

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 July 2019 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa, at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillors Cooke, Day, Falp, Grainger, Matecki, Norris and Rhead.

Also present: Councillors: Syson (representing the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee); Davison (Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee); Boad (Liberal Democrat Group Observer); Heath (Whitnash Residents' Group Observer) and Cullinan (Labour Group Observer).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hales.

7. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning of the meeting. During the meeting, the following declarations of interest were made:

Minute Number 13 – Project Officers – Cultural Services

At the time of discussing this item, both Councillors Falp and Heath declared an interest because they were Ward Members for Whitnash and the report and recommendation 2.2 made reference to a project in their Ward.

Minute Number 26 – Affordable housing purchase – Montague Road, Warwick

At the time of discussing this item, Councillor Grainger declared an interest because she was objecting to a Planning Application related to the item. She therefore did not vote on this item.

8. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2019 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Part 1

(Items for which a decision by the Council was required)

9. **Role of the Chairman of the Council – Task & Finish Group**

The Executive considered a report from Democratic Services bringing forward recommendations on the role of the Chairman of the Council following a Task & Finish Group Review as agreed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 2 April 2019.

A Task & Finish Group was formed in October 2017 by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to undertake the review as set out within the defined

scope, attached at Appendix 1 to the report. The Membership of the Group was established as Councillors Ashford, Mrs Knight and Margrave. The Group concluded its work in spring 2019 and its recommendations were supported by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 2 April 2019.

The Group undertook a significant amount of evidence gathering from Councillors, Past Chairmen and other District and Borough Councils, as summarised in Appendices 4-6 to the report. The Group was pleased that nearly half of all District Councillors had completed the survey, but were disappointed that some of the new Councillors from 2015 had not taken this opportunity.

In considering the information received, the Group was mindful of the challenges faced by the Council, including the Medium Term Financial Strategy, however, it was equally mindful of the Chairman being the first Citizen of the District and the important role they played as Civic Lead.

From the responses received to the consultations and reviewing the relevant legislation, the Group was aware that the Chairman was responsible for chairing the Council meeting and while beyond this the role was non prescriptive, it had consistently received evidence that the Chairman should be there to promote, in particular, the work done by the Council.

Within the representations, there was strong agreement that the Chairman played an important part in recognising the hard work that the Parish/Town Councils undertook within the District and that the Chairman attending a meeting of each Parish & Town Council during their year in the office and/or holding a meal for them with guest speakers, was well received and enabled constructive dialogue.

There were some questions from Councillors with regards to the meaning and reason behind the Chairman being the 'conscience of the Council', as set out in the Constitution. On reflection, following written discussion with the current Chairman and Vice-Chairman, it was considered appropriate to remove this requirement for the Chairman because their role was closely defined to enable them to be fair to all.

The consultations undertaken and discussion within the Group highlighted concerns about the prominence and respect shown to the Chairman when they attended events, some of which had been Warwick District Council (WDC) events. The Group therefore welcomed the work by officers to update the protocol for the Chairman attending events and guidance for officers and outside organisations who invited the Chairman to events, on who should be invited to WDC events, as set out at Appendix 7 to the report.

The Group recognised that, at present, the Chairman of the Council had discretion to attend whichever events they wanted during their year of office, because the Council had never provided direction for them. This caused concern for the Group because some events appeared to be attended out of tradition without consideration of the benefit for Warwick

District, the promotion of the District or the relevance of the event to Warwick District. Examples of these included Mayor making at Town Councils outside Warwick District and attending fundraising events for Mayors outside Warwick District.

The Group was also mindful that the Chairman attended a number of fundraising events for other Civic Heads' charities. The justification for which appeared to be that if they did not attend their events, "they would not attend mine". The Group had significant concerns that Warwick District tax payers were essentially giving money to civic heads' charities, some of which were outside the District. The Group considered this to be an inappropriate use of Council Tax payers' money.

The Group also considered fundraising by the Chairman of the District Council. While any fundraising event had to be self-funding i.e. the money raised would pay for the costs of the event, it was recognised that there was a proportion of staff and Council time put into this which was not charged back to the event. The Group also considered this work in relation to the main role of the Chairman to promote Warwick District and to what extent a proportion of the attendees at these events were Civic dignitaries from other authorities. The Group felt that on balance, it was not appropriate for the Chairman to be fundraising for charities. It recognised that there would still be donations made to the Council, for example the donation from the crematorium recycling, that a decision had to be made on. Therefore, it would be appropriate for the Chairman to name a preferred charity should any donations be forthcoming during the year of office.

The Group also reflected on the title of 'Chairman' as defined within the Local Government Act 1972. Although this involved a minor proposal for amending the Constitution, it felt it was important that the Chairman should be given the opportunity to be called Chairperson or Chairwoman (as alternatives to Chairman or Chair already defined in the Constitution) if they so wished, and the Constitution should be amended to reflect that.

The Group also felt that explicit reference to the appointment of the Chaplin should be made within the Constitution and this should be made at the discretion of the Chairman.

The Group considered the current allowance paid to the Chairman each year. In total, the allowance was £17,700 of which £4,240 and £1,860 were paid directly to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively, with the remainder being held by officers to pay for the Chairman to attend events or host (no fundraising) events. The amounts paid directly to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were in recognition of the role they would undertake and to cover the cost of items such as new clothing, collections, raffle ticket purchase, etc. The overall allowance of £17,700 was made under Local Government Act 1972 where the Council might pay the chairman and Vice-Chairman for the purpose of enabling them to meet the expenses of office.

The Group had not established if the past Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of

the Council had found the money paid directly to them to be sufficient, but it was aware that no Chairman had ever requested further funding from the balance during their year in office. The Group had established that, as reported to Council previously, there was always a residual amount left over from the remainder of the allowance managed by officers. This had varied in level, but the lowest was £1,500. Having considered this, it would be a reasonable proposal to look to reduce the budget, with a further review in twelve months to look at the impact of the wider recommendations in the report, if approved.

The Group noted the importance of the Chairman having a space available to meet with guests if required, and also noted the minimal use the current Chairman's office had. It was recognised that this was partly because the majority of Council officers were not based at the Town Hall and therefore the primary use of the office had become a room for the Chairman to prepare in prior to Council. The Group was mindful of the current proposals to relocate the Council's HQ and meetings to a new building. It noted that meeting space would be at a premium in the new HQ and that no officer would have a dedicated office. To have a dedicated room within the HQ for the Chairman to use for a maximum of two hours per week (when meeting with their PA), parading from and to Council eight times a year and meeting with guests for, on average, four times a year for an afternoon, was not appropriate. It also recognised the need for the Chairman to have a space to undertake these functions and that the new HQ, if approved, would have significantly improved meeting spaces which they could use.

The Group noted that over the last 45 years, the Chairman of the Council had received many gifts or awards on behalf of the Council. A proportion of these were located within the Chairman's office and it welcomed that this would be reviewed by officers with the Chairman with a view to making these more visible to the public.

The final area the Group looked at was the Annual Council meeting. At present, 364 people were invited, through 'plus one' invites, which included all District Councillors. A summary of those invited was given in Section 3.17 in the report.

Despite the significant number invited, only 57 non WDC Councillors (or their partners) attended the event in 2018, with a slightly greater number in 2017 and 2016.

The Group were also aware that Annual Council cost in the region of £3,100 each year and that other local authorities had less formal ceremonies. Therefore, it felt that the change in elected Members of the Council in May 2019 presented an opportunity to review the approach used for the annual meeting including, but not specifically:

- the current past Chairman & Consort badges, due to the cost at over £500 each;
- the need for a drinks reception after the meeting for all guests;
- those who were invited (considering if they were appropriate and the relationship they had with the District Council);

- the need for a formal ceremony with photos (could the photos be undertaken afterwards rather than during the event which would reduce the length of the meeting); and
- consideration of the need to appoint the Chairman of Committees the same evening to ensure that required delegated authorities were in place as soon as possible.

Although the Group had made no direct recommendations with regard to support for the Chairman, throughout the review, past Chairmen all had unequivocal gratitude for the support they received from the Chairman's PA. They also noted the views of past Chairmen and Councillors that there was a need for a dedicated civic car and driver. It agreed that with the recommendations as set out, there was not a need for this level of support to be reviewed, however, variation away from this may then require a further review of the resources with a view to either a reduction or increase based on the decisions.

In terms of alternatives, an option would be not to agree with the proposals put forward by the Task & Finish Group, but this could look to undermine the work of the Group which was appointed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the role. Members could also choose to vary the proposals put forward, or to ask the Group to undertake further investigations.

Councillor Boad suggested that a further review should look at the Annual Council meeting, which represented a significant cost for the Council. In response, Councillor Day advised Members that recommendation 2.6 in the report asked the Chairman to conduct a full review of the purpose and arrangements of Annual Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Grainger and seconded by Councillor Cooke that an amendment should be made at Section 6, page 11 in the report, to remove the rest of the paragraph after the word "appropriate".

Recommended to Council that

- (1) the proposed revisions to Article 5 of the Constitution as set out at Appendix 3 to the report, be made, subject to an amendment to Appendix 3, Section 6, on page 11 in the report, to read "to host or attend events or functions they determine appropriate.", and remove the rest of the paragraph after the word "appropriate".

Resolved that

- (1) the current budget for supporting the Chairman is appropriate, but that in light of the underspend on their allowance over each of the last four years, this should be reduced by

£1,500 per annum as part of the 2020/21 budget, be accepted;

- (2) in the event of relocation to a new HQ, a room is not dedicated solely for the chairman's use, but a suitable room be made available to the chairman for use when inviting guests or meeting with staff, be agreed;
- (3) the updated guidance/protocol for leading on events as set out at Appendix 7 to report, be welcome;
- (4) the review of the current civic gifts with the Chairman's office be undertaken with a view as to how these can be made more publically accessible or if appropriate disposed of;
- (5) the Chairman be asked to undertake a review of the purpose and arrangements for Annual Council, including who is invited and they report on this to Council by no later than November 2019;
- (6) a report will be brought to Scrutiny in July 2020, by officers in liaison with the Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, that reviews the impact of these recommendations, if they are agreed by Council, be noted; and
- (7) in addition to 5 and 6 above, the report shall include details of the events, including fundraising events, that the Chairman had attended and the cost of attending those events.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Day)

Part 2

(Items for which a decision by the Council was not required)

10. Governance Review

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive proposing that a review of the Council's Governance should be undertaken and that assistance should be provided by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS).

It was further suggested that a small fixed term working party should be established to enable the review to be undertaken, with the intention that a further report on the outcome of the review should be presented to the Executive and Council.

Group Leaders had requested that a review should be undertaken of the Council's present Executive and Scrutiny governance arrangements to determine if there was a more effective way of involving more Members of the Council in the decision making processes.

To assist the process, the CfPS had offered help to the Council at no cost to the Council. The CfPS was part of the Local Government Association (LGA) and this help was part of the benefit of the Council's membership.

The CfPS had proposed the following:

- Workshop 1: to introduce Members to the fundamentals of governance change, to talk about the different options and approach to reviewing them. Design principles would also be discussed. This would be reviewed in light of the Council's strategic plans (recognising the sensitivity of aligning political objectives with governance, but recognising also that the former inevitably impact on the latter);
- Workshop 2: translating design principles into practical changes to ways of working (on policy development, on the way information was shared with Members, on decision-making, on the monitoring and oversight of council and partner business);
- Workshop 3: in the light of all the foregoing considering whether formal governance change would be, in fact, necessary, and agreeing actions to accompany that change if necessary.

