

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10 December 2007 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Coker (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Bunker, Michael Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Kirton, Pratt and White.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Boad (Chair of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee);
Councillor Caborn (Chairman of the Council)
Councillor Crowther (Labour Group Observer)
Councillor Ms De-Lara-Bond (Liberal Democrat Group Observer); and
Councillor Mrs Knight (Chair of Audit and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee);

693. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute number 701 – Relocation of Customer Service Centre to Shire Hall, Warwick

Councillors Caborn, Kirton and Doody declared personal interests because they were Warwickshire County Councillors.

Minute number 713 (D) – Release of Licence of Westgate Car Park to Warwickshire County Council

Councillors Doody and Kirton declared personal and prejudicial interests because they were both Warwickshire County Councillors and left the room whilst the item was considered.

Minute number 718 – Kenilworth Public Service Centre Feasibility Study and Sale of Land

Councillor Mrs Bunker declared a personal and prejudicial interest because not only was she a Kenilworth Town Councillor, she was also a member of Warwick District Council Planning Committee and therefore left the room whilst the item was considered.

Councillor Coker highlighted that he was a member of Kenilworth Town Council but would not declare an interest in this item because when it was to be discussed at Kenilworth Town Council he would be declaring a personal and prejudicial interest and not take part in any of the discussion.

694. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 October 2007 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

695. MEMORIALS AND PETITIONS

RESOLVED that the petition opposing the closure of Warwick Fire Station, referred from Council, be supported.

696. NOTICE OF MOTION

The Executive considered the following Notice of Motion, sponsored by Councillor Mrs Higgins;

- (1) that Warwick District Council supports the Warwick Chamber of Trade's initiative for the phasing out of free plastic bags; and the Environment and Economic Policy Committee be asked to investigate and recommend to the Executive (a) how this Council can support this either financially or through assistance in promotion of the scheme and (b) how other Chambers of Trade can be encouraged to follow the example of Warwick; and
- (2) that the Executive approaches DEFRA for a grant to introduce chewing gum disposal points within the district."

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Notice of Motion be agreed as printed; and
- (2) Part (1) of the Notice of Motion be referred to the Environment & Economic Policy Committee for their working party to investigate.

697. COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance which sought members' views on the new draft vision and strategic aims for the Community Strategy that had been developed as a result of several stakeholder events.

Local Authorities had a duty under the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare a Community Strategy that set out the long term strategic vision for their area. This was in partnership with other key agencies, the voluntary and community sector and businesses sector, under the umbrella of the Local Strategic Partnership.

The new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), in accordance with recent government guidance, sought to integrate social, economic and environmental issues and tackle the area's longer term challenges. Consequently, there was a need for a fresh vision for the District which reflected local, regional and national change and new agendas.

The SCS had been prepared alongside the "Core Strategy" which was in the process of being prepared by the Planning & Engineering Department. This would form part of the Local Development Framework for Warwick District. The

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Core Strategy and SCS were launched at the joint “Visioning Event” held in Warwick in June 2007. Although the timetable for preparing the SCS was much shorter than that for the Core Strategy, every opportunity had been taken to draw the two processes together, with planning officers attending all the consultation and Warwick Partnership Executive Group meetings. This had enabled the SCS to be aware of figures for new jobs and homes in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy Review and also for the Core Strategy to be aware of the needs and aspirations of various stakeholders within the District. Where it was reasonable and possible, the needs of stakeholders would be reflected in the Core Strategy in due course. The Government supported close working between Community Strategies and Core Strategies. The Core Strategy was required to have regard to the SCS.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the draft vision and strategic aims as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed as a framework for further developing priorities and subsequent actions for the District's new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS);
- (2) the draft framework be accepted as a way forward to producing the final draft Sustainable Community Strategy, acknowledging that it was a work in progress and subject to further consultation with all partners and stakeholders; and
- (3) the timetable for consultation on and completion of the final draft Sustainable Community Strategy, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Bunker)
(Forward plan ref 26)

698. ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance on the proposed new organisational values to be included in the new Corporate Strategy.

The development of a clear set of core organisational values would provide clarity for employees, the community, partners and stake holders illustrating what Warwick District Council stands for. It would also provide the starting point for the development of a competency framework of behaviours for the whole organisation.

The five values and statements below had been developed from the consultation with staff undertaken as part of the Chief Executive's annual presentation which included over 200 returns from those present.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The values underpinned an approach to the people which Warwick District Council served and who they worked with;

- Honesty and Integrity - Can be relied upon and would be truthful;
- Open and transparent - Accountable and understandable;
- Fair and equitable - Value all our citizens and our work will be without bias or prejudice;
- Community focussed - Put the needs and aspirations of our local communities to the fore and we will work flexibly and collaboratively as one Council and with others in response; and
- Environmentally sensitive - Ensure our long term impacts are minimised and were sustainable for future generations.

