

**Budget Jury – Session 4, Tuesday 30 November 2010**

**Redditch Borough Council Priorities 2011/12 – Safe, Clean and Green, Enterprising Community, Well Managed Organisation**

**Options for Change**

<b>Option</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Shared Services	M	Quality of service issues / need to ensure a balance and retention of right staff
Procurement Target	H	Agreed
Confidential ( Terms and Conditions review)	H	Agreed
Stop the Scrutiny Budget ( now reduced )	H	Agreed
Hospitality Budget	H	It was queried whether the civic suite rental could be reduced, how often it was booked and it was suggested that further advertising should be carried out
Environmental Services Review	H	Agreed
Sponsorship Target	H	Agreed
Use of Reserves	H	Agreed

## Capital Bids for 2011/12

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Revenue Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
1	<p><b>Winslow Close – flats central heating</b> To install a modern electrical oil filled radiator system to the flats. This would enable an efficient and more economical system to be in place for tenants which would reduce maintenance provision and reduce CO2 emissions.</p>	£120,000	None	H			This would reduce repairs, give better resident satisfaction, lower bills and produce more efficient heating
2	<p><b>Member ICT Facilities</b> The project will deliver standard ICT equipment for all Members at RBC to ensure that members have full secure access to all information in a timely way and to reduce the printing costs associated with Committee reports. Members will also be able to use the wireless system that is being implemented as part of the ICT shared service improvements.</p>	£32,000	£8,250 (A)		M		Noted that training may be needed. Some concerns that money won't be saved immediately and that there may be some resistance.
3	<p><b>New telephone system</b> To deliver a new phone system at the Council to save rental costs of £20,000 and to ensure that the system in place has adequate lines and monitoring provision to manage the customer calls to the Council. The system will also enable free calls between RBC and BDC which will also save money in the future.</p>	£90,000	£35,000 (E)	H			Lack of previous investment acknowledged; this will help provide better customer service
4	<p><b>Intelligent Banking Solutions (IBS) Debtors (Revenues &amp; Benefits Debtors)</b> To provide an enhanced functionality of the current debtors system to enable officers to manage the debts more effectively and to identify trends and age of debt to ensure effective recovery of customer debt in the future.</p>	£10,000	None	H			This was considered a small amount to invest for the potential pay back

**Capital Bids for 2011/12**

	<b>Main Bid</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Associated Revenue Bid*</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Automated Customer Feedback</b> Implementation of an automated customer feedback mechanism enables customers to provide real time feedback on their experience of contact at the time of the contact. This helps inform service delivery improvements and provides us with greater ability to evaluate the success of transformation. This would support rather than replace more traditional customer satisfaction surveying. It would also remove the need for mystery shopping exercises, which are difficult to manage, expensive and often do not give a true reflection of customer experiences.</p> <p>Mechanisms for collecting good customer feed back and evidence that we use it to prioritise improvements, are vital evidence for Customer Service Excellence Accreditation. More importantly though it provides us with valuable customer insight.</p>	£10,000	£6,000 (U)			L	The Jury likes the idea of customer feedback eg capturing whilst already on the phone. It was considered this can be achieved in other ways and the Jury questioned how the information would be used. It was agreed in principal but maybe for another year.
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Solar Panels</b> Invest to save project - to install Solar PV panels on suitable Council Buildings to include the Town Hall and Palace Theatre. This would support the Councils aim to improve the commitment to the green agenda whilst potentially generating income through the sale of energy.</p>	£48,000	None		M		The maintenance costs and life expectancy of the panels were queried. It was considered expensive in the current economic climate; the Jury recommended that alternatives are explored.

Capital Bids for 2011/12

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Revenue Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
7	<p><b>Equipment for Podcasts / Video Camera / Training / Editing Equipment</b> By purchasing the equipment this will enable the Council to look at extending the range of communications internally and eventually externally.</p>	£2,000	None	H			It was viewed as a small investment compared with potential benefits
8	<p><b>Flood alleviation</b> To improve the infrastructure in areas of the Borough that are affected by flooding - these include Batchley Brook, Bromsgrove Road and Callow Hill.</p>	£80,000	None	H			The Jury are interested in knowing more about what this involves, how long the infrastructure would last and the cost of maintenance
9	<p><b>Site investigations – new cemetery</b> To identify a new site on which a cemetery can be established. To be owned and managed by Redditch Borough Council; and to agree funding for a feasibility study and the development of a timetable.</p>	£35,000	None	H			Agreed - necessary
10	<p><b>Fleet replacement</b> To purchase new vehicles to ensure the fleet can provide an effective and reliable service to customers. This includes £92k in relation to Dial -a-Ride vehicles.</p>	£655,000	None	H			The Jury received an update on the breakdown of the fleet. Whilst they agreed with the majority of the replacements they felt that a short-term fix should be investigated in respect of dial-a-ride or perhaps reduce by one vehicle or consider a leasing option.