It was proposed that all Members should be invited to Workshop 1 which would probably be held in late July and that the other two should be undertaken by a Working Party comprising the five Group Leaders, plus one other Member from the Conservative, Green and Liberal Democrat Groups, probably held in September. This approach enabled a balance to be struck between inclusion of all Members and the practicality of having detailed discussions. The proposed Working Party would then be required to prepare and present a report on the findings to the Executive and Council for discussion and decision on the way forward this coming autumn.

It was important that a decision was made in the autumn since if new processes were required, time would be needed to amend the Council's Constitution, agree and implement new procedures and there would be some formal consultation required. The intention should therefore be to enable any changes so agreed to be put in place for the new Municipal Year 2020/21 (i.e. May 2020).

The proposed Working Party would consider options, but at this stage, the only other option available was to not agree to take forward a review. This was an option Members could make, but since this review had come forward at the behest of Members, it had been discounted as an option.

Councillor Cooke advised Members that he operated under both systems and there were advantages and disadvantages for both. Members were

reminded that a change to Committee system might mean additional meetings and more work for Councillors.

Councillor Day thanked officers for the hard work they put in delivering the report in a very short space of time.

Resolved that

- (1) a review of the Council's Governance arrangements be agreed;
- (2) the methodology for undertaking the review as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report, be agreed;
- (3) Workshops 2 and 3 be undertaken by a Working Party consisting of each of the Group Leaders Conservative, Green and Liberal Democrat Groups plus one other member from their group plus the Leaders of the Labour and Whitnash Residents Groups; and
- (4) the Working Party prepare and present a report on the outcomes to the Executive and Council as soon as possible in the autumn of 2019 so that any changes can be implemented by May 2020.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Day)
Forward Plan reference 1,031

11. Playing Pitch Sports Strategy

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services seeking approval of the Playing Pitch Strategy (2019) as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

In 2015, a report was taken to Executive detailing the strategic importance of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and Indoor Sport Strategy (ISS) in shaping the future of sporting facilities in the District. In accordance with Sport England's recommendations, both strategies had been refreshed and now took into account the population increase as outlined in the Local Plan. The evidence contained within the Strategies ensured that the Council had a robust mechanism to meet the future demand of the population in Warwick District Council.

The PPS 2019 was an update of the previous PPS (2015), which was based on detailed needs and evidence work at the time and was produced in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF was updated in 2018, and set out the requirement for Local Plans to ensure that there was proper provision of community and cultural facilities to meet local needs. Sport England had developed a mechanism to calculate

developer contributions for outdoor sports pitches. The updated PPS provided a robust evidence base alongside the Sport England calculator to inform these requests for contributions from developers.

The new NPPF's expectations for the development of local planning policy for sport and physical activity/recreation was set out in paragraphs 96 and 97, which required there to be a sound (i.e. up-to-date and verifiable) evidence base underpinning policy and its application.

Paragraph 96 indicated that:

'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the need for open space, sports and recreation facilities (including qualitative or quantitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision are needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.'

Paragraph 97 stated that:

'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.'

The latest 2019 Strategy was a refresh of the 2015 evidence base, reflecting changes that had taken place over the last four years across Warwick District. The updated PPS now included Athletics, in addition to the sports from the original strategy, i.e. Football, Rugby, Cricket, Hockey and Tennis. The Strategy included sport and the associated facilities in the District which were managed and owned by private clubs, schools or by the Council directly.

As was the case in 2015, it was essential that the Council had a robust evidence base to support any requests for developer contributions towards sport in the District in the coming years. The PPS was the recognised methodology for establishing demand for various sport facilities, based on the population and demographics of an area. The recommendations in the Strategy identified potential projects, which might require funding through Section 106 contributions. With support from National Governing Bodies of sport the Council had a robust methodology, which had proved successful and rarely challenged by developers.

The refreshed 2019 PPS ensured that the long term sports facility needs for the District to 2029 were identified and it also ensured that the Council was in a position to deliver not only on sporting provision, but also on the Council's health and well-being and economic priorities. The Strategy had been updated to reflect the latest information relating to formal sport including Council-owned facilities, private facilities, schools and universities. It also factored in projections for population growth and the associated demographics up to 2029, in order that future plans by all leisure providers could reflect the needs of the District for now and in the future as the population demographic would change and increase.

In parallel to the completion of the PPS in 2019 was the production of the Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) commissioned by the charitable arm of the Football Association, the Football Foundation. The LFFP complemented the PPS by demonstrating a need for additional football facilities in the coming years to accommodate the population increase and growing popularity for the game amongst, in particular, younger people. The FA would be making available potential funding for capital projects identified in the LFFP and evidenced in the PPS. The Council would be working closely with the FA to ensure it took every opportunity to improve its football facilities in the District.

The PPS indicated that the authority played a significant role in providing sporting opportunities in the District for the local community. The Council owned a third of the grass football pitches in the District; it also had tennis courts situated in its parks within Leamington Spa, Warwick and Kenilworth. The Council also owned the only athletics track in the District, currently situated in the heart of Royal Leamington Spa. The track might in the future relocate to a site which would be the home of a five thousand seater community football stadium to the south of Royal Leamington Spa. The PPS confirmed the new location of the track as the preferred site, acknowledging that this move would resolve the challenges of managing a currently aging facility with limited parking.

Officers regularly met with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of the sports featured in the PPS to discuss the progress of their respective sports in the District. This commitment by officers and NGB's to meet, ensured that the PPS remained in focus and relevant. Over the years, sports clubs and organisations had come to value the input from officers who utilised the evidence in the PPS as a guide and were able to offer support on that basis. Some recent examples of the authority working in partnership with clubs included Khalsa Hockey Club's potential merger with Leamington Hockey Club and relocation to Berricote Lane. Khalsa Football Club's ambitions to create their own club facilities in Hatton and Racing Club Warwick, who were looking to build an artificial playing pitch within their current premises. The PPS identified a multitude of clubs who had ambitions to improve their current status and could be looking to Council officers for support and advice in the future.

The updated PPS demonstrated that there was a significant amount of change since the original was produced in 2015. Notable were the number of sports clubs which had ambitions to improve their facilities and grow

their club provision to meet the increasing demand for certain sports in the community. Two examples were the Wardens Cricket and Football Club and their relocation to Castle Farm in Kenilworth and Kenilworth Rugby Football Club's relocation to land east of Kenilworth. Both clubs expressed a desire to relocate and by working closely with the Council would have improved facilities as a result of the move.

In parallel with the refresh of the PPS, there had been the development of the Local Football Facilities Plan for the Council. Further information regarding the detail of the LFFP could be found in the LFFP report, Agenda item number 7, Minute number 12. The two documents worked in tandem and provided data-based evidence which supported the development of football facilities, both public and private, in the District. Football continued to grow in popularity particularly for younger people, the refreshed PPS demonstrated that there was a greater demand for football facilities than before with a need in particular for 3G Artificial Football Pitches in the District.

The refreshed PPS included Athletics; this was a new addition to the group of sports included in the 2015 version. Athletics in the District was a priority sport for the Council as the athletic facility located in Leamington Spa might be rebuilt at the site of the new community football stadium. The PPS provided useful evidence, which indicated a strong need for an athletics facility to be retained in the District.

In terms of alternatives, the Council could have chosen not to refresh the 2015 Strategy and continue to use the documents for forward planning purposes. The newly formatted Playing Pitch Strategy created a methodology for calculating Section 106 contributions for grass pitches, which was not available in the previous version. In addition, to not refresh the PPS was contrary to the advice from Sport England and would leave the Council exposed to risk as outlined above. Therefore, it was not considered a viable option.

Councillor Grainger, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, emphasised that the document was a revised version of the one adopted in 2015, and the importance of the adoption of this document in order to secure good Section 106 Agreements in the future.

Resolved that

- (1) the updated comprehensive evidence base and modelling which makes up the PPS report and the consequent recommendations in the strategy document, be noted; and
- (2) the refreshed Playing Pitch Strategy (2019) as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Grainger)
Forward Plan reference 995

12. **Local Football Facilities Projects**

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services seeking approval for funding for the Local Football Facilities Projects. In 2018, the Football Association (FA) made available to Warwick District Council its Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP), which detailed a number of football facility projects in the District eligible for potential funding by the charitable arm of the FA, the Football Foundation (FF).

It was estimated that the total value of all the projects was in the region of £11.5 million (with at least 50% of funding potentially being made available by the FF) and if realised, would be transformational for football provision across the District. The Council was seeking approval for a fixed term Project Officer to manage the projects in the LFFP, from conception to completion.

Racing Club Warwick (RCW) was one of the clubs featured in the LFFP with projects included to improve changing room provision and to build a '3g' artificial football pitch to replace the club's full size grass pitch. With the support of the Council, RCW would be in a position to apply for significant external funding from the FF, and as a result contribute to an improvement on football provision in Warwick.

In early 2018, the Council was invited by the FA to be part of a new strategic concept to deliver quality football provision, the Local Football Facilities Plan. On completion of the LFFP nationwide, the FA would have a detailed understanding of football facility priorities at a local level across England. The Council was included in the first tranche (with a further three to follow) that would eventually result in all local authorities having a bespoke LFFP for their area. £1.3 billion had been committed across England by the Football Foundation and central government with the possibility of a further £1 billion as future tranches of the LFFP evolve. The Warwick District LFFP had been signed off by the FA and the FF, and included a programme of 22 projects, which if completed, would transform local football facilities across the District. The projects fell into four categories: 3G artificial pitches, improved grass pitches, changing room pavilions and small sided facilities. Out of the 22 identified projects, 15 were on Council-owned land, and Council officers worked very closely with the FA throughout the process of writing the LFFP to ensure it was accurate and reflective of the football requirements in the District.

At the same time as the LFFP was being developed, the Council was working alongside WYG Environment Planning Transport Ltd, (previously Neil Allen Associates) to update the needs and evidence base for the Playing Pitch Strategy. The updated Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), which was being considered as Agenda item number 6, Minute number 11, and the LFFP work in parallel was intended to provide a strong evidence base which would support funding applications and the drawing down of Section 106 contributions from future housing developments in the District. The Council also updated The Indoor Sport Strategy (ISS) in line with the national Planning Policy which set out the requirement for Local Plans to ensure that there was proper provision of community and cultural facilities

to meet local needs. This updated Strategy was approved in 2018. Together, the PPS and ISS provided a coordinated and long-term approach to sports facility provision and planning across Warwick District for both indoor and outdoor sport.

In terms of delivering the projects within the LFFP, they would be considered individually, and would each need to be supported by appropriate feasibility reports and funding strategies. The FA would also require each project to demonstrate the impact that the project would have in the community and how it related to current FA strategies. It appeared likely that for all the projects listed in the LFFP, there would be a requirement for the project owner to find match funding. Developer contributions through Section 106 outdoor and indoor sports funding was one source of match funding but other sources of external grant funding or loans might need to be found for some of the higher value projects.

