>The breakdown is attached at Appendix 6 and includes maintenance costs.</p> <p>In respect of replacement costs, it is estimated that a vehicle will have a 7 year life, consequently there is no vehicle within the fleet that will require replacement within the next 4 years. At this time the vehicle replacement will feature within the Environmental Services vehicle replacement programme.</p>