

Report to the Board of Directors from the Managing Director, Will Myles

20th June 2018

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to collate and reports the relevant operational and strategic elements of the Visit Isle of Wight Limited activities.

It will be formed of the following different sections:

1. Matter arising from the previous board meeting
2. HR and team issues impacting on the organisation
3. Website and Voluntary contribution sales YTD
4. GDPR and IT
5. Travel Press and PR impact / report
6. IOW / Industry Press and PR impact / report
7. Access fund projects
8. Website statistics and development
9. Brand Marketing activities
10. Campaign Marketing activities
11. Social Media
12. BID activities, funding and 2018 / 19
13. Visitor Information Centre
14. Finance and governance

This report will offer a 2018 Quarter 2 perspective up to and including 31st May 2018

1.0 Matter arising from the previous board meeting

- 1.1 Investigation of an approach to publish a redacted version of the board minutes / MD report – This has been looked at and it should be a simple process to delete commercially sensitive materials / information and to be published on the industry website, although the board should decide what information should be redacted.
- 1.2 WM to look at the finances of the organisation and its processes – this has been carried out and changes are being implemented as detailed at item 14 in this report.
- 1.3 WM to look at preparing our own accounts – with the change in our book-keeping function, this will be discussed at the meeting.
- 1.4 WM is keen to increase comms with levy payers – a Managing Director roadshow is currently being planned for post summer across the island along with increased on-line interactions and Vlogs.
- 1.5 WM to communicate with the industry – once the campaigns have been completed then it is proposed to evaluate and post results on the industry website.

- 1.6 Communication that the visitor economy is a benefit to the island – this is an ongoing process and is being communicated to everyone met.
- 1.7 Move the date of tourism conference – this is being actively looked at along with the potential to have the event as an on-line webinar
- 1.8 Consultation drop-ins not very successful – this is being addressed in 1.4 of this report and increasing the local press and PR around the events. It is an on-going process.
- 1.9 GDPR – this has been a massive undertaking, with policy changes, opt-in e-mails, secure server changes etc, but Visit Isle of Wight are in a very positive place and future proofed.
- 1.10 The complaints process has been implemented robustly.
- 1.11 Communications of HMRC identifying organisations in the tourist industry regarding uniforms – this has been communicated to the industry.

2.0 HR and team issues impacting on the organisation

- 2.1 Quarter 2 of 2018 has seen several challenges with the team; however, this was to be expected during the transition period after the introduction of a new Managing Director and their very different approach to teamwork and projects.
- 2.2 Our Visitor Travel projects manager has decided to continue with her own personal development and has resigned to take up a position with Wightfibre, whilst this was not expected, the longer-term benefits are positive as this position was a full-time salaried position and going forward will be altered to be a fixed term contracted position. The recruitment for this position is underway and 1st interviews will take place on 25th June 2018.
- 2.3 A team building session took place on 21st May 2018 where all team members were away from the office for the day, breaking down “barriers” and working together on shared experiences and taking the team forward.
- 2.4 One to One individual sessions have been introduced across the team, they have been very well received, this process is currently based on an operational model, once 2018 / 19 KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) are set alongside the new budgets and campaigns then KPI monitoring will come into place, which will strengthen our performance and alongside that our HR performance.
- 2.5 Things are settling down across the team as they are devolved more responsibility and are empowered to carry out their roles without every decision requiring sign-off.

3.0 Website and Voluntary contribution sales YTD

- 3.1 The website sales and voluntary contribution figures don't make great reading at the moment, however with other specific projects such as GDPR management and implementation along with the coordination and lead on the Tourism conference now concluded, this part of the organisation should increase in line with the 2017 trends.

The current YTD figures are:

Web sales income generated for 2017/18 YTD:	£28,029.06
Web sales income for the same period in 2017:	£32,888.26
Target sales income for 2017/18:	£65,000.00

So as can be clearly seen we are a way off achieving that particular figure however this is the team focus until the remainder of the financial year, will the target be achieved? The answer is no, but it will be quite close.

At the time of writing this report the individual's Voluntary contributions income is as follows:

Voluntary contributions generated for 2017/18 so far:	£6,875.01
Target contributions for the full financial period are:	£21,000.00

3.2	Since the figure were initially declared the Web sales have increased to:	£32,536.50
	Voluntary Contributions have increased to:	£11,097.53

With that focus it is clear that the business is there and can be achieved.