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Revenue Bids for 2011/12

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Capital Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
<b>A</b>	<p><b>Grants officer post</b> To fund the post to ensure effective allocation of grants of £250k to the 3rd sector &amp; other partners. Currently funded by LSP but funding being withdrawn for 2011/12. Post builds relation-ships with partners and aims to develop a sustainable 3rd sector in the Borough.</p>	£40,000	None				<p>Medium to High. (but following evaluation of the current post)</p> <p>It was considered expensive for issuing grants worth £250k and the Jury wondered if this could be delivered within existing resources. The wider functions of the post were explained and the group understood the need for the grants process to be properly administered.</p>
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Private sector Housing Officer (0.5 fte)</b> This 0.5fte post ensures the inspection and compliance of 135 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) in accordance with statutory legislation.</p>	£21,000	None	H			Agreed
<b>C</b>	<p><b>Member ICT facilities</b> This cost relates to the ongoing annual cost of the capital bid proposed. The bid relates to providing standard ICT equipment to members to provide secure access to information in a timely way, reduce printing costs associated with Committee reports and allow members to use the wireless system currently being implemented as part of the ICT shared services improvement.</p>	£8,250	£32,000 (2)		M		As per capital bid
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Microsoft Office &amp; PC Suite – Upgrade</b> The project will upgrade the Microsoft Licenses at RBC to bring MS Office to a supported version (current version support has expired). This will enable officers to work in the most efficient way</p>	£69,000	None	H			Agreed as this is needed to facilitate a more efficient service

	and ensure support is available if issues arise.						
<b>E</b>	<p><b>Telephone system</b> This cost relates to the ongoing annual cost of the capital bid proposed. The bid relates to delivering a new 'phone system which will save RBC costs of rental and will provide adequate lines and monitoring provision to manage calls to the Council. This system will enable free calls between RBC and BDC saving money in the future.</p>	£35,000	£90,000 (3)	H			As per capital bid
<b>F</b>	<p><b>Security for PC's</b> The virus scanning at RBC has proved to be inadequate as viruses have spread in the past. Encryption is also required to provide security for removable storage as used by both authorities and is a requirement from the code of connection to the GCSX (Government Secure Data Transfer). This bid will provide for the security system to be implemented.</p>	£6,000	None	H			Agreed - necessary
<b>G</b>	<p><b>GCSX (Gov. Connect) – connection charges</b> There is a statutory compliance to ensure the Council has secure lines linked for transfer of document and information to Government departments. Grant funded for implementation in 2010/11 but funding withdrawn. Compliance remains. The connection is required to allow staff to send/receive information from DWP and other Government departments.</p>	£18,000	None	H			Agreed - necessary
<b>H</b>	<p><b>Customer feedback – Tagish</b> This cost relates to the ongoing support and maintenance costs for the complaints and Freedom of Information systems.</p>	£2,000	None	H			Agreed

Revenue Bids for 2011/12 (cont.)

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Capital Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
I	<p><b>Organisational development</b> To support the workforce to develop to meet the needs of the organisation in the future. This will include support and training in customer service and transformation to ensure our staff have the capacity and capability to provide excellent and consistent services to our community and customers.</p>	£88,000	None				Medium to High
J	<p><b>Town Centre regeneration – Grants (evening economy)</b> To implement a Business Support Scheme to provide financial incentives to local business to locate and trade within the town centre, particularly the town centre users which will contribute to the early evening economy. Leading to a better trading environment enhancing the demand for property increasing both its capital worth and rentable value.</p>	£15,000	None			L	It was felt that this sum of money would be too small to be effective and the proposal was unrealistic
K	<p><b>Core Strategy review</b> To fund the statutory review of the Core Strategy.</p>	£50,000	None	H			Agreed - necessary
L	<p><b>Aftercare service</b> To develop an aftercare service the purpose of which is to embed businesses in the Borough and to minimise the risk of relocation. This activity is included in the Redditch Economic Development Strategy Action Plan and without funding this activity will not be able to take place.</p>	£15,000	None			L	
M	<p><b>Business start up grant</b> The project would provide a £500 grant to people who start a new business and undertake a free business start up course provided by NEW College. This activity is included in the Redditch Economic Development Strategy Action Plan and without funding this activity will not be able to take place.</p>	£5,000	None				The Jury said they would want to know more; have many people been through the process before and was it beneficial?H

Revenue Bids for 2011/12 (cont.)