Members of staff should be expected to act in accordance with such values but also to be treated likewise by the Council as an employer and by the community.

The previous Corporate Strategy contained seven values; however, these were not used as the basis for a competency framework or to drive how the organisation worked.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the five core values for Warwick District Council be approved, subject to final definition; and
- (2) the inclusion, publication and promotion of the five values within the new Corporate Strategy be approved, subject to the Corporate Strategy 2007 to 2011 report being submitted to the Executive.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)

699. CORPORATE STRATEGY 2007 TO 2011

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance which sought approval of the draft Corporate Strategy 2007 to 2011.

At its meeting on 23 July 2007, the Executive agreed the seven Corporate Strategy Objectives along with the three priorities falling within each objectives.

Since then, work had been done to establish robust proposals for the remaining elements of the Corporate Strategy – the vision and mission; the targets for each priority; high level actions; the resource framework; the management and delivery framework and the process for monitoring and review. The report sought approval for those additional elements.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Corporate Strategy was one the most important documents for the Council. It articulated the aims and priorities of the administration and directed the way the Council allocated its resources. It set out what the Council aimed to achieve, why and how. It was the cornerstone of the Council's performance management framework the objectives, priorities, targets and key actions would be the measures by which the Council would be judged.

Finalisation of the Corporate Strategy, including completing the consultation, had not been possible as a number of the targets needed to be amended following the publication of a new set of national performance indicators in late October 2007. Other indicators were awaiting responses from the November Citizens' Panel before targets could be set. These results were expected in early December.

As a result of the delay, it was proposed that consultation with partners and community leaders took place in early 2008 following the approval of the draft by the Executive.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report, but suggested that bench marks needed to be clearly shown.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the draft Corporate Strategy 2007 to 2011 attached at Appendix 1 of the report be approved as a basis for consultation;
- (2) the amendments to Objective CS4 (which reads "To provide high standards of environmental services across the district delivering a sustainable and quality environment") and Priority 3 within this Objective (which reads "To promote high standards of environmental health") be approved; and
- (3) following the consultation in December 2007 and January 2008, a further report be submitted to the Executive to finalise the Corporate Strategy, alongside a report on the feedback from the consultation.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)
(Forward plan ref 25 & 32)

700. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Executive considered a report from Policy, Projects and Conservation which sought approval for a number of changes to the Council's current Local Development Scheme and reported on the progress that the Council had made during 2007 in its programme of plan preparation.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act required all local planning authorities to prepare a Local Development Scheme and to review as necessary. The current Warwick District Council Local Development Scheme had been approved by the Executive in December 2006 and it was now appropriate that it be rolled forward.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the changes to the current Local Development Scheme attached at appendix B of the report be approved for submission to the Secretary of State;
- (2) the Local Development Scheme be approved and have effect as from the date when the Secretary of State notifies the Council that he does not intend to direct the authority to amend the Scheme; and
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Development Portfolio holder and the Head of Planning & Engineering to agree any further minor amendments to the presentation of the Local Development Scheme prior to or after submitting it to the Secretary of State.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward plan ref 41)

701. RELOCATION OF CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE TO SHIRE HALL, WARWICK

The Executive considered a report from Revenues and Customer Services on the business case for the relocation of the Customer Service Centre (CSC) from Riverside House to Shire Hall.

At its meeting on 11 June 2007, the Executive agreed that officers should prepare a full business case for the delivery of a joint District and County Council CSC.

The full business case had now been prepared and demonstrated real benefits to the customer whilst at the same time, incurring no extra cost for Warwick District Council.

The business case was based on the premise that the joining-up of the District and County Council CSC teams would not occur from day one. There would be a phased approach to change. Initially the District CSC team would simply relocate to Shire Hall. This in itself would be of benefit to the Council as it would free-up accommodation as detailed in the *Building on Excellence Programme*. Thereafter the respective CSC teams would work together to join up services.

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Consequently this was not a short-term programme but one lasting three to five years.

When considering the proposal for a joint CSC it was crucial that members appreciate the significant investment that the Council had made in the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which provided the council's "front-of-house" phone and counter services. This investment had led to a position where the CRM system would shortly be able to record and retain customer contacts, regardless of whether contact was made via the District or County Council.

There was a real opportunity to provide the customer with a truly joined-up approach to service delivery, not only answering an enquiry about a service at first point of contact, but also providing advice and information in respect of many other related services.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were not happy with the content of the business case as it contained insufficient financial detail. The Committee wanted to see information regarding:

- regarding the salary budgets, and accommodation costs;
- a robust risk assessment;
- details of the potential change in working conditions for WDC staff to WCC in order to explain why it is stated there will be no cost implications; and
- on what might happen if there was a need to bring any of these staff back to WDC conditions at later stage.