The Sports team currently comprised of three officers who were fully engaged in their existing roles, managing the strategic priorities of the service, securing Section 106 contributions, engaging with external partners, monitoring the leisure contract and working in partnership with Everyone Active, and managing the Council's outdoor sports pitches and associated facilities.

The Project Officer post would be full time on a fixed three-year contract. The post would be critical to the success of delivering the projects not only identified within the LFFP, but with other projects noted in the PPS as a priority. The process of delivering a project would require the Project Officer to lead on a number of processes, namely, identifying funding, which might include Section 106 contributions, and leading on funding applications to a variety of bodies and internal requests through the Council's funding streams. They would be liaising with stakeholders and colleagues throughout the period of the Project. They would be appointing contractors in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures and the FA contractor framework. When work on site would begin, the post holder would oversee the works alongside any technical project officers assigned to the project.

In terms of the Racing Club Warwick (RCW), it was a well-respected and long-established football club with history in Warwick dating back 100 years. The club was ambitious and aimed to get to step 4 of the football league in future seasons, a target which many believed was within their reach after recently being promoted to step 5. The club had currently senior teams and would have 13 junior teams (u16yrs) next season. There were three academy teams with young people who were currently working towards gaining a related qualification in partnership with an organisation called Future Pro. The club had expanded in recent years and not only provided football, it also was home to Warwick Judo and Ju Jitsu, Royal Naval Association, Two Castles Choir, and ran a range of community social events.

The Council had a long working relationship with the club and had supported them on a number of facility projects which had had positive

outcomes for the club and the community. The Council was the landowner of Townsend Meadows, the site on which the club was situated, and therefore had a vested interest in the future success of the club. The club facilities also formed an important part of the St Mary's Lands project as the club acted as much a community hub for the nearby Forbes Estate as much as a sports facility. In addition, the Council maintained the two grass pitches situated on the adjacent St. Marys Lands of which RCW was the exclusive hirer.

The LFFP identified three projects in connection with Racing Club Warwick.

- new 11v11 floodlit 3G FTP;
- refurbish changing pavilion; and
- works to natural grass pitches and grounds maintenance equipment for club.

In order to progress the projects related to RCW, the club needed to raise funding to meet the FF requirement of at least 50% of the costs of the project being met by the club. There were 16 years remaining on the lease on Townsend Meadows that RCW had from the Council. Therefore, in order to comply with the funding requirements of the FF, any application for LFFP funding would need to be a joint application between RCW and the Council. RCW were seeking funding from a variety of organisations including the Council. The estimated overall project cost was thought to be £1.1 million, therefore RCW were likely to have to raise in the region of £550,000.

RCW had the full support of their committee to progress with the two projects identified in the LFFP to convert their main grass pitch to a 3G facility and to improve the provision of changing rooms. The FF had advised that the club would need to secure £150,000 in order for the FF to consider the project viable and progress it to the next stage with the support of a specialist company who would work with RCW to develop the project to a point where it was considered deliverable. In order to get the project started, RCW had approached the Council with a request of a sum of £150,000 in order that the project could commence, while RCW continued to seek additional funding from other sources. RCW had indicated that it could provide £20,000 towards the proposal itself. It was proposed that a pledge of £150,000 be made in support of the proposal.

S106 monies totalling £55,500 from two developments had been identified, both of which had agreed to provide funding for outdoor sports facilities. The first, Lower Heathcote Farm in Harbury Lane, had already paid in full its S106 contributions to the Council. The other, Harbury Gardens Phase 1, also in Harbury Lane, would yield 50% of the S106 contributions later this year with the final sum being paid in 2020/21. The remainder of the funding pledge (£94,500) could come from the Community Projects Reserve.

Drawing down of £140,000 of the Council funding should be subject to the submission of a robust business plan from RCW to the Council, and the development of a community use agreement between RCW and the Council for the proposed artificial football pitch and ancillary facilities.

This would ensure that the facilities developed at RCW would have an element of "community use" in addition to supporting the football activities organised by the football club. Further meetings would establish whether the fund was required this year or the following. However, officers understood that RCW were keen to commence with the project this year. In addition, drawing down of the pledge would also require resolution of any state aid issues.

The FF only required evidence of funding in the early stages of the project, however as the project developed through the different planning stages costs would be incurred, which would require funding either by the Council or RCW. The sources of this funding would need to be established. It was proposed that RCW would use its contribution of £20,000 towards the planning stages and the Council a maximum of £10,000. Planning costs would total around £24,000.

There was a risk that some of the Council's contribution was at risk should the project be deemed undeliverable at any stage, since the money would have been committed to finance the work of the independent company in the planning stage. However, this was a small sum in the context of the potential overall investment gain and of the potential benefits to the local community.

In terms of alternative options, the Council could choose not to fund RCW as the facilities were managed by the club and therefore it could be left to them to find the funding. It was unlikely that the club by itself would be able to find that level of funding and so secure the much larger level of funding available via the LFFP. In supporting the enhancement of the football facilities, it supported the objectives of the club and the community in providing long term good quality sporting provision.

The Council had benefited from having a close involvement in the development of the LFFP and advising on the projects detailed within. If resources for a Project Officer were not approved, then the Council would have to review which of the projects within the LFFP it could resource, resulting in delay for a number of projects, an uncoordinated approach to project delivery and the potential that some projects would not be deliverable due to lack of project officer time.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Councillor Grainger, thanked the Scrutiny Committee for the very good questions raised ahead of the meeting and proposed the report as laid out.

Resolved that

- (1) the funding of up to £41,600 per annum (including oncosts) representing a total of up to £124,800 over three years for the creation of a fixed term Project Officer to lead on the roll out

of the Local Football Facilities Plan projects and other outdoor sports projects across the District funded from the Service Transformation Reserve, be approved;

- (2) the projects detailed in the LFFP which relate to Racing Club Warwick and St Mary's Lands, be noted;
- (3) a funding pledge of up to £150,000 be granted to Racing Club Warwick, the funding of which at this stage will comprise £55,500 from S106 contributions and an additional £94,500 from the Community Project Reserve to enable Racing Club Warwick to progress to the next stage of their LFFP application for the installation of a 3G artificial pitch and improvement of changing provision;
- (4) prior to £140,000 of the funding pledge being drawn down, the Council receive and agree a robust business plan; community use agreement; and confirm that state aid issues are dealt with appropriately; and
- (5) up to £10,000 of the Council's contribution of £150,000 be used to assist with the planning stage costs of the scheme.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Grainger)
Forward Plan reference 1,024

13. Project Officers – Cultural Services

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services setting out proposals to temporarily expand the Programme team within Cultural Services, by adding two additional fixed term Project Officers.

The two Project Officers being proposed would work alongside the existing posts responsible for delivering the ambitious multi-faceted project on land north of Gallows Hill, and on the delivery phase of the leisure facility projects in Kenilworth and Whitnash.

Since the establishment of the previous fixed term posts, the Council's aspirations had expanded, new opportunities had emerged for external funding, and the number of projects now in the pipeline had grown. In the last 12 months, a number of these projects had progressed from initiation and feasibility stage through to a stage where additional resources were required to ensure that the projects continued to develop and projects would be delivered in line with schedule.

The Community Stadium project had progressed well in the last 12 months, however it had become increasingly evident that this was far more than a single project and was, in fact, a series of related projects which, whilst being supported by professional advisers in the form of legal, procurement and estate agency services, had formed a complex project which required appropriate project resources.

Whilst the existing Community Stadium Project Officer had been able to lead successfully on the progress to date, as the various strands of the project progressed it was anticipated that he would continue to oversee the wider project, but his time would increasingly be focussed on the delivery of the football stadium. Therefore, additional officer resources were required to support the Community Stadium Project Officer, in the other elements of this project. This post was approved to be added to the establishment by Employment Committee at its meeting on 11 June 2019.

The stadium alone was a project costing between £6 million and £7 million. The relocation of the athletics track would cost in the region of £2 million. The development of a riverside park at Edmondscote (Commonwealth Park) would cost in the region of £1 million. An expected development opportunity gave rise to the potential to fund these works. A series of projects of this value would need dedicated resources to ensure that it was delivered effectively. Hence the need for additional resources to support this officer with the other work streams as outlined in the reports to the Executive in November 2018. Examples included a feasibility study of the relocation of the athletics facility and associated facilities and the subsequent design, the procurement of a developer for the listed farmhouse on the main site, the feasibility of jointly marketing the existing athletics facility site at Edmondscote Road and assisting colleagues in discussions with the County Council for a number of additional land transactions and disposals on the site.

The job description written for the new Project Officer explained that the new role would report to the Community Stadium Officer and would be allocated work packages within the wider Community Stadium and related projects work. The new officer would be responsible for these smaller pieces of work, and would report back to the Community Stadium Officer who would advise and support this more junior role as appropriate.

The proposal was to fund the post from the expected capital receipt of the sale of land fronting Gallows Hill agreed in November 2018 and expected later this financial year.

The Whitnash Community Hub project had been strongly endorsed by a number of reports and policy positions, including the Neighbourhood Plan, as a key priority for residents in the town. The Town Council embarked on the project with the assistance of a company of consultants. The company had completed the work on the feasibility phases of the project, and had been successful in obtaining external funding, but the company did not provide client services for construction projects, so they were unable to fulfil this role going forward. Whilst this project was owned by Whitnash Town Council, Warwick District Council had part-funded the project with

grants totalling £1 million and saw this project as being a key facility for the residents of Whitnash. The District Council considered that the Hub proposal contributed to the excellent portfolio of leisure provision across the District, with its two new court sports hall and improved sports pitches. Therefore, the Executive approved the allocation of project officer resource to support this project in spring 2018, which had been part funded by payments from Whitnash Town Council which would continue whilst the District Council was supporting this project.

The Whitnash project was now at the point where it was moving from the development phase to the construction phase. The procurement of the construction contractor was currently underway as the report was being written. Work on site was due to commence in autumn 2019. Faithful and Gould had been appointed as project managers, but based on experience with other similar projects, it was essential that there was an officer within the Council to support the project from the client perspective, to protect the Council's investment, and ensure that the project delivered the high quality facilities that would benefit Whitnash and the wider district. The Project Officer (Whitnash and Kenilworth) would oversee the project in the client role and would act as the link between contractor, Whitnash Town Council and WDC. Working within the Leisure Development Programme team in Cultural Services, the officer would be able to draw on the considerable experience within this team on construction projects, and would benefit from a degree of resilience that could be offered from colleagues within the team.

It was proposed that the new Project Officer (Whitnash and Kenilworth) would pick up the Whitnash project from the start of the construction phase, freeing up the existing Project Officer who had been leading on the project to date, to increase her involvement in the emerging Kenilworth projects.

The Kenilworth projects, Abbey Fields Swimming Pool and Castle Farm Recreation Centre, were now at RIBA 2 stage and, subject to the outcome of discussions with the new Executive, it was anticipated that the projects would continue to develop over the coming months, to a point, at RIBA 4, where planning applications could be submitted and tenders issued for the construction phase. Irrespective of the detail of both schemes, it would be essential that there was appropriate officer resource to progress these projects. The existing permanent Project Officer would work with the Programme Manager and Mace Ltd (our appointed Project Managers) to progress these two complex projects, but she could only do so if the new Project Officer (Whitnash and Kenilworth) was created to take the lead on the construction phase of the Whitnash project.