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Capital Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
N	<p><b>Careers fair for Year 8 students</b> The careers fair aims to foster economic ambition in young people and encourage them to think about their future opportunities in relation to their educational attainment. This activity is included in the Redditch Economic Development Strategy Action Plan and without funding this activity will not be able to take place.</p>	£1,000	None	H			It was suggested that there was potential for a larger sum of money to be made available for this activity
O	<p><b>Employment land review forecasting and retail needs assessment refresh</b> For consultant to assess the need for Employment Land / retail requirements in the Borough. This will be done using updated Economic data that takes account of the recession.</p>	£30,000	None	H			Agreed - necessary
P	<p><b>Graduate programme</b> To develop a graduate placement programme within the Borough. The Social Science Workplace Experience Programme (SSWEP) is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The programme is used to access the skills and knowledge of undergraduate social science students and is subject to application. This activity is included in the Redditch Economic Development Strategy Action Plan and without funding this activity will not be able to take place.</p>	£1,000	None				It was considered that this money would be better allocated towards the careers fair
Q	<p><b>Implement bureau service for payroll &amp; improvements to BACS process</b> To provide an automated system for the update and consolidation of monthly information from staff to enable payment of car mileage and overtime etc. This system is currently resource intensive and it is anticipated that there will be a saving in staff time to offset this cost.</p>	£13,000	None	H			

Revenue Bids for 2011/12 (cont.)

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Capital Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
R	<p><b>Stress audit</b> To enable pro-active support to staff who may suffer from stress and to provide advice and support of health related matters to reduce the impact of stress related sickness.</p>	£3,000	None				Whilst the group understood the importance of managing stress they did not feel that this would be effective. No score.
S	<p><b>Develop and introduce health and well-being programme</b> To improve the support given to staff in their health and well being. This should reduce the sickness and support the absence management across the Council.</p>	£10,000	None			L	
T	<p><b>Develop and deliver training and development programme</b> To increase the corporate training budget across the Council from £20,000. This will ensure staff are fully trained in all issues including: Health and Safety, Risk and Financial Management and HR policies and procedures.</p>	£13,000	None	H			
U	<p><b>Automated customer feedback</b> This cost relates to the ongoing annual costs of the capital bid proposed. Implementation of an automated customer feedback mechanism – this enables customers to provide real time feedback on their experience of contact at the time of the contact.</p>	£6,000	£10,000 (5)			L	As per the capital bid
V	<p><b>Customer service excellence</b> This represents the cost of Customer Service Excellence assessment which provides public services with a practical tool for driving customer-focused change within the organisation. Particular focus is on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. There is also emphasis on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.</p>	£4,000	None	H			

Revenue Bids for 2011/12 (cont.)

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Capital Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
W	<p><b>Monthly staff newsletter</b> To provide a monthly newsletter to replace the existing Redditch Core Brief and Contact, and will be distributed with pay slips. The newsletter will appear on the Orb intranet and sent to all staff, as many staff in outlying services do not have e-mail access and may miss out on important communications.</p>	£1,584	None	H			Agreed
X	<p><b>Big Society campaign</b> This campaign will build on the 'Redditch-It's My Place' campaign which started in early Summer. The campaign will celebrate volunteering and encourage residents to be active in the community. It will encompass bold, hopefully memorable and fun messages about 'doing your bit' for your community.</p>	£5,000	None				Consider spending the money of education related activity instead. No score.
Y	<p><b>Children's and Young People Magazine</b> This one-off publication is an opportunity to engage with our younger residents, and fits in with the new town / younger population for Redditch. The Council supports a number of activities for the younger population but in print, nothing is aimed at children and young people. We would envisage attracting sponsorship to help meet production costs but suggest £4,000 to pump prime the project.</p>	£4,000	None	H			This was considered a good idea
Z	<p><b>Information boards</b> To provide branded Council information boards at community centres and other community focal points to inform residents about the Council's work, contact details, major developments, events information etc. Information posted would be updated regularly to ensure relevance and accuracy.</p>	£10,000	None			L	The Jury did not think this was the best use of the money

Revenue Bids for 2011/12 (cont.)

	Main Bid	Amount	Associated Capital Bid*	High	Medium	Low	Comments
AA	<b>Removal of tourist signs</b> To remove the lit tourist information signs which are in need of an upgrade and are a cost to the Council in terms of both energy consumption and the carbon footprint.	£1,000	None			L	
BB	<b>Redditch Matters</b> The Redditch Matters magazine is sent to all households in Redditch three times a year (Spring, Summer and joint Autumn / Winter editions) and provides residents with a round up of what is the Council is doing.	£10,000	None	H			
CC	<b>U Decide</b> The U Decide project is a participatory budgeting exercise that will allow young people from Redditch Borough to put in bids for positive activities and equipment for themselves and other young people in the Borough. The criteria will be developed with young people that reflect the issues and priorities of the Borough. The bids will be evaluated on a rolling programme by a group of young assessors or 'young bankers' and the most beneficial projects will be granted funding. It will step into the gap left by Worcestershire County Council's FLOSS initiative (the Youth Opportunity Fund monies have been un-ring fenced), which was well accessed by young people in Redditch during the lifetime of the scheme.	£10,000	None	H			

Further Options for Change

£480k required to close the gap; members of the Budget Jury were in favour of exploring shared services as far as possible. They also felt that additional income would be a difficult option to achieve.