4.0 GDPR and IT

4.1 During the Quarter 2 of 2018, plans and processes have been put into place to take into consideration all of aspect of the new GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) regulations that came into force on 25th May 2018.

This included a complete back to basics approach to the usage and storage of Data within the organisation, with our suppliers and our contractors. This piece of work should not be underestimated and became central to everything that we do.

Staff processes, data mapping processes, privacy policies have all been updated, that alongside the introduction of an updated IT server allows the organisation to move forward with confidence.

4.2 A full audit of current IT equipment used has been carried out and is now available should it be required.

5.0 Travel Press and PR Impact / report

5.1 This element covers 'known' coverage throughout the three-month period, and it should be noted that the values given are based on information currently available. Advertising equivalent value (AEV) and publicity value information for international, some regional publications and on-line coverage is not always available.

Value of National/international print and on-line media:	£901,667.67
Value of local media coverage:	£29,105.91
Total	£930,773.58

Compare this with £504,697.50 for the same period in 2017 this shows a massive year on year (YOY) increase comparison.

The cumulative Year to Date (YTD) figures show a similar trend, which has to be seen a positive impact on the overall perception of the island as a travel and holiday destination.

Jan to 31 st May 2018:	£1,757,405.61
Jan 2017 to 31 st May 2017:	£942,408.00

A full list of the coverage is available if required.

- 5.2 During the Quarter 2 the following media visits took place and their value and coverage will be felt later in the year, which will be reported at later board meetings.

Vivian Vassos, exec editor of Zoomer magazine & Everythingzoomer.com

Rachel Dixon, The Guardian

Mark Rowe, BBC Countryfile

Mark Hudson, The Sun (in conjunction with Four Communications)

Al Ferguson, The Dads Network

Fatima Ali, Blogs by FA

Jane Knight, The Times

David Wickers, Good Housekeeping

Gwen Lane, The LA Girl

Richard Mellor, The Metro/The Telegraph

Elise Britten, Bristol Post (in conjunction with Four Communications)

Wibke Carter, US-based Wine Dine Travel Magazine

Ben Clatworthy, The Times

Sophie Davis, Sophie's Suitcase

6.0 IOW / Industry press and communications impact / report

- 6.1 Local / industry press communications especially linking with BID levy payers across the island is a priority for the organisation and has been given its own focus, as this is an important route to market locally and with our BID levy payers.

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|--|---------------------|
| 6.2 The YTD (1st Jan till 31 st May 2018) local AVE is valued at: | £107, 120.43 |
| The specific Q2 (1st April till 31 st May) local AVE equates to: | £10,057.79 |

To enable Media outlets to consume your messages more easily internal creation of content has been adopted by VIOW, therefore the number of pieces of Audio circulated YTD – on average 3 clips of audio per story, approximately 15 stories - **45** separate pieces of audio.

The YTD number of Industry e-mails sent out from 1st January 2018 till 31st May 2018
YTD - **23**

Number of Industry e-mails sent out to the industry Q2 (1st April till 31st May) YTD –
11

Number of topics / stories covered for YTD – **80**

Number of topics / stories covered for Q2 – **38**

The overall sent rate for the industry newsletter – was **1300** pre- GDPR and now it is
985 – This drop off was to be expected as there is a majority of BID levy payers who
use personal e-mail address for their business and must opt-in, it is being addressed.

Generic Delivered rate – **99%**

Generic Open up rate – **31%**

Generic Click through rate – **4%**

7.0 Access fund projects

7.1 March saw the end of the 1st year of the Sustainable Travel Access Fund and the full
budget was allocated and met the KPI's as required. The year-end highlight results
were as follows:

7.2 1A Tourism Business engagement

Key Card Scheme

622 Days Travelled out of 1880, 12,000km travelled by bus

Additional budget from another project underspend allowed the purchase more key
cards taking the current total to 100.

Green Star Online

527 businesses linking to green travel info or the VIOW green travel pages on the
website - target was 500

Sustainable Travel Familiarisation Trips

8 trips completed across the year to include Bus, Bike, walk, train engaged with
approx. 400 tourism business at these trips

7.3 1B Destination Walking and Cycling

Cycling survey all closed, and data is in the process of being analysed.

