

WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP

14 March 2008

Report of Chief Executive

PARTNERSHIP BUDGET

1. The budget for the West of England Partnership Office (WEPO) covers staffing, supplies and services and accommodation. Costs for individual projects (mainly transport and waste) are accounted for separately.
2. WEPO currently employs 13.5 staff (the 0.5 is a post shared 50:50 with North Somerset Council).
3. The gross budget for 2007 / 2008 is estimated at approximately £890,000. However income is received from SWRDA in support of the strategic economic partnership and of the Local Intelligence Network (£58,000). The net cost of the office will therefore fall below £800,000 for the financial year once creditors and year end under spends are taken into account. This is in line with the estimated budget submitted to the Partnership at the beginning of 2007 / 2008.
4. For day to day budgeting purposes the budget is divided into a series of cost centres – transport; inward investment; policy, intelligence and research; and waste planning. Fully detailed budget breakdowns are available for each cost centre and for the office as a whole.
5. In the coming financial year (2008 / 2009) a similar level of expenditure is envisaged.
6. The only significant change to the budget arises from a change to office accommodation which is described in detail below.

Office Accommodation

7. WEPO is based in Wilder House, a Bristol City Council office block, where it took over the office space previously occupied by the former Joint Strategic Planning and Transportation Unit. In February 2008 WEPO moved from the 5th to the 1st floor in Wilder House, a move necessitated by the requirements of the City Council to expand its traffic management operations on the 5th floor.
8. The licence fee for the 5th floor has been £11,000 pa from May 2001 (plus 9.25% of the annual outgoings of the block – rates, maintenance etc). This represents £6.00 per sq.ft. for 1,830 sq.ft.

9. The licence fee for the 1st floor is proposed at the current open market rental value which equates to £8.50 per sq.ft. The new office is slightly larger at 2,145 sq.ft. giving a revised rental of £18,250pa. The service charge would rise slightly to 10.85% of the total for Wilder House.
10. It is recommended that the new licence fee is agreed and that any necessary reports are submitted to individual Councils for approval.

Recommendation:

That the Partnership notes the report.