



Report to: Income Generation Sub-Committee, 9th October 2018

Report of: Head of Finance

Subject: INCOME GENERATION PROJECT UPDATE

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the project updates and current programme of work.

2. Background

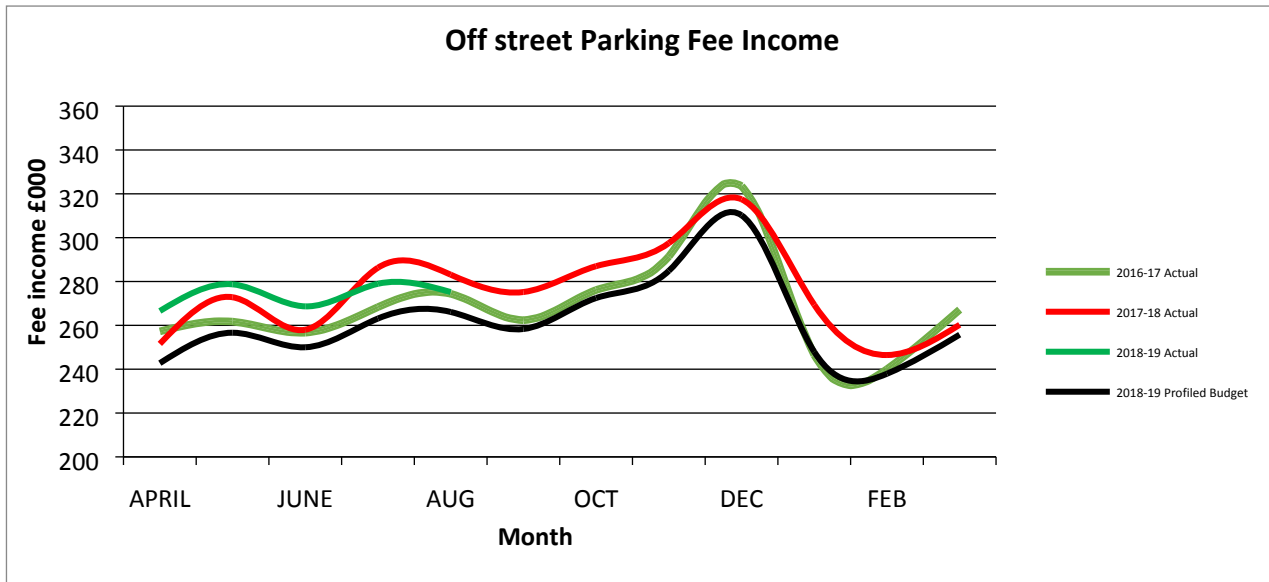
2.1 The Income Generation Co-ordinator was appointed in January 2018 and set up a range of projects to support the Council's drive to generate more income from existing activities and to develop new opportunities.

2.2 Although she has now left the Council, the projects continue to develop through the existing teams. The hosting of the Museums Service by the City Council has afforded the opportunity for closer working with the commercial and marketing arms of the service to contribute to the Council's new income generation projects.