Two new cycling leaflets have been produced Red Squirrel Trail and Isle of Wight
Walking and Cycling.

During the project a joined-up approach with VIOW marketing on many adverts to
help share the costs and the awareness of walking and cycling has been increased.

Waterloo promotion on the station with South Western Rail

7.4 **2E Travel Ambassador Volunteers and Traineeships**

Traineeships – 105 business identified to take a trainee and passed on to the training provider (target of 100 placements) 15 young people placed into a business.

Volunteers – 66 volunteers have completed 1707 hours of voluntary work as a Travel Ambassador

Green Training Day for front of house staff where sustainable travel providers presented took place offering the option to train teams about green travel on the island. It was attended by 48 people and was hailed a great success with the feedback being really positive.

All in all these projects offer a really positive impact for visitors coming to the island and with Visit Isle of Wight at the forefront of sustainable tourism it offers major options as being seen as the experts in that field.

8.0 Website statistics and development

- 8.1 The Visit Isle of Wight website should be and is the main “Call to Action” (CTA) for all our campaigns, be they Brand or Tactical, that is why a massive amount of effort is being focused at the current website and the information that it provides.

There is an argument that all content should live on the website in a digital format and that all printed material should be “phased out”, whilst this point of view is the way forward, VIOW is not quite in the position to take that leap of faith right here right now, although it should be the long-term aim.

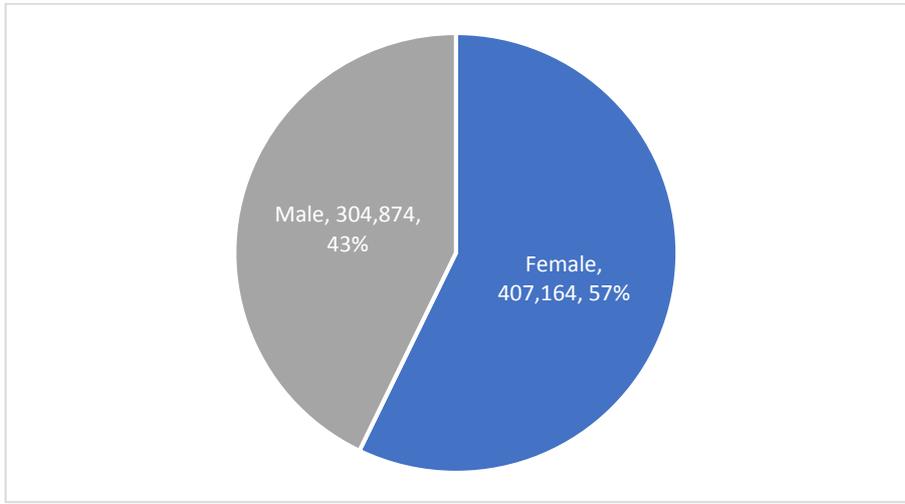
- 8.2 The website statistics speak for themselves, enclosed in this report are some of the more pertinent ones

Website Visits

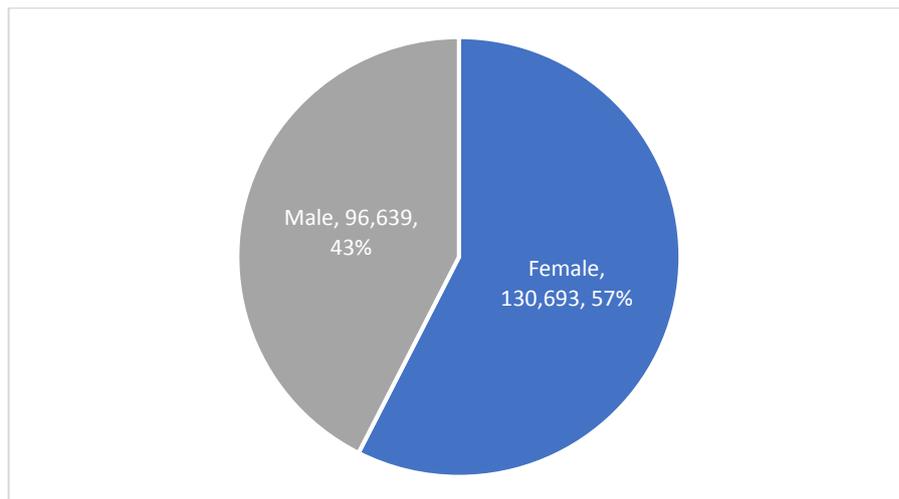
Month	2016 Visits	2016 Unique Visits	2017 Visits	2017 Unique Visits	2018 Visits
Jan	157,418	109,185	181,976	116,524	184,212
Feb	168,875	116,267	167,075	105,616	143,380
Mar	191,435	127,316	197,933	125,403	171,102
Apr	197,615	131,785	235,593	150,156	177,481
May	226,395	149,642	220,942	140,221	278,181
Jun	218,655	143,928	214,009	136,523	
Jul	284,059	181,660	289,067	180,196	
Aug	349,876	212,959	287,356	169,141	
Sept	204,093	130,932	170,539	110,857	
Oct	174,781	111,758	149,085	98,177	
Nov	135,689	86,829	107,075	72,270	
Dec	127,256	80,201	113,825	78,406	
Annual total	2,436,147	1,582,462	2,334,475	1,483,490	954,356