Due to the uncertainty that currently existed around the timeline for the two Kenilworth projects, it was possible that the new Project Officer for this workstream might initially be appointed for only two years, with an option to extend their contract to three years depending on progress of the project towards the end of 2021.

A report was considered by the Executive in Feb 2018 to outline the constituent parts of the Kenilworth phase of the Leisure Development Programme and approval was given to appoint a Project Officer to work with the Programme Manager, to deliver this project. As anticipated, this Project Officer had been involved in some elements of the Kenilworth projects to date, but had increasingly been focussed on the Whitnash project to the detriment of the Kenilworth projects. The proposal to add an additional officer who would focus on Whitnash, would free up the existing Project Officer to pick up the necessary workstreams in order to progress the Abbey Fields and Castle Farm projects. Learning from the experiences of Phase I, it was very clear that each project would have its own challenges and would need careful management if they were to be delivered effectively.

In supporting the proposals for additional staff resource as outlined above, it was essential to understand the role of the Programme Manager. As the Leisure Development Programme had expanded since its formation in 2015, the Programme Manager role had become increasingly challenging. The Programme now included Abbey Fields, Castle Farm, and Whitnash, a number of projects based on the Community Stadium and adjacent sites as detailed above, and the Commonwealth Games. It was not effective or efficient for the Programme Manager to be pulled into the detail of these projects; he needed to retain capacity to take an overview of these projects, and manage the strategic challenges of the Programme.

In terms of alternative options, the Executive could choose not to approve the funding for these posts and to recommend that officers should consider alternative solutions to the management of these projects or review the deliverability of these high profile corporate projects. Consideration had been given to alternative ways of managing the projects by reallocation of work within the Programme team. However, there were only three officers in the team, all of whom were stretched with the current work streams, with no spare capacity within the team. The Whitnash Hub and the Community Stadium projects were now both well advanced in terms of initial designs, planning and other approvals secured. The range of projects on land north of Gallows Hill came together to form a major transformation project for the district; any delays on delivery could have significant commercial and operational impacts.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Grainger, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, reminded Members that there were some very big projects coming forward, and as one project was expected to finish, another one would be coming along.

Resolved that

- (1) the Project Officer (Community Stadium and Related Projects) (1 x F/T) be approved from 1 August 2019 to 31 December 2022, up to a total cost of £142,100 to be funded from the

initial capital receipts from the enabling works for the community stadium site; and

- (2) the Project Officer (Whitnash / Kenilworth) (1 x F/T) be approved from 1 August 2019 to 31 December 2022, up to a total cost of £142,100 funded from the Service Transformation Reserve, and from the capital funding for the Kenilworth project if the scheme goes ahead with the Service Transformation Reserve duly replenished.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Grainger)
Forward Plan Reference 1,016

14. **Plastic Free Resolution for Leamington & Warwick and Plastics Policy Update**

The Executive considered a report from Health & Community Protection seeking to pass a 'resolution' to achieve plastic free status for Royal Leamington Spa and Warwick and more widely for the District as a whole, to enable all communities within the District to also achieve plastic free status should this be desired.

The Plastics Policy was adopted in November 2018 and was coupled with a Stage 1 report, outlining the aims of this work area, taking into account what could be accomplished at the time. This was an interim report aiming to provide an update on the progress of the policy commitments and identifying that further work could be achieved.

Since the Plastics Policy was adopted, there had been good progress on the commitments of the policy, as outlined in Appendix 2 to the report. Some of the highlights of this work included reducing a number of single-use plastic items from The Spa Centre, Pump Rooms Café and Town Hall. A Plastics Register was developed listing the single-use plastics that had been avoided, re-used and recycled. Procurement requirements were included in large tender documents, a plastics animation had been developed for local residents to raise awareness of our plastics policy commitments and work with local organisations on the agenda.

The Plastics Policy commitments were to be embedded within the Sustainability Approach when it was next updated and were already included in the Sustainability Officer Group action plan which was reviewed on a regular basis.

The policy commitments remained realistic at this point in time and as they would become embedded, these could be stretched further where the Council considered further Stage 2 actions.

The Council had been providing on-going support to the Plastic Free Leamington & Warwick group, which was a local action group of volunteers working to reduce single-use plastics from local businesses and

schools and also to encourage individuals to reduce single-use plastics. It should be noted that Warwick Town Council had also heavily supported the group.

The Plastic Free group awarded 'plastic free champion' status to organisations and businesses, when at least three pieces of single use plastic had been eliminated. Currently, there were over 25 businesses that had achieved plastic free champion status, including Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council. In addition, eight schools had become plastic free champions and a number of residents were being supported to reduce single-use plastic from their homes. Work was still in progress to achieve more plastic free champions, which would result in obtaining the plastic free status for Leamington and Warwick.

The Plastic Free group had encouraged a significant number of businesses to offer the National Re-fill scheme from their premises. Businesses offering Re-fill would provide free tap water to anyone providing their own water bottle or container. There were now 46 businesses offering Re-fill in Leamington alone, with 16 in Warwick and others in the District. The Spa Centre and Pump Rooms Café were operating the re-fill scheme.

The Plastic Free group had been working for over a year towards achieving plastic free status for Leamington and Warwick. The group hoped that Leamington and Warwick could become one of the first 100 towns nationally to achieve this, and there were currently around 530 plastic-free 'communities' in the UK working on achieving the status.

For an area to achieve plastic free status, there were five key objectives that were to be achieved and this would involve working closely with the local Council. There were main objectives of the status which had to be achieved: Local Governance, Resistance Hubs, Plastic Free Allies, Plastic Free Rallies and Set Up a Steering Group. Further details regarding these objectives were included in Section 3.10 of the report.

The Mayor of Kenilworth had expressed an interest in being part of the Plastic Free Leamington and Warwick group and there was the likelihood that other towns and communities would follow suit.

Officers were developing single-use plastic guidance in relation to events to ensure that events on Council-owned land were single-use plastic free.

The report recommended strengthening this requirement to put more pressure on the stall holders at events to avoid single-use plastic and therefore it was recommended for future events to be single-use plastic free where practicable.

Where it was not reasonably practicable for events to be single-use plastic free, the Events Team would work with the individual event organisers to work towards making year on year improvements.

As an alternative option, the Council could choose not to pass the resolution, but the negative impacts associated with this were outlined in the report.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee welcomed the report and supported the recommendation, and urged that speedy progress should be made to go further. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee also recommended to the Executive that the words "plastic free" were replaced with "single-use plastic free". The Executive were required to vote on this item because it formed a recommendation to them. It was clarified by the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the recommendation was to replace the words "plastic free" with "single-use plastic free" across the entire report.

When being put to vote, the recommendation from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to replace the words "plastic free" with "single-use plastic free" was rejected. Instead, an additional recommendation was approved, to read *"authority is delegated to the Head of Health & Community Protection in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Health & Community Protection and Business & Environment, and Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to agree on a suitable re-wording."*

This was because the proposal from the Committee would have required significant changes to the report and instead, this additional recommendation would enable a dialogue to take place in order to ensure the aim was achieved.

Resolved that

- (1) the recent progress on the commitments of the Plastics Policy as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be noted;
- (2) Warwick District, as an area, be supported in achieving plastic free status, with further reports brought forward as necessary;
- (3) where events take place on Warwick District Council land, these should be single-use plastic free where reasonability practicable and authority be delegated to the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Business to introduce guidance for events on this; and
- (4) authority be delegated to the Head of Health & Community Protection in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Health & Community Protection and Business & Environment, and Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to agree on a suitable re-wording.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Falp and Rhead)
Forward Plan Reference 1,011

15. **WDC Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Review**

The Executive considered a report from Finance seeking approval for the revised policy as the basis upon which Discretionary Housing Payments were administered by WDC's Benefit Section.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) allowed WDC's Benefit Section financial discretion, independent of the law governing the entitlement calculation of Housing Benefit and the Universal Credit Housing Costs Element, to assist DHP claimants in meeting their housing costs.

DHPs were awarded by the Benefit Section to those in receipt of Housing Benefit (HB) or the Housing Costs Element of Universal Credit (UC) to help meet shortfalls in housing costs. The principal objectives of the award of DHPs were set out in Section 3.1 of the report.

The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (as amended) regulated the administration of the DHP scheme and they set out the basic requirements that had to be met before an award could be made. Thereafter though they allowed an authority wide discretion on the operation of the scheme, including how to claim, information requirements and the recovery of overpayments.

These regulations, and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP's) DHP Guidance Manual and Good Practice Guide, were the law and guidance upon which WDC's current DHP Policy was based.

WDC's current DHP Policy had been revisited and revised because of the changes required by Welfare Reform, which had affected both Housing Benefit and Universal Credit, since the original DHP Policy was written in 2012. In doing this, reference had been made to the DWP's DHP Guidance Manual, which itself was revised, as a result of these changes in 2018. The principal changes in respect of Welfare Reform since 2012 were detailed in Section 3.5 in the report.

The Policy revisions were:

- an extended explanation as to what DHPs could assist with, inclusive of under-occupancy, the reduction in the Benefit Cap, the removal of the family premium, and personal allowance two- children limit;
- an extended explanation as to what DHP's could cover, particularly in accounting for the increased range of sanctions that affected customers' benefits;
- to define more precisely when DHPs might be used to assist with Rent Deposits, Removal Costs, and Rent in Advance. Rent in Advance being of particular note because Housing Benefit was payable from when a customer moved into a property. If a DHP for rent in advance was sought, this provided the potential for a DHP to be awarded for the same period Housing Benefit would also be awarded. The policy had

therefore been amended to indicate this potential for duplication and to clarify that such requests would only be allowed in exceptional circumstances; and

- to define more precisely when a DHP might be awarded when a customer was receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Housing Costs on two homes; this principally because the rules for HB and UC regarding this circumstance were slightly different.

Since the introduction of DHPs, this year was the first that the DHP Budget had been reduced. As a result, conditions on awarding a DHP had been added to the policy, and represented the only entirely new addition to the Policy. DHPs were intended to assist claimants with a short term need. The introduction of conditionality helped ensure that the claimant, particularly when reapplying for further DHP assistance, knew what steps to take to improve their situation and so reduce their reliance on DHPs. Such steps should help reduce the claimant's rental liability, help them find alternative accommodation, increase their income or reduce their expenditure. Examples included:

- proactively looking for work, with or without the support of the Local Authority and could incorporate attending work-related coaching;
- registering for housing and actively bidding for suitable properties; potentially looking for mutual exchanges;
- making regular payments to clear/reduce rent arrears;
- acting on debt advice from an appropriate organisation to increase income and reduce outgoings; prioritising debts accordingly; and
- engaging on advice provided by a speciality support services.

Should a claimant fail to show reasonable efforts had been made to meet the conditions, a further DHP award might be refused.

If there was no ongoing DHP policy in place, some of the most vulnerable citizens would have reduced recourse to meet rental liabilities, and thereby be further exposed to the issues outlined. This would then place further burden on WDC and indeed wider support services.

The alternative option would be not to operate a DHP Scheme and utilise the available funds in assisting citizens.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Resolved that the revised Discretionary Housing Payment Policy, as set out Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hales)
Forward Plan Reference 1,019

16. **Service Area Plans for 2019/20 & Fit For the Future Change Programme Update**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) seeking approval of the Council's Service Area Plans for 2019/20; the latest position of the Fit For the Future (FFF) Change Programme; and detailing the savings required / income to be generated to ensure a balanced budget with no impact on services.