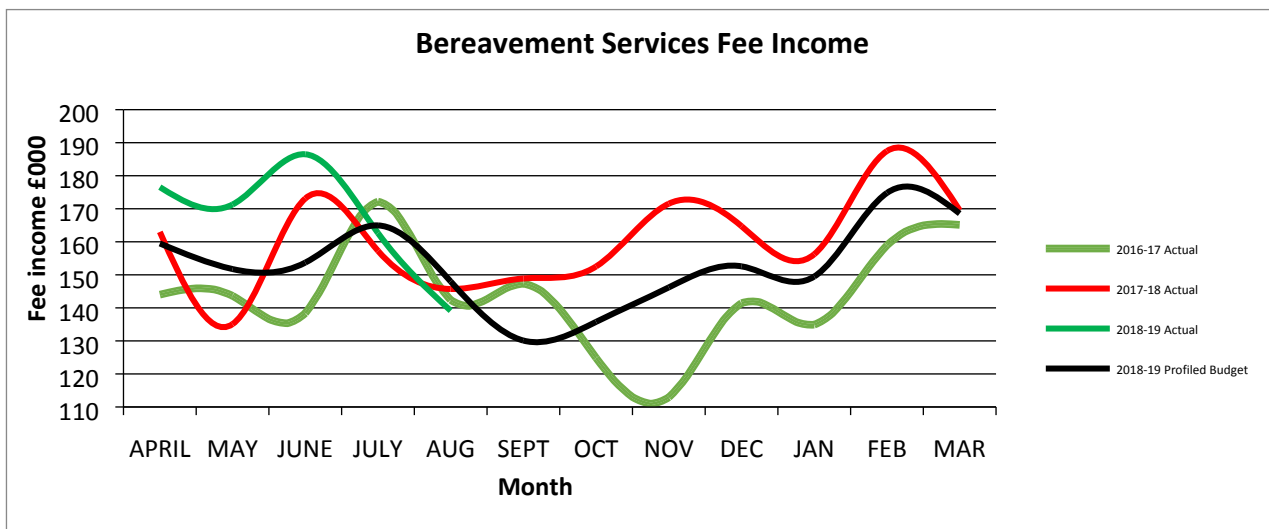
3. Information

3.1 The income achieved by the Council in 2018/19 to the end of August is greater than the budget and is summarized in **Appendix 1**. The main areas of growth were off-street Car Parking and Bereavement.

3.1.1 Car Parking – income increased by 2.5% over the previous year in 2017/18 and this trend has continued in 2018/19 with a slight slow-down in the last couple of months. There has been no change in the car park tariffs.



3.1.2 Bereavement – in 2017/18 income increased by 12% over the previous year with the greatest increase being in Q4. 2018/19 began strongly and income has reduced in the last couple of months following the pattern of previous years.



3.2 There are currently a number of projects in hand which involve income generation and are at differing stages of development ranging from initial feasibility studies though to development of existing services. The latest progress on each is summarized below.

3.3 The Guildhall – in 2017/18 income from room hire for weddings and events was £62k: a 5% increase on the previous year. Bookings from high profile events such as the boxing and gin festival remain strong along with smaller private events.

- 3.3.1 The Guildhall team has produced a brochure that sets out the rooms available for hire. It can be adapted for the different customer sectors that have been identified namely weddings, commercial events and smaller personal parties etc. The team is ordering new staff uniforms and arranging some customer service training. Together this will enhance the marketing of the Guildhall particularly to customers who visit in person.
- 3.3.2 The team has developed a standalone website for the Guildhall which can be found at <http://www.worcesterguildhall.co.uk/> rather than it being embedded within the main council website. Social media is also being used regularly to promote events that are taking place and to publicise the Guildhall as an events venue.
- 3.3.3 With the marketing material now complete the team is embarking on a business development initiative focused on businesses in the city centre. The aim is to increase the awareness of the Guildhall as a venue for meetings, conferences, interviews, training courses etc.
- 3.3.4 An Autumn Wedding Fair is to be held in the Guildhall on Sunday 7 October. Over 30 local businesses have signed up to take part and the income will generate a small surplus for the Council. The Museums Service has also agreed to take a table to market the Commandery as another wedding venue. This is targeted at smaller wedding parties of up to 50 guests whereas the Guildhall is best suited to larger groups. They are therefore sufficiently different for the Guildhall and Commandery to be complementary rather than in competition. The link to the Commandery's wedding website is shown below.
- http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/museums/info/1/the_commandery/35/weddings_at_the_commandery
- 3.4 Trade Waste - The council's Trade Waste service is introducing a recycling service which has gone live in September. The recyclate carries a significantly lower disposal cost and this saving can therefore be reflected in a lower price charged to the customer. The added service will initially be rolled out to existing customers and will then be followed by a marketing campaign to attract new business.
- 3.5 Garden Waste – the number of customer accounts continues to increase with a 1% increase in income compared to 2017/18. A targeted marketing campaign is planned for 2019.
- 3.6 Riverside – this is covered in a separate report to the Committee.
- 3.7 Solar power – the contract to install solar panels on the roof of St Martins Gate car park has been awarded and work is scheduled to be completed by November.
- 3.8 Council Lottery – the meeting of the Income Generation Sub-committee on 10 July 2018 approved the setting up of a council lottery for Worcester. Subsequently officers have met with the company whom it is intended will operate the lottery. The various licenses are being applied for with a planned go-live date in spring 2019.
- 3.9 A desktop review is also being undertaken to identify those discretionary services which the Council does not currently charge for to recover its costs, when most other councils do. These include s106 monitoring fees, street naming fees and charging developers for new domestic refuse bins.

Ward(s)

All Wards

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Background Papers:

None