Demographics 2017 v 2018 YTD

2017				
Age	Users	Sessions	Pages	Session Duration
35-44	163,777	238,921	2.71	00:02:49
25-34	152,032	208,250	2.56	00:02:37
45-54	140,747	198,943	2.80	00:02:55
55-64	113,883	160,625	2.92	00:03:09
65+	97,824	142,210	2.99	00:03:19
18-24	58,057	77,362	2.52	00:02:29



2018 (Jan - May)				
Age	Users	Sessions	Pages	Session Duration
35-44	49,547	66,626	2.78	00:02:53
25-34	45,891	60,144	2.58	00:02:34
45-54	44,200	58,755	2.83	00:02:57
55-64	39,546	53,349	2.96	00:03:13
65+	36,602	50,397	3.01	00:03:23
18-24	13,513	17,281	2.72	00:02:49



It can be clearly seen that some visits show an upward trend in some month YOY and some are behind, however there have been some changes made to the Google analytics and Newmind algorithms

The demographics tell a similar story YOY and it continues to be a larger majority of female searches YOY at 57%

Since April 2017 the trends have shown the increase of the use of mobile devices to initiate the search with desktop 2nd and tablet 3rd choice.

A full report on all web statistics is available for perusal and comment.

8.3 Website development

There is currently an internal website development team addressing the current set up, design and UX of the website with a deadline of 3rd December 2018 should any changes or change-over be required.

9.0 Brand Marketing activities and impact

9.1 The off-island brand marketing of the island is seen as a critical part of increasing the brand awareness and website traffic to the island.

This activity takes place in the key areas where our target markets live and work and follow a simple approach to engage with target markets to inspire them to consider and ultimately book the island as their next destination for a day, short or longer break. By offering inspiring images of the island alongside the products that people can experience whilst here has been a trusted method for several years.

Do our brand campaigns prove cost effect?

This is a difficult question to answer, because Visit Isle of Wight is not in control of the product, the price, the quality or the sale.

Visit Isle of Wight is a facilitator, its job is to facilitate connections between target consumers and our Island, and our product sellers (of all types).

We could employ expensive brand research to analyse levels of awareness but given that our budget is relatively small, a news story could affect those results as easily as our advertising budget. Besides, the budget for this type of research could easily be more than the entire media budget for one of our campaigns.

Therefor a simpler way to analyse our performance is to look at website visits. All advertising carries our website address in a prominent position - and given the size of our website we are - in search results - the first site that appears.

Summary of performance

The following figures use the same weekly dates (Monday - Sunday) - week before campaign dates and week after campaign. Six weeks before Easter and Easter week up to Easter Sunday. Three weeks after Easter and the week of the second May Bank Holiday/ Half-term week.

Week before Week after Difference+/-

Twixmas weeks

Year	Week Before	Week After	+/- %
2016	10,311	17,549	+70%
2017	8,444	16,071	+90%
2018	6,452	14,643	+127%

Pre-Easter

Year	Week Before	Week After	+/- %
2016	21,775	25,541	+17%
2017	17,001	30,302	+78%
2018	15,533	22,779	+47%

Post-Easter

Year	Week Before	Week After	+/- %
2016	22,983	30,278	+32%
2017	23,751	29,468	+24%
2018	19,903	30,273	+52%

After each brand campaign (indicated in bold) a significant uplift in website visits can be seen that are considerably larger than in 2016 with the exception of Post-Easter 2017 - a year where Easter feel quite differently to both 2016 and 2018.