The Council had seven Service Areas - Chief Executive's Office; Cultural Services; Development Services; Finance; Health & Community Protection; Housing Services; and Neighbourhood Services - each of which, following consultation with the respective Portfolio Holders, produced an annual Service Area Plan (SAP). The SAP comprised five parts:

- Part 1 - Purpose of the Services Provided;
- Part 2 - Managing Service Delivery;
- Part 3 - Managing and Improving People;
- Part 4 - Budget (Main budgetary pressures and changes); and
- Part 5 - Managing Planned Changes, Major Work-streams and Projects.

The individual plans sought to describe a Service Area's scope of services and projects, and how delivery would be managed through the respective Service Area's resources. In aggregate the SAPs were the programme of work for the Council for the financial year in question.

Members were asked to agree the SAPs at Appendices A-G to the report, noting that performance was reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on a rolling basis and to Executive at the end of the municipal year.

Officers were in the process of developing a Council Business Plan with the Plan's strategic direction being steered by the Executive. The Plan was currently at an early stage but would shortly move to draft stage. Once this point had been reached, consultation would take place with Group Leaders and the respective Groups to garner Councillors' views on the document. It was hoped that a consensus could be reached as to the Plan's content.

Members would be aware that a new Portfolio, Environment & Business, had been created. This Portfolio did not have specific Service Area responsibility but would take a cross-cutting view of the Council's functions in respect of environment and business activities. However, it was anticipated that the Business Plan would contain a number of high profile cross-cutting projects which would be the responsibility of this Portfolio. The content of these projects was currently being worked-on.

In order to deal with the significant changes anticipated for local government, the Council agreed a FFF Change Programme in 2010 covering three interrelated strands: Service, People and Money.

The Money element of the programme was to produce initiatives that would either save money or increase income whilst at the same time not

impacting upon the quality or breadth of services provided by the Council. This strand had delivered significant savings / increased income since 2010 (in the region of £10m) but as the amount of grant from central government had now disappeared, there was an ongoing requirement to produce further initiatives. The Change Programme would now be reviewed in light of the work that was ongoing to produce the Council's Business Plan, however, at Appendix 1 to the report, Members would find an update on the current Change Programme initiatives.

Since last reporting, many of the initiatives had either been completed or business cases approved by Executive with savings / increased income factored into the 2018/19 Budget or MTFs as appropriate. The HQ relocation and Town Hall use amounting to £385k of savings, were still to be delivered and needed to be monitored very closely. It was anticipated that the Business Plan would come forward with further ideas to enable the Council to address its financial challenge.

No alternative options to the recommendations in the report had been considered.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Resolved that

- (1) the Service Area Plans (SAP) attached as appendices A-G to the report be agreed as the Council's programme of work for the financial year 2019/20, noting that the Plans may be revised following completion of the Council's Business Plan and that the Business Plan will include a series of projects to be overseen by the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Business;
- (2) the latest position of the outstanding initiatives of the previously agreed FFF Change Programme set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (3) the updated savings profile as shown in section 5 of the report, be noted; and
- (4) following completion of the Council's Business Plan, the FFF Change Programme will be updated so as to inform a revised savings profile for consideration.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Day)
Forward Plan reference 1,026

17. **Adoption of the Custom and Self-Build SPD**

The Executive considered a report from Development Services seeking adoption of the final draft of the Custom and Self-Build SPD.

The Warwick District Local Plan 2011 – 2029, adopted in September 2017, contained commitments to bring forward Supplementary Planning Documents on a number of matters, including Custom and Self-Build. The draft version of the Custom and Self-Build SPD was subject to a period of public consultation between 28 January and 11 March 2019.

Under policy H15 of the Local Plan, the council had committed to produce an SPD to assist in the delivery of Custom and Self-Build dwellings.

The government had placed a duty upon Local Authorities to grant suitable development permission in respect of enough serviced plots of land to match demand on their self-build register.

The SPD would explain the approach that the Council would take to considering whether sites were suitable and provide more clarity in understanding the government's statements in support of self-build, the publicity for the register, new regulations and requirements placed upon LPAs.

The SPD went through an appropriate public consultation period, the representations to which were summarised and responded to in Appendix 1 to the report. As a result of the representations, no amendments had been made to the consultation draft, the final draft attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

In terms of alternatives, the Executive could decide not to adopt the Custom and Self-Build SPD, however this would take away the opportunity to emphasise the regulations set out by the Government and could lead to difficulty in managing expectations from the self-build community. It would also be contrary to a commitment within the Local Plan.

An addendum circulated prior to the meeting advised Members of a correction to Appendix 2, Page 3, line 21, to replace "principle" with "principal", and Page 11 d) iv), to replace "foul water" with "water and foul water" in order to bring it in line with the Custom and Self-Build Regulations. These amendments were intended to ensure clarity and accuracy in the final document.

Resolved that

- (1) the statement of community consultation attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) the adoption of the SPD attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved; and

- (3) the adopted Custom and Self-Build SPD be used in the determination of planning applications.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Cooke)
Forward Plan reference 1,021

18. **New contract terms for Internal Health and Safety IT system – AssessNet**

The Executive considered a report from Health & Community protection seeking approval for additional funds of £11,240 plus vat per annum in order to secure the licence for the AssessNet software system.

AssessNet provided a recording system with easy access to all staff that helped manage the Council's Health and Safety obligations as an employer.

AssessNet had been used by the Council since 2009 and this had developed into a system now used by all departments, including: Accident & Incident Management, Risk Assessments, Audits, Inspections, Fire Risk Assessments, COSHH, DSE, Portal etc. This was very important as all of the documents were in one place and not held across a number of services.

This system could be accessed from anywhere with Wi-Fi connection, so in the event of a system or building failure, documents could be accessed via a login.

The Portal system was used across all departments to log accidents, near misses and any verbal / physical assaults reports which would then provide a unique incident number.

AssessNet also enabled users to do Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments which included on line training and the opportunity user to complete their own specific assessment.

The Council used the Fire Risk Assessment module to complete the PAS79 FRA on all of its corporate buildings so that it was compliant with the Fire Regulations 2005.

With the new system which they were still developing and improving, there were new features which were expected to be time savers, e.g. on auditing it would be possible to complete an audit without Wi-Fi and walk into the office and it would automatically download instead of having to do a paper copy and then transfer it.

The current cost per annum of the current contract was £8,475. This was constructed of £5,480 and the portal system at a cost of £2,995. AssessNet had increased their contract price and were bringing out an enhanced system. This meant there would be additional costs of £11,240 plus vat per annum.

Due to the current accumulative spend level for the original contract exceeding the threshold of £25,000, soft market testing was required to evaluate the market and identify potential suppliers with an aim to procuring a replacement contract. AssessNet (the incumbent supplier) was identified as still being the most competitive and suitable provider. As a result, a decision was made to direct award the contract through a compliant government framework.

The framework allowed for a maximum charge of £7,495 per annum per module. A total of 12 modules were now required, equating to £89,940 per annum. As per the requirements of the framework, a clarification request was issued to provide a revised total based on procuring multiple modules. A revised annual cost of £19,715 was provided. As per the stipulations of the framework, a contract award of two years could be made with an optional extension of 24 months then being available.

In terms of alternatives, an option would be to choose not to utilise a software system and use manual systems, for example spreadsheets, but this would take extra time and without regular prompts, it would inevitably create some gaps and risks would increase.

The Council could find another supplier, but all functions would no longer be in one place and costs would increase, including additional training. Transferring the already existing documents onto a new system would also take a great deal of time.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection, Councillor Falp, emphasised that the Council was receiving a very good deal and thanked officers for all their hard work in securing this offer.

Resolved that additional funds of £11,240 plus vat per annum be approved in order to secure the licence for the AssessNet software system, funded from the Contingency Budget for 2019/20 and included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for future years.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Falp)
Forward Plan reference 1,029

19. **Final Accounts 2018/19**

The Executive considered a report from Finance providing a summary on the draft 2018/19 out-turn with the Appendices, with the draft Statement of Accounts (available on the Council's website) providing a detailed analysis.

The 2018/19 Accounts had been closed, and the draft Statement of Accounts was being audited by external Audit following publication on the Council's website for a period of public review. Subject to the outcome of the Audit, it was intended that Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee would formally approve the Audited Statement of Accounts on the 30 July 2019.

Members were asked to note the financial position for 2018/19 as detailed in the report, and the decisions made under delegated authority.

The final out-turn positions upon closure of the Accounts were as follows:

	Latest Budget £'000's	Actual £'000's	Variation £'000's
General Fund	8,642	8,320	-322
HRA	-3,882	-3,998	-116
Capital Programme	29,045	26,464	-2,581

The outturn for the General Fund Revenue Services for 2018/19 presented a favourable variation of £321,500. Should there be any change to the variation as a result of the ongoing External Audit, members would be updated accordingly.

All of the significant variations were presented in the table below.

Description	£	Favourable / Adverse
Staffing underspends	-255,900	F
Christmas events management and illuminations	45,000	A
Spa Centre and Pump Rooms net increased activity	-72,900	F
Repairs and Maintenance Responsive Repairs	166,700	A
Benefits	-293,700	F
Kenilworth Public Service Centre Increased Rental Income	-30,100	F
Local land charges search income	26,700	A
General Fund Utilities (Electricity, Gas and Water)	-3,100	F
Housing Advice and Allocations	232,000	A
Investment interest income	-271,000	F
Planning Fee income down on the Revised (increased) Budget	202,000	A
Revenue income increased court fees received	-60,000	F

Burial Rights	90,400	A
Legal Fees	50,500	A
Audit Fees	47,000	A
Printing / Stationery	40,000	A

analysis by Portfolio was shown at Appendix Ai to the report. Appendix Aii to the report provided a detailed breakdown of service variations, with the most significant identified in the table above being discussed in paragraphs 3.2.8 – 3.2.13 in the report. Due to the length of this appendix, it was only made available electronically. IAS19 adjustments and capital charging had been excluded from this analysis as these were reversed out.

Net Business Rates Retained Income to the General Fund was £121,900 below the revised Budget. This reflected adjustments in respect of increased business rates collected for the year, which had increased the levy due to be paid by the Council to the Government by £660k. This had been partly compensated by the increased income the Council received from being a member of the Coventry and Warwickshire Pool. Under the accounting arrangements for Business Rates Retention, the Council's share of any increased business rates for 2018/19 would be reflected in future years' retained business rate income. The £121,900 had reduced the contribution the Council had made to the Business Rate Volatility Reserve, so presenting a neutral position on the General Fund for 2018/19.

Investment Interest was higher than that budgeted. Delays in various programmed expenditure as discussed within the report, meant that there had been more balances to invest which had led to this favourable variation, rather than it being due to higher interest rates. The Annual Treasury Management Report was due to be presented to Finance and Audit Committee on 9 July, which provided more details on the 2018/19 performance. The table below showed that budgeted and that received broken down into the two Funds.

	Revised Budget £'000's	Actual £'000's	Variation £'000's
HRA	-213	-335	-122
General Fund	-331	-602	-271
Total Interest	-544	-937	-393

Vacancies across a number of teams had resulted in salaries being underspent by £255,900 in 2018/19. Key drivers of the underspend included vacancies within Development Services for building control and a conservation officer, Strategic Leadership during recruitment for the Asset Manager post, and within the Asset Management team following a restructure implemented in November.