There was also concern that by moving the CSC away from Riverside House this would separate them from the service they are representing and could lead to a non functional distant relationship. However the primary concern that there was no costings within the document and they recommended that the Executive find out more details before the matter progressed.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report but suggested that it be monitored and reviewed after 6 months.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the principal of the business case as set out in the appendix to the report for the relocation of the Customer Service Centre (CSC) to Shire Hall, Warwick, be approved; and
- (2) the relocation takes place in a phased way to facilitate the integration of District and County Council services, subject to the Executive, Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer being satisfied that the exit strategy and contract exit arrangements are robust.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Pratt)
(Forward plan ref 42)

702. LOCALITY WORKING PROPOSALS IN WARWICK DISTRICT

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive on the consultation purposes proposals for locality working in Warwick District.

The Building on Excellence document agreed in mid September 2007 contained a proposal to develop neighbourhood working but which required more detail in respect of the geographical areas and services that would form the basis for the virtual teams proposed in that document.

In discussion the County Council had made 6 suggestions and these were detailed in the report. In addition the Police implemented 8 Safer Neighbourhood Forums and Teams in 2006 in the District.

The proposed concepts suggest it would take time to develop and mature and staff needed to be allowed the opportunity to work out how it could work. Staff would be part of the consultation.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report but suggested that the items mentioned under number 6 of 2.3 of the report be higher up the priority list.

RESOLVED that the proposals for locality working in Warwick District set out in this report at paragraph 2.3 for consultation purposes with partner agencies, parish and town councils and staff and unions be approved provided that the existing areas remain and that they have adequate support within the proposals.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)

703. APPROVAL OF GENERAL FUND BASE ESTIMATES REVISED 2007/08 AND ORIGINAL 2008/09

The Executive considered a report from Finance on the latest projections for the General Fund revenue estimates in respect of 2007/08 and 2008/09.

The Council was required to determine its budget requirements in order to set the Council Tax for 2008/09.

At its meeting on 23 July 2007, the Executive considered a framework for a Financial Strategy and the Budget 2008/09 Prospects and Process.

The report proposed Base Budget for 2008/09. The figures reflected the costs of maintaining the current level of service, and any unavoidable changes in expenditure (for example, where the Council was contractually or statutorily committed to incur additional expenditure). The report also considered the current year's budget, and included details of proposed revision to the 2007/08 Budget.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Alongside the preparation of the Estimates, the 2008/09 Service Area Plans were being developed. Possible service enhancements and service reductions were being identified. These were being considered and prioritised by portfolio holders to enable a package of ideas for external consultation during December.

The effects of “Building on Excellence” had not been incorporated within the report. The result of any changes would be included and reported to the February meeting. In addition further changes would be required to the estimates for areas such as Insurances and Procurement for which there should be savings. These would be included within the February budget report.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were of the opinion that they could not recommend the estimates for approval because they did not understand them in the format in which they were presented. They asked for

- less detail and highlighting of the major changes
- an explanation avoiding accounting recharge adjustments where possible

For this reason the Committee established a working party of Councillors Dean, Dhillon and Malcolm Doody to a look at a revised format for next year, and a summary explanation of changes prior to agreeing the 2008/09 budget.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the revised base budget revenue estimate for the General Fund services in respect of 2007/08 as outlined in Appendix ‘B’ to the report be approved;
- (2) the base budget revenue estimate for the General Fund services in respect of 2008/09 as outlined in Appendix ‘B’ to the report be approved;
- (3) the transfer of any surplus on the Creating Uplift Provision to a new “The CUP” Reserve be approved; and
- (4) the transfer of £306,857 from the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Grant to the Renewals and Replacements Reserve be approved.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)
(Forward plan ref 49)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

704. APPROVAL OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BASE ESTIMATES REVISED 2007/08 AND ORIGINAL 2008/09

The Executive considered a report from Finance which set out the latest projections for the Housing Revenue Account estimates in respect of 2007/08 and 2008/09.

The Council was required to determine its budget requirements in order to set Council Housing Rents for 2008/09.

At its meeting on 23 July 2007, the Executive considered a framework for a financial strategy and the Budget 2008/09 Prospects and Process.

The report proposed the Base Budget for the Housing Revenue Account for 2008/09. The figures reflected the costs of maintaining the current level of service, and any unavoidable changes in expenditure (for example, where the Council was contractually or statutorily committed to incur additional expenditure). The report also considered the current year's budget, and included details of proposed revision to the 2007/08 Budget.