A very full report on the Brand marketing activities, creatives and target market mapping is available

10.0 Campaign Marketing activities

10.1 Additional campaigns have also been taking place during the 1st 2 quarters of 2018 which have included the Isle of Wight Walking Festival and “We’re going on a Bear Hunt” which have brought some interesting results, as follows.

10.2 Isle of Wight Walking Festival - feedback via an online survey:

- 91.31% of survey respondents were aged 55 and over.
- 54.31% of respondents had been before.
- On average the respondents rated the Walking Festival 9 out of 10 (where 10 is excellent).
- First year of online reservations was a success. 1,242 walkers reserved online.
- Of the people that registered on line and or on paper and gave us some sort of address 56% were off Island and 47% were Island.

10.3 Walker Data

Getting accurate data on walker numbers is tricky. Web reservations plus paper forms put the total of walkers for 2018 at 1,668. It was estimated that 3,000 attended in 2017.

Of the people that registered on line and or on paper and gave us some sort of address 56% were off Island and 47% were Island.

Walk leaders were asked to complete a form with data about walker numbers and send it back after their walk. This was to capture data from walkers who had not pre-registered online. There were 98 walks but only 45 items of post festival correspondence received.

Key points

There is a definite groundswell of support for the Festival from walker leaders who are mainly volunteers and from walkers. Many would like to see an Autumn Walking Festival.

The Walking Festival is important in bringing visitors during May. It's well known and popular – we have had emails from people wanting to book for next year including a Canadian visitor wanting to book flights now.

Any future sponsors should not be a competitor. Local accommodation providers did not want to promote Warner Leisure Hotels.

10.4 “We’re going on a Bear Hunt”

The Island-wide campaign in conjunction with the National Trust on the Island alongside Walker Books and Lupus Films is now well and truly underway; the most recent event brought over 350 people, again, the majority coming from off island.

There are 3 other NT Bear Hunt events to take place, 2 at St Helens Duver and 1 as part of the Children’s Literary Festival

In addition to the NT events, Vectis Ventures hosted a Bear Hunt event at Robin Hill where almost 1200 took part.

11.0 Social Media

11.1 The Visit Isle of Wight social media channels are becoming more and more important in the marketing mix and for the engagement with our target markets. Recent research has identified that this media channel is so important that businesses ignore it at their peril. Visit Isle of Wight focuses its efforts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with a strategy of informing and engaging with its followers. In addition to posts and engagement, boosting posts, advertising and sponsored links to similar market segment are proving fruitful.

The following statistics show the gains that have increased over the past year, especially on engagement.

Instagram 2018

	Followers	Reach	Impressions	Likes	Comments	Engagement Rate
January	5200	53224	109704	8750	191	17%
February	5400	49069	98410	8958	199	19%
March	5616	56317	125694	10882	311	20%
April	5879	48157	86887	8342	207	18%
May	6108	60718	104795	9200	193	15%

Instagram 2017

	Followers	Reach	Impressions	Likes	Comments	Engagement Rate
April	3780					
May	3981					

Instagram likes have increased by 35% year on year from May 2017 to May 2018.

We are still sharing other people's posts of photos that appeal to our audience and use the #pureislandhappiness hashtag.

Twitter 2018

	Followers	Impressions	Engagements	Engagement Rate	Paid Impressions
January	12873	382136	7542	2.0%	180384
February	13008	298965	6801	1.7%	
March	13231	398812	8328	2.1%	
April	13414	331453	5218	2%	
May	13559	356651	5278	1%	

Twitter 2017

	Followers	Impressions	Engagements	Engagement Rate
January	11000	321000	5394	1.4%
February	11200	295000	4535	1.2%
March	11300	279000	5400	1.4%
April	11500	255000	4761	1.4%
May	11600	300000	5254	1.4%

From May 2017 to May 2018 Twitter followers have increased by 14%

Impressions have increased by 18%

Facebook 2018

	Total Likes	Total Engagements	Total Reach	Total Organic Reach	Total Paid Reach
January	34721	38872	565592	259977	309909
February	34879	40298	273083	262570	1141
March	35960	79507	682215	423614	270008
April	36090	24416	254555	169543	17825
May	36234	28083	449055	156313	309653

Facebook 2017

	Total Likes	Total Engagements	Total Reach
January	30066	3893	63294
February	30574	2171	29432
March	30814	1905	24507
April	31319	2310	37232
May	32047	3751	46405

From May 2017 to May 2018 Facebook likes have increased by 11.5%.