General Fund utilities budgets were underspent overall by £3,100, with underspends on electricity totalling £43,200 offsetting overspends on gas and water supplies of £25,200 and £14,900 respectively. The most significant variations were shown in Section 3.2.7 of the report.

Having a reasonably mild winter would have led to a drop in consumption. Officers would work with the Compliance Team to determine the most appropriate usage that budgets should be based upon, with the 2019/20 budgets being adjusted to reflect this.

Delivering the Christmas lights events across the District and the Victorian evening in Warwick incurred an additional £24,600 in expenditure above budget. In addition, there was an adverse variation of £21,100 on the cost of the Illuminations in Kenilworth and Leamington £21,100. The contract for providing the illuminations was currently out to tender, with the budget to be reviewed alongside the award of the subsequent contract.

There had been an increased number of Events throughout the Arts facilities during 2018/19, in particular the Royal Spa Centre and the Royal Pump Rooms. Income from non-WDC admissions, including room bookings, concessions and events had increased by £206,700. Much of this was offset by the additional costs directly relating to the hosting of these events, including staffing. The sites had generated a net favourable position of £72,900, the majority of which could be attributable to the Pump Rooms. Income from other activities at the Spa Centre, such as the cinema and main shows, had been in line with budget.

Planning Fee Income budgets were increased twice during the year, the second as part of the Revised Budget Setting Process. This increase of £200,000 proved to be too optimistic and did not materialise. Income received in 2018/19 was still £257,800 more than was forecast in the original budget. The position was being re-assessed for the current and future years' budgets.

Housing benefits presented a favourable net variance of £293,700, driven by an increase in the subsidy on benefit overpayments. The bad debt provision for Benefits had been reduced by £16,800 due to a lower level of debtors, and was £67,800 lower than budget.

As previously reported, there was an increase in external audit fees paid during 2018/19 which had resulted in an adverse variation of £47,000, following delays in the completion and sign off of the 2017/18 Statements of Accounts. External audit was required to carry out additional work and visits to WDC following their scheduled agreed programme in June and July 2018, with further visits required in September and November alongside ongoing work off-site.

During 2018/19 there had been a net £50,500 adverse variance in the cost of legal services, with favourable variance of £11,700 in legal fees, offset by an adverse variation of £62,200 in disbursements.

An additional recurrent budget of £100,000 for Bed and Breakfast costs was built into the 2018/19 budget. This would be compensated for in part by additional benefits reimbursement from Government and an additional £100,000 in rebates was also built in. The Council now had a refurbished property in Willes Road, and also as of September had use of William Wallsgrove House to provide accommodation to those who would have previously been placed into Private Sector Bed and Breakfast. Now in use, it presented a corresponding adverse variance of £23,200.

While the use of the Council's own properties had reduced the amount of expenditure spent on Bed and Breakfast accommodation, it had increased costs relating to rents, council tax and Repairs and Maintenance on these properties, with an adverse variance of £208,400.

Officers would re-assess the use of temporary accommodation in 2019/20 and adjust the budgets accordingly to reflect the changes in how the service was provided.

Demand to purchase plots for future use had reduced due to the Leamington graveyard now being close of capacity, following increased demand in previous years as plots were reserved while they were still available, resulting in an adverse variation of £90,400. Going forward, there would be a review of the fees for Exclusive Rights for non-residents in order to prolong availability for the Council's own residents at Kenilworth cemetery. The effect of this should be to delay the need for a capital project to build a new Cemetery.

The Revised Budget for the HRA allocated £3.882m to be appropriated to the HRA Capital Investment Reserve. The actual outturn for 2018/19 resulted in £3.998m being transferred, a variance of £116k. This was summarised in Appendix Bi to the report, which provides a detailed analysis of the variations and their drivers.

Vacancies across a number of teams had resulted in employee costs being underspent by £329,200 in 2018/19. Key drivers of the underspend include vacancies across the housing services teams, and the recharge from the Asset Management Team being below budget as mentioned above. There had been significant vacancies within the Council's supported housing provision at William Wallsgrove House, following opening of the hostel in September, totally £89,900.

Repairs and maintenance had resulted in an adverse variation of £620,000. Following on from the outcome of the stock condition survey, and ongoing works as part of the fire safety in high rise properties projects, major repairs expenditure was £113,000 above budget. Responsive and void repairs had resulted in an adverse variation of £506,000. There had been an increased drive this year to make best use of the time that a property was void to ensure that when it was re-let, it was to the minimum agreed standard. Across the repairs, maintenance and improvement programmes, both revenue and capital through the Housing Investment Programme, there had been increased delivery of

works to ensure that none of the Council's housing stock could be categorised as having poor or very poor components by March 2020.

There had been a significant amount of change in the Assets Team during the year, including a redesign taking place in November. Monitoring and budget processes had been reviewed in conjunction with control processes supported and agreed by the asset manager, to ensure up to date information was shared between key service stakeholders. This would enable greater financial control, and prevent works being agreed with contractors without the necessary budget and authorisation.

Members were reminded that the depreciation charged on HRA properties, in particular housing stock, was roughly in line with forecast expectations for the year. The increased depreciation, up £105,000 from 2017/18, was charged as an expense to the HRA as per statutory guidelines, being transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR). The MRR was ring-fenced to be used to fund capital improvements through the Housing Investment Programme, or could be used to repay debt.

There was a favourable variation on the Bad Debt Provision of £174,900. Continued delays to the full implementation of Universal Credit, which had been factored into this Budget, and improved collection rates had reduced the level of Debt outstanding at 31 March 2019 against the forecasted arrears. Similarly, there was a favourable variation on the HRA's Court Costs, £45,500, offset in part by reduced income from charges (£17,400).

HRA PV Panel income was favourable compared to that budgeted by some £9,500, driven by a summer that supported high levels of generation to maximise the Feed-In-Tariff rates received.

The HRA utilities budgets were overspent by £78,400, with overspends on electricity totalling £35,100, gas £28,000 and water supplies £15,300 respectively. Electricity cost increases were driven in part by a change in supplier part way through the year, with the latest contract reflecting increased supply rates in the sector. Any costs related to individual properties within one of our sheltered and the five very sheltered properties provided as part of communal supply were recovered through recharges to the tenants.

Officers would be monitoring these budgets in 2019/20, and reviewing the budgets where necessary to ensure appropriate resource allocation going forward.

Capital Expenditure showed a favourable variance against the latest budget of £2.581m. This was comprised of the Housing Investment Programme and Other Services. The table below summarises Budget and Expenditure by Fund, with further details within appendices D and E.

	Latest 2018/19 £'000	Actual 2018/19 £'000	Variance 2018/19 £'000
Housing Investment Programme	10,598	11,086	488

Other Services	18,447	15,378	(3,069)
Total Capital	29,045	26,464	(2,581)

The main reasons for these variations were:

Slippage due to delays in delivering agreed programmed works and projects commencing late. Budget to be carried forward to 2019/20 for these specific planned works total £1.375m on the Housing Investment Programme, and £2.605m for Other Services. Whilst this showed as a variation in the table above and in the appendices, it was not an underspend or saving.

The increased cost of delivering Housing Investment Programme improvements identified alongside the ongoing works for fire safety in high rise properties had resulted in an adverse spend of £237,600 above the agreed original budgeted programme, which included £2.590m for specific fire safety works (£770,400 of this programme had been slipped to 2019/20). The main drivers of this included the complete rewiring of a number of the Council's blocks for electricity, and also for digital utilities for TV and broadband services. Doors were replaced to offer further fire prevention above the minimum safety standard. Where these were brought forward in the programme, future budget requirements would be reduced and factored into the programme based on their new attribute expected life.

A number of major construction and acquisition opportunities for the delivery of council housing had arisen during the year, resulting in an adverse variance of £1,509,000. A number of ex-council houses originally sold through Right to Buy being repurchased using delegated authority. While it had been budgeted that only one would be purchased when the budget was set, an additional five were purchased during the year. The conversion of Beauchamp House following its purchase in April, and the conversion costs of 173 Rugby Road and William Wallsgrove House had also been above original forecasts. The conversion projects had been as a result of the work required to bring the units up to an appropriate standard being under estimated at the outset of the projects, with some high value works only being identified once contractors were on site.

The maintenance of play areas on land with HRA ownership was transferred from Open Spaces, and had resulted in an unbudgeted cost to the HRA of £160,000. This would be factored into the programme from 2019/20.

Appendix D to the report showed an analysis of the Capital Programme, with Appendix E to the report providing a more comprehensive breakdown of the variations and their drivers, and the level of budget to either be returned to reserves or slipped to 2019/20.

In November 2016 (Budget Review Report), Members approved that any surplus or deficit on the General Fund balance was to be appropriated to

or from the General Fund Balance. Under this agreed delegation, £321.5k had been allocated.

Similarly, it was agreed for the Housing Revenue Account, that the balance be automatically appropriated to / from the HRA Capital Investment Reserve. £116.1k had been transferred in 2018/19.

It was also agreed that the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder, would amend these arrangements for appropriating the surpluses or deficits as necessary and would agree any further items of revenue and capital slippage.

As part of the Final Accounts process, requests had been approved under delegated authority by the Head of Finance for Revenue Ear Marked Reserves. These were for previously agreed projects where it had not been possible to complete as budgeted within 2018/19, and would therefore need to carry forward budget to 2019/20.

These totalled £1,325,000 for the General Fund and £281,400 for the HRA, and were outlined in detail in Appendix C to the report. Requests were considered against budget outturn within the specific projects and services, with requests approved only where there was sufficient budget available.

Members noted this was a considerable sum, the most significant projects being the ongoing works on Linen Street, Covent Garden car park, golf course maintenance and the housing external decorations programme.

It was recommended that the Executive noted the position on Revenue slippage. As in previous years, expenditure against these Budgets would be regularly monitored and reported to the Executive as part of the Budget Review Process.

When thinking of alternatives, the report was a statement of fact. However, how the outcomes might be treated could be dealt with in a variety of ways, mainly the alternatives were to not allow any, or only allow some of the earmarked reserve requests to be approved.

Another alternative was to allow the General Fund balance to vary from the core level of £1.5m level, along with how the 2018/19 surplus was allocated. Any changes to the allocations would be implemented during 2019/20.

An addendum circulated prior to the meeting advised Members of a correction to table included in Section 3.2.2, Page 3 of the report, to remove "000's" from the header of the second column, which is reflected above. The addendum also showed the significant variations of the outturn for the 2018/19 General Fund Revenue Services as a percentage.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee received the above-mentioned addendum to the report that updated the table detailing the significant

variations within the general fund so it included the percentage or variation.

The Finance & Audit Committee noted the report.

In the absence of Councillor Hales, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the report, appendices and addendum were proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Day, as laid out.

