STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Public Questions regarding the threatened closure of Stroud TIC under Agenda item 6c (but also relate to item 6b):

Questions from Mr J Bassett	Questions Committee	
1) Before any decision can be made can a full and detailed breakdown of the £55000 running costs and £23000 support charges be made to clarify what these costs and charges actually cover?	Equipment Purchase	27
	Sales Stock	24
	Clothes & Uniforms	213
	Printing & Graphics - External	726
	Photocopying - Internal Recharge	928
	Stationery	364
	Security Services	1,205
	Bank Charges	1,164
	Postal Services	653
	Telecommunications	2,725
	Sales Stock	3,410
	Ticket Reimbursement	43,018
	Publications	551
	Running Costs	**55,008**
	Finance - Accountancy	1,302
	Finance - Payroll	2,309
	Finance - Risk Management	95
	IT - Infrastructure Team	3,499
	Business Development	400
	Procurement Services	403
	Senior Management	10,910
	Corporate Services - Cashiers	1,000
	Corporate Services - Mail Room	2,202
	Corporate Services - Public Relations	303

	Corporate Services - Policy & Review	299	
	Business Continuity	301	
	Support Charges	**23,022**	

Support charges represent best accounting practice of estimating a financial value of the level of support provided to the TIC. They do not represent a true financial cost and have not been a factor in the decision making process.

Both of these tables refer to actual costs. As per the financial implications of the report the potential saving to the Council is based on the budgeted level of support (£81k).

2) How much of the district and how many queries can be answered by trying to set up volunteer led TICs in different wards with the tiny sum of £2000?	The £2,000 one off grant is to help encourage the seven Town councils to work together with other neighbouring councils to promote districtwide tourist information. This would assist the existing TIC's in Nailsworth, Painswick and Wotton-under-Edge and help develop tourist information in town councils areas where this facility doesn't currently exist. The Town councils will apply for the £2,000 grant funding to help them to do this, the grant is not intended to cover the full cost of setting up a volunteer led TIC.
3) Why are the council even bothering to support the Canals bid when they admit themselves that they have no centralised tourism strategy and intend on closing the central Tourist Information Centre?	The Canal Project is about bringing benefits in terms of ecology, environment, heritage, economy, leisure, health and wellbeing. For example, investment into the canal corridor totalled £115 million in the period 2008-17. As such, there are tremendous community benefits resulting from the project, quite apart from it attracting more visitors.

The Canal also has two Visitor Centres which serve visitors to it. One is at Wallbridge (Stroud) and one at Saul Junction. The towpath has numerous information panels and QR code points.

Work is underway on planning the next stage of canal restoration, leading to a Heritage Lottery Fund bid late next year. This planning work includes sustainable tourism initiatives. This is likely to include provision of canal information at both Stroud and Stonehouse railway stations. |