Engagements have increased YOY by 93.38% over the same period. There are two reasons for this; Increased paid reach in 2018 and a change in the Facebook algorithm in Jan 2018. The algorithm now favours engagement and VIOW SM strategy has been to respond to this.

Total reach has increased by 91% due to the increased budget for paid posts.

12.0 BID activities, funding and 2018 / 19

12.1 The BID activities are quite specific and form a core part of Visit Isle of Wight's strategies going forward. The following information is key.

Original number of BID levy invoices issued is **1,246** businesses.

Total amount of monies collected YTD for Year 2: **£449,893.19**

Total YOY comparison of monies collected YTD: **£404,244.57**

Various Comparisons year-on-year	Year 1	Year 2
Businesses billed	1,024	1,246
Businesses in BID after appeals, etc.	946	1,166
Total number of appeals *	96	106
Number of unsuccessful appeals	18	26
Number of successful appeals	78	80

*the figures shown represent official and unofficial appeals also removals because of Liquidation or NNDR having incorrect information e.g. contact address etc.

Engagement with levy payers who do not have webpages continues by sending reminders and emails where possible. Those who have not provided email contacts have been written to on numerous occasions but still do not engage.

Brief timeline of the 2018 / 19 BID process.

Arrangements with Isle of Wight council are already underway to extract the BID Year 3 list from the NNDR. There were 28 businesses that had to be removed from the original list for Year 2 before bills went out because the wording on their category was not as our appendix A.

Once list is finalised it needs to be cross referenced by hand with our database and adjustments made.

Letters to all new BID payers for Year 3 will be sent beginning August from VIOW.

Text on Bill needs to be reviewed and updated end August.

Appeals process needs to be made live on visitwightpro.com by end September (or before if we allow new businesses to appeal before bills go out).

Bills will be sent out end September from Isle of Wight Council.

13.0 Visitor Information Centre

The operating ethos of the Visitor Information Centre has until now been a “break-even” approach, however it is felt that this part of Visit Isle of Wight could be developed to increase revenue, to increase and enhance the Visitor experience on the island. There is potential for this location, both financial and to support the visitor’s attractions and experiences on the island.

YTD 2018 Gross figures for the shop up to and including 31st May 2018 - **£4,873.81**

YTD 2018 Nett figures for the same period - **£3,965.23**

YOY comparison for the same period in 2017 - **£3,444.48**

Current stock level held by VIOW - **£2,416.77**

No. of visitors 2018 YTD - **9,959**

Total No. of visitors 2017 – **24,934**

YTD Museum numbers up to 31st May 2018 – **1,199**

YOY comparison of Museum numbers – **1,119**

Products requested: Walking, Cycling, books/leaflets/guides souvenirs, information, attractions/discounts.

Potential activities to increase sales within the VIC

Electric Bike promotions

Ticket sales (Fairweather fest/County Show)

Robin Hill/Blackgang Chine – winter pop up shop

Adventure Activities – Focus on days

Museum information days - half term/guides/talks/dinosaur experts

English Heritage (Osbourne/Carisbrooke castle) – Focus on days

Guided walks - Autumn

14.0 Finance and Governance

14.1 When appointed to the position of Managing Director, it was with a key focus of financial processes and stability. This has been the focus going forward and will continue to be so.

It is felt that under the current regime Visit Isle of Wight, with some additional monies, still to be realised during 2018 Q3 is in a good financial position and will remain so with strong processes and management

The full April and May Management accounts and cashflow are available for scrutiny and will support these statements.

A new on-line accounting system has been tested and will be introduced into the organisation for the start of the new financial year. This will include devolved responsibilities for the team and a rigorous purchase order process.

There are also the opportunities to bring payroll and accountancy in-house and use these potential savings to employ a higher-level book-keeping function within the organisation, this is currently being explored at the moment.