Resolved that

- (1) the final revenue outturn positions of the General Fund (GF) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), being £321.5k and £116.1k favourable respectively, be noted;
- (2) the Capital Programme showing a favourable variation of £2.581m, noting the level of slippage carried forward to 2019/20 as set out in Appendix E to the report, be noted;
- (3) the allocations of the revenue surpluses which have been appropriated to the General Fund Balance Reserve and HRA Capital Investment Reserve under delegated authority, be noted;
- (4) the final position for Revenue Slippage be noted; and
- (5) the Earmarked Reserve (EMR) requests of £1.325m General Fund and £281.4k HRA attached as Appendix C to the report, be approved, with the requests having been approved under delegated authority by the Head of Finance in conjunction with the Finance Portfolio Holder.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hales)

20. Recording & Broadcasting of Council meetings

The Executive considered a report from Culture seeking approval for the purchase and associated financing for a new Audio Visual (AV) system within the Council Chamber at Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa.

The Town Hall was managed by the Council's Arts Section and was primarily used by the Council for its public meetings. The Council Chamber was also used for other WDC functions such as planning inquiries which used the AV system to record meetings. The Council Chamber and Assembly Hall were also hired by Royal Leamington Spa Town Council for annual council meetings and mayor making. When rooms at the Town Hall were not in use by the Council's, they were hired for a range of events.

The current AV system had been in use in the Town Hall Council Chamber for over 12 years. When originally installed, the system comprised of three operational cameras (two of which could move their focus and track to pre-programmed points in the room and one fixed view camera). The two tracking cameras were based on a pre-set digital ground plan of the Council Chamber and mapped to specific locations in the room where microphones were placed. This had limited value because it required fixed locations and should the microphone be moved or the room set up changed, the camera did not track to the new position. In addition, these two cameras ceased to be operational over five years ago as the technology to support the modes became obsolete and they subsequently failed.

The ability of the AV system in the Council Chamber to record meetings was now limited to a single fixed point camera mounted by the data projector under the public gallery which, while it had a wide angle lens, did not capture the whole of the room. The recording quality of the camera was not sufficient to operate in low level lighting conditions (for example during presentations to Planning Committee). The audio functionality of the system was restricted because the microphone base stations used a wireless bandwidth that was very narrow and therefore was susceptible to interference from other Wi-Fi networks within the vicinity of the Town Hall and Town Centre. Despite its age, the system remained useable in its current form due to the current support contract that was in place.

The majority of common issues experienced with the AV system could be attributed to the inconsistent volume of those addressing the meeting or users not speaking directly into the microphone so their voice could not be picked up and amplified. This latter problem might not be fully resolved by introducing a new system and would require a greater understanding of microphone technique by those addressing meetings.

Video recordings that were taken of the Council meetings in the Council Chamber were recorded onto a hard drive from which DVDs were created. These were then held on a master file with Democratic Services for 12 months before being securely destroyed.

The current AV system could be used to transmit a video and audio feed through to the Assembly Hall. This had been used on several occasions when demand to attend Council meetings had been greater than the capacity of the public gallery (a maximum of 35 people). However, upon assessment from two of the industry's leading suppliers, the current system could not be used / adapted to securely broadcast meetings to the internet.

At present, the Council did not have any recording / broadcasting facilities within rooms 21, 18 or 11. In order to enable this, either a purpose-built system would need to be installed or a small, or table-top recording device would have to be used. Democratic Services officers had experimented with the latter option but it would not be of a sufficient

standard to broadcast to the public. It was also considered that due to the significantly poor quality of these solutions, they would not be appropriate for use by the Council unless in an emergency situation i.e. for an urgent licensing panel when the Council Chamber was unavailable. The addition of more advanced recording / broadcasting facilities in these rooms had not been considered at this stage on the advice of external suppliers, as the associated costs would be prohibitive.

With regard to the Assembly Hall, only the microphone base stations could be transferred from the Council Chamber. There was no method of recording either the audio or visuals of meetings that took place in the Assembly Hall.

Before purchasing its own AV solution, Warwickshire County Council had experimented by broadcasting their meetings live to the internet via 'Periscope' (a third party social media video streaming platform). It was understood that these recordings were undertaken using a tablet computer. This option was considered by Officers. However, during discussions with WCC and after inspecting their Twitter account, it became clear that they had received multiple complaints from the public regarding the quality of the video. It was not always possible to see the relevant Councillor speaking, and it was therefore unclear as to who was speaking. The audio quality was of an extremely poor standard. An example recording of a WCC scrutiny committee made using this technology was available to view online and the link was circulated with the agenda. In addition to this, at least one dedicated member of staff was required to undertake the recording for the duration of the meeting.

The WDC Media team had considered the potential benefits and disadvantages of utilising this technology. It was concluded that while this method would provide some assurance to the community regarding openness of Council meetings, the quality of the broadcast would not enhance this or the Council's overall reputation for delivering high quality information.

WDC officers had also considered the ability to broadcast or upload its current recordings via online video sharing sites, such as YouTube. However, due to the recording format currently used, this option was also found not to be possible.

As part of the response to a Notice of the Motion in June 2018, Officers held informal talks with two suppliers about the potential to broadcast meetings from the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. Both suppliers advised that there would be a need to update the current system and that there was an additional cost for the broadcast or hosting of the meetings online. In both instances, the costs for the period up to January 2021 were over £70,000. The suppliers and exact cost had not been named in the report because this information was considered to be commercially sensitive.

Indicative discussions were also held with suppliers about either upgrading the current system and then transferring this to the new HQ, or

installing a new system and transferring this to the new HQ. Both suppliers advised against this because the system should be designed for the room(s) it would be used in and by the time the Council technology would have progressed, which could lead to complications in embedding within any wider technology provision within the new HQ. The tendered contract for the new offices included budget provision for a new AV system so at the point of any future relocation of Council functions, the new Town Hall system would become redundant, unless elements of it could be redeployed to other Council buildings. However, given that any relocation of the Town Hall functions was unlikely to be required before 2021 at the earliest, it was appropriate to make the relatively modest investment in the new system, even if were to become redundant in the future.

No discussions had taken place with the regard to installing recording and broadcasting of meetings from within the Assembly Hall, Room 21, Room 18 or Room 11 at the Town Hall because this would require a new AV system to be installed, as well as cameras (either permanently or temporary/transferrable between rooms), for which there would be further cost.

Officers had investigated what neighbouring authorities (Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council as well as the other District/Boroughs within Warwickshire) did in terms of broadcasting meetings.

All of these authorities, apart from Rugby and North Warwickshire Borough Council, broadcasted some or all meetings online. In summary, the viewing figures from the authorities that officers were provided with were variable. Stratford District Council had circa 30 to 90 views per meeting; Solihull, between December 2015 and August 2016 had had between 25 and 250, depending on the subject matter (but average circa 100 views); Coventry City Council were only able to broadcast meetings of Council held in the Council Chamber and normally had around 20 views per meeting but had one meeting with 94 views. WCC were unable to confirm numbers as they were hosted via Periscope on Twitter and the new system, and at the time of writing, had not been in use for a full cycle of meetings to provide a comparison.

The volume of requests for WDC meetings to be broadcast or recordings from local residents had not been significant. While no direct records were kept, only a limited number of enquiries had been received, via Twitter, asking if meetings were available to watch online. The Council had provided 59 copies of recordings of 37 meetings out of a potential 137 meetings that were recorded since May 2015. Nearly all of the recordings that had been provided were of Planning Committee.

Members were also reminded the decision from the former Minister for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, which encouraged members of the public to comment live from Council meetings and clarified the law that the public and press were entitled to record, broadcast, take photos, take notes or comment on social media live from

public meetings, so long as it did not interfere with the meeting. The guidance also made it mandatory to make facilities available to enable this to happen. In essence, this was to ensure a reasonable number of chairs were provided, as well as a table for leaning on to make notes where practicable. Officers were aware of occasions where this had occurred in Council meetings and this did pose a small risk because individuals could, as they were entitled to, edit and broadcast parts of meeting they wished to, for which the Council could not provide contrary evidence. While this risk was minimal, it was increasing with the popularity of social media.

Members were made aware that the current support contract for the system would expire in September this year, and therefore an exemption to the procurement process was requested to provide cover for the current system until a new one was installed.

The recommendation to carry out an options appraisal was in line with the requirement to subject all vehicle, plant and equipment purchase to an options appraisal to determine the most cost effective method of finance.

In terms of alternatives, the Council could decide not to invest in a new AV system for the Council Chamber now, but this could lead to further public embarrassment and bad publicity.

The Council could consider moving some of its public meetings away from the Town Hall to other locations which could provide broadcasting/recording facilities as standard. However, there would be additional costs to consider which were not currently budgeted.

For rooms 21, 11 and 18 the Council could utilise a small recording device, however, this had been tested in some Licensing & Regulatory Panels when the Council Chamber had not been available and had provided mixed results and were not of sufficient quality to broadcast.

During the process of producing this report, Stratford District Council had moved to using their current equipment to broadcast live via Youtube. At this stage this process had been discounted by officers because the WDC equipment would need to be upgraded to enable this and officers had not been able verify the costs of this approach.

The Finance & Audit Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Resolved that

- (1) purchase of a replacement AV system costing approximately £80,000 for the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, be approved and that this be included in the 2019/20 General Fund Capital Programme;
- (2) an options appraisal be undertaken in association with Link Asset Services, Treasury

Advisors for the Council, in order to determine the most cost effective method of financing the purchase;

- (3) as a result of the options appraisal, should purchase prove to be the most cost effective financing method, then the cost be met from the Equipment Renewals Reserve;
- (4) the potential need for additional annual budgetary provision within the Medium Term Financial Strategy from 2020/21 above the current of £2,400 for the maintenance and support for the new AV system, be noted;
- (5) as part of this project, the new AV system should include the ability to broadcast meetings live, on line, from the Council Chamber; and
- (6) an exemption to the Code of Procurement Practice be approved, to extend the maintenance contract for the current system by six months, to the end of March 2020, to enable the new system to be procured and installed.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Day and Grainger)

21. **Significant Business Risk Register**

The Executive considered a report from Finance setting out the latest version of the Council's Significant Business Risk Register for review by the Executive. It had been drafted following a review by the Council's Senior Management Team and the Leader of the Council.

The report sought to assist Members fulfil their role in overseeing the organisation's risk management framework. In its management paper, "Worth the risk: improving risk management in local government", the Audit Commission set out clearly the responsibilities of Members and officers with regard to risk management.

The Significant Business Risk Register (SBRR) recorded all significant risks to the Council's operations, key priorities, and major projects. Individual services also had their own service risk registers.

The SBRR was reviewed quarterly by the Council's Senior Management Team and the Council Leader and then, in keeping with Members' overall responsibilities for managing risk, by the Executive. The latest version of the SBRR was set out as Appendix 1 to the report.

A summary of all the risks and their position on the risk matrix, as currently assessed, was set out as Appendix 2 to the report.

The scoring criteria for the risk register were judgemental and were based on an assessment of the likelihood of something occurring, and the impact that might have. Appendix 3 to the report set out the guidelines that were applied to assessing risk.

As part of the process of assessing the significant business risks for the Council, some issues had been identified which at this stage, did not necessarily represent a significant risk, or even a risk at all, but as more detail emerged, might become one. These had been mentioned in previous reports but as their status had not changed, they were included again for completeness.

