**Corporate Policy Economic Development and Communications**

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Ask For: Freedom of Information Team

Email: FOI@ashford.gov.uk

Our Ref: FOI-8919

Date: 16 March 2020

Dear Stephen Smith

Thank you for your email received on the 16 March 2020 requesting an internal review into the response provided for FOI 8919 asking information about outstanding debt the council may have.

Information about our financial position is available on our transparency pages at the following link: With the statement of accounts setting out our debt position as of the 31st March 2019, in due course the revised statement of accounts for the period 19/20 will be published on this webpage.

<https://www.ashford.gov.uk/transparency/expenditure/budgeting-and-statement-of-accounts/>

As previously stated this position is regularly reviewed at Cabinet in the form of quarterly financial monitoring reports, medium term financial plans and budget reviews. These reports and related minutes are available on our website at the following link with November and Februarys Cabinet likely to be of most interest to you, included within Februarys papers is the Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring report the appendix sets out the position as of 31 Dec 2019 with the next quarters report due, in due course.

<https://ashford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=136&Year=0>

Information intended for future publications as the specific information being requested here would be is exempt from disclosure under section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act:

“22 Information intended for future publication.**U.K.**

This section has no associated Explanatory Notes

(1)Information is exempt information if—

(a)the information is held by the public authority with a view to its publication, by the authority or any other person, at some future date (whether determined or not),

(b)the information was already held with a view to such publication at the time when the request for information was made, and

(c)it is reasonable in all the circumstances that the information should be withheld from disclosure until the date referred to in paragraph (a).”

There is a public interest in the council providing information they hold that falls within the scope of an FOI request as quickly as possible. But this needs to be balanced with the public interest in the council ensuring the maximum cost effectiveness. Providing this information in response to an FOI request is not the most cost effective way of placing this information in the public domain when it will be published in due course on the council’s website. Furthermore to provide the information mid reporting period may actually misrepresent the requested information deviating from the stranded reporting periods.

Kind regards

Freedom of Information Team

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF; www.ico.org.uk; Tel. 0303 123 1113.