Brexit – already recognised as a potential trigger to some of the Council’s existing risks, this issue would be kept under review so that as details emerged of exactly what Brexit might mean, generally for local government and specifically for this Council, the implications for the Council’s risk environment could be considered further; and

Funding – the Government had started consultations around changes to the Business Rate Retention scheme by Local Government and the Fair Funding Review, with both these changes due to be effective from 2020/21. Depending on how these proposals would develop, there might be a substantial impact upon the Council’s finances.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

Resolved that

- (1) the Significant Business Risk Register attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) the emerging risks identified in section 10 of the report, be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder was Councillor Hales)

22. Update on Action Plan following Review of Closure of Accounts

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) setting out the progress on the action plan that was agreed in the report on the Review of the Closure of 2017/18 Accounts in October 2018.

Appendix 1 to the report set out the monthly progress report on the action plan agreed following the Review of the Closure of the 2017/18 Accounts. Progress was to be noted and the Executive and the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee were asked to make any comments.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee received a briefing from the Council auditors (Grant Thornton) regarding an emerging issue for the potential increase in pension liability for the Council, as the result of a

national case regarding public sector pensions. There was to be a formal conversation with officers on the potential need for the 2018/19 Accounts to be amended to reflect this before they were formally signed off by the Committee and Audit at the end of July.

The Committee took the opportunity to thank officers and Grant Thornton for their work completing the accounts on time.

Resolved that the report and Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hales)
Forward Plan reference 1,027

23. **Commonwealth Games 2022 (CG 2022) – CWLEP funding bid**

The Executive considered a report from regarding the Commonwealth Games 2022 (CG 2022) – CWLEP funding bid.

In December 2017, the Commonwealth Games Federation confirmed that Birmingham would be the host for the 2022 Commonwealth Games with the Lawn Bowls and Para Bowls competitions being held at Royal Leamington Spa's Victoria Park.

Following the establishment of a Project Board and an initial Project Initiation Document (PID), a dedicated Warwick District Commonwealth Games Manager was appointed for a period of four years. The Project Manager was now leading on the ongoing development of the project with support from colleagues across the Council who jointly formed the Project Team.

In March 2019, the Executive agreed a number of recommendations in relation to the development of this project. The latest report sought further permissions from the Executive, in particular, those related to a significant funding bid that had been submitted to Coventry and Warwickshire Local Economic Partnership (CWLEP).

It was anticipated that the results of the CWLEP application would be known in mid-July, and officers would update Members as soon as possible. The future funding and scope of this project was dependant on whether the CWLEP bid was successful or not; the report identified the funding which the Council had already allocated for specific projects but also sought approval for additional funds for essential works related to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games (the CG 2022 Games).

All of the recommendations in the report related to the need for additional funding to enable the Council to deliver on a range of projects directly relevant to the successful delivery of the bowls and para-bowls events in the 2022 Games. It should also be noted that the improvements would also have a strong legacy for the district after the 2022 Games and hence would benefit residents of the district and visitors to the district for years to come.

The CWLEP had ring fenced a sum of £3.3m for projects that would make a contribution towards the CG 2022 Games. It had made a closed call for proposals and invited WDC and WCC to bid. At the time of writing, a draft application had been submitted and it was anticipated that the LEP Board would make a decision in mid-July. Likewise, WCC were submitting a bid. The two bids were complimentary and were both based on Leamington.

Appendix 1 to the report in the private & confidential section of the agenda contained the submitted bid. It was required to be confidential at this stage as it was still a draft bid and some elements had information from a third party involved. However, paragraph 3.2 in the report detailed the particular elements.

In support of the LEP Bid, the Council would need to be aware of the existing financial resources already planned and available and of the additional resources requested in the scenario of the bid being successful and if it was not. In either scenario, £50,000 was sought to support a bid by Sustrans. If the Bid was successful, an additional £280,000 was sought. In all scenarios, the proposals for additional resources were to be funded from the Community Projects Reserve.

Lawn Bowls was an important sport for Warwick District with Victoria Park Bowling Greens recognised as the "Home of English Bowls". Whilst the current facilities were appropriate for hosting local and national competitions, they required further improvement to host the Commonwealth Games. The proposed improvements, which were essential whether the CWLEP bid was successful or not, also presented an opportunity to future proof the venue for the benefit of local clubs and Bowls England, and ensure that the venue would be in a position to host other international and national events in the future should the opportunity arise.

Private and confidential Appendix 1 to the report outlined, in Section B2, the reasons for the works to the greens and the wider bowling venue. With professional advice from the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) and World Bowls, a specification and programme of works had been agreed that would deliver the greens to the required standard by 2022. A procurement exercise was now underway to identify a contractor to carry out these works, starting in autumn 2019.

It was essential that works start in autumn 2019 in order that the works to the greens could be organised in such a way that allowed the local clubs, Warwickshire County Bowls Association and Bowls England to continue to use the venue with minimum disruption. It would not be possible to avoid disruption completely, and officers were working with these organisations to plan ahead to keep this to a minimum.

The Commonwealth Games project gave the Council another opportunity to introduce electric bus services into Leamington Spa. This would play a major contribution in tackling the poor air quality issues in south Leamington that were increasing due to traffic congestion and vehicle emissions. The Council proposed to revive its previous bid to the

Department for Transport / OLEV which would introduce an electric bus service along with the installation of 'opportunity' charging infrastructure which would enable the introduction of e-buses into the fleet of contracted bus operators e.g. Stagecoach.

The Council had been working with Sustrans on a proposal to further improve the Lias line by using circa £2m Department of Transport (DfT) funds to improve cycle access around HS2 – which was the use of the old railway line connecting Leamington to Rugby and Southam which linked with the existing National Route 41 that ran through the town centre leading to the railway station and beyond further west. The emerging proposal would also help improve the route through the towns of Leamington and Warwick using the existing and proposed open spaces along the river corridor, of which the proposed Commonwealth Park would be a significant step forward. However, it would also enable improved pedestrian and cycle access to the Games venue and to the railway station. Some match funding was required and it was proposed that the Council should contribute £50,000 irrespective of whether the CWLEP bid was successful or not. WCC, Rugby and Stratford Councils were also involved and were contributing to the overall scheme. The end result would be a complete off road cycleway from Rugby to Warwick via Leamington with a route also to Southam.

The 2022 Games were being tagged by the Birmingham Organising Committee as 'the Public Transport Games' and it had estimated that 75% of visitors were expected to arrive at the bowling events by rail. The Warwickshire County Council (WCC) CWLEP bid included a number of improvements to the railway station forecourt, the underpass providing a link to Sayer Court / Avenue Road, and wayfinding from the railway station to the bowls venue. The route from the railway station to the venue was often referred to as the "last mile" and created the first impression of the town for visitors to the event.

The WCC bid would also include the establishment of a bike hire docking station network, with one located at the station forecourt and others at Victoria Park and the town centre.

Victoria Park was only one kilometre from the town centre, with road and park routes for pedestrians leading to hotels, guesthouses and restaurants. However, current signage was poor and required a combination of permanent signage supplemented by temporary wayfinding for "Games time". The Council had made a match funding commitment of £32,000 to WCC to improve wayfinding to and from the station. It was anticipated that this would include conventional physical signage and "digital / virtual signage".

A number of the actions within the CWLEP bid would require statutory consents and other permissions in order to be implemented. Officers would work closely with the relevant portfolio holders and colleagues to secure these consents as required.

The Project Team was aware that appropriate and timely communication with stakeholders in the coming three years should be a priority in order that all those with an interest were kept informed of progress and have an opportunity, where appropriate, to input into the details of the works.

In terms of alternative options, the Council could choose to not proceed with the LEP Bid but this would be counter to the previous decision made to seek funding and so it had been discounted as an option.

The proposal could be varied in a number of particular ways. However, the Bid prepared had sought to maximise the investment in the venue and the surrounding area to fulfil the overall objectives of the Commonwealth Games project.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee welcomed the report and supported the recommendations.

Resolved that

- (1) the bid made to CWLEP as detailed in the Private and Confidential Appendix 1, be noted and supported;
- (2) the use of the existing monies referred to in Private and Confidential Appendix 2 to the report as the Council match-funding to the CWLEP bid, be approved;
- (3) an allocation of £50,000 from the Community Projects Reserve in 2019/20 and 2020/21 as a contribution to the Sustrans Route 41/Lias Line cycleway upgrade, be approved;
- (4) should the CWLEP bid be successful, an allocation from the Community Projects Reserve of £280,000 over 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 to fund the installation of charging infrastructure for the electric bus scheme, be approved;
- (5) should the CWLEP bid be unsuccessful or undetermined, the recommendation in the private and confidential Appendix 5 to the report be approved;
- (6) should the CWLEP bid be successful, authority be given to the Chief Executive, Head of Cultural Services and Head of Neighbourhood

Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Culture and for Neighbourhood Services, to seek the necessary statutory and other consents necessary to implement the proposals in the CWLEP projects; and

- (7) the key stakeholders be kept informed and involved in the implementation of the project on a regular basis.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Grainger)
Forward Plan Reference 803

24. **Public and Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute Nos.	Para Nos.	Reason
25, 26, 27, 28	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

The items below were considered in confidential session and the full details of these were included in the confidential minutes of this meeting.

25. **Confidential Appendices to Agenda Item 5, Minute Number 24**

The Executive considered the confidential appendices to Agenda Item 5 - Commonwealth Games 2022 (CG 2022) – CWLEP funding bid.

The appendices were approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Grainger)
Forward Plan Reference 803

Part 1

(Items upon which a decision by the Council was required)

26. **Affordable housing purchase – Montague Road, Warwick**

The Executive considered a confidential report from Housing.

The recommendations in the report were approved.

(At the time of discussing this item, Councillor Grainger declared an interest because she was objecting to a Planning Application related to the item. She therefore did not vote on this item.)

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Matecki)
Forward Plan Reference 1,028

Part 2

(Items for which a decision by the Council was not required)

27. Compulsory Purchase Order – Land at Warwick Road

The Executive considered a confidential report from the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ).

The recommendations in the report were approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Cooke)
Forward Plan Reference 1,025

28. Minutes

The confidential minutes of 6 June 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(The meeting ended at 7.03pm)

CHAIRMAN
21 August 2019

ARTICLE 5 - CHAIRING THE COUNCIL

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - SECTIONS 3-7

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - SECTION 37 - CONSTITUTIONS

DIRECTION

PARAGRAPH 3(G)

5.01 Role and function of the Chairman

The Chairman of the Council and in their absence, the Vice-Chairman will have both a ceremonial role and that of chairing Council meetings.

The Chairman will be elected by the Council annually. The Chairman will have the following responsibilities:

1. to uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary;
2. to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community;
3. to ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members who are not on the Executive are able to hold the Executive to account;
4. to promote public involvement in the Council's *activities and to celebrate the activities and achievements of the Council including its officers and councillors;*
5. *to support the Town and Parish Councils in their work by either visiting their meetings, inviting them to events or through other appropriate actions*
6. *to host or attend events or functions they determine appropriate;*
7. The Chairman may on occasions delegate *attending* functions to their Vice Chairman, or in exceptional circumstances, another Councillor (*normally the previous Chairman*);
8. Cannot be a member of the Executive or Standards Committee; and
9. Can decide to be called Chair, *Chairwoman, Chairperson*, or Chairman during their year in office.
10. *The Chairman may optionally select a chaplain but this should not be seen as requirement of the role.*
11. *Determine one or two charities, associated with the District, to advocate during their year in office, but not hold any specific events to fund raise for them.*