Alongside the preparation of the Estimates, the 2008/09 Service Area Plan was being developed. Possible service enhancements and service reductions were being identified for consideration and prioritization by the portfolio holder.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were of the opinion that they could not recommend the estimates for approval because they did not understand them in the format in which they are presented. They asked for:

- less detail and highlighting of the major changes; and
- an explanation avoiding accounting recharge adjustments where possible

For this reason the Committee established a working party of Councillors Dean, Dhillon and Malcolm Doody to a look at a revised format for next year, and a summary explanation of changes prior to agreeing the 2008/09 budget. In addition the need to highlight to the Executive that the draft subsidy figure from the government on the requirement for a contribution to the national housing rent pool was still to be confirmed, and may be significantly higher than in the current year.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the revised base budget revenue estimate for the Housing Revenue Account services in respect of 2007/08 as outlined in Appendix 'B' to the report be approved;

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- (2) the base budget revenue estimate for the Housing Revenue Account services in respect of 2008/09 as outlined in Appendix 'B' to the report be approved; and
- (3) the Strategic Director for Community Resources ensure a response to both the Consultation on this and the Revenue Support Grant announcement be made to the Government given the adverse impact on the Council's tenants and Council tax payers.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward plan ref 50)

705. SPD ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Executive considered a report from Policy, Projects and Conservation requesting that the Council adopts the Affordable Housing Strategic Planning Document (SPD) and the Development Control Guidance on the Mix of Housing for use in decision making for development control purposes.

The Supplementary Planning Document was one of five identified in the Council's Local Development Scheme. Its purpose was to set out the Council's detailed planning policy requirements for affordable housing on housing development sites based on Local Plan Policy SC11, and on rural exception sites based on Local Plan Policy RAP4.

A Draft Mixed Communities and Affordable Housing SPD and background documents were approved by the Executive on the 23 July 2007 for public consultation. This additionally included guidance on the mix of market housing. A six week period of public consultation had carried out between the 31 August and 12 October 2007.

A total of 23 forms/letters of objection had been received over the six week period. The revised version of the SPD, which included the changes made as a result of the consultation exercise, was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. A proposed new development control guidance note, to include the market housing aspects of the SPD, was attached at Appendix 2 to the report. A summary of the representations, together with response and proposed changes was set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

In accordance with the regulations a full Sustainability Appraisal was prepared alongside the Draft SPD. This was revisited following the consultation exercise and the non-technical summary was attached at Appendix 4 to the report.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted for use in decision making; and
- (2) the Development Control Guidance on the Mix of Housing, attached at Appendix 2 to the report, be agreed for use in decision making

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Doody and Hammon)
(Forward plan ref 17)

706. HRA INCENTIVE SCHEME

The Executive considered a report from Housing Services which sought approval for two incentive schemes, one aimed at encouraging applicants on the Housing Register to move into designated older people's accommodation and one aimed at encouraging existing tenants to vacate larger family sized accommodation, both of which were designed to contribute to the effective use of the Council's housing stock.

The proposals were designed to address issues of high and low demand for particular property types within the Council's housing stock, promoting the aim of making the most effective use of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets.

Demand for social housing in the district was high and increasing. There were over 4,600 households on the Common Housing Register and the figures were rising year on year. Supply was restricted, with on average only 403 properties per year becoming available for letting within our housing stock over the last three years. Despite the mismatch of supply and demand, Warwick District Council experienced a small number of properties becoming relatively difficult to let, requiring multiple adverts or a direct offer outside of the HomeChoice process to achieve a letting.

The incentive scheme as set out at Appendix A to the report proposed that prospective tenants of specified low demand properties be offered a resettlement package. It was proposed that authority to determine which properties became eligible for the incentive scheme to be offered was delegated to the Head of Housing Services under a new power within the existing Scheme of Delegation.

The Council also faces a high demand for family sized accommodation, particularly though not exclusively, three and four bedroom houses. The incentive scheme set out at Appendix B to the report proposed that tenants of those larger homes received a cash payment if they were to 'downsize' by transferring to a smaller property.

It was also proposed that qualifying tenants wishing to transfer were, pending a future review of the HomeChoice scheme, offered an alternative property through the existing priority transfer arrangements (commonly known as a 'management move'). This would ensure that the larger property they were

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vacating was made available for re-letting as quickly as possible rather than having to wait for the tenant to identify and successfully bid for an advertised property which could take considerable time. The vacated property would then be advertised through the HomeChoice scheme as normal.

Both the Culture and Social Policy and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committees supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the incentive scheme for prospective tenants of low demand designated older persons accommodation as set out at Appendix A to the report, be approved;
- (2) the incentive scheme for tenants transferring from family sized general needs accommodation as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved;
- (3) it be noted that if approved those tenants qualifying for the transfer incentive scheme, set out at Appendix B to the report, would be rehoused under the priority transfer arrangements, outside of the HomeChoice scheme;
- (4) a review of the two incentive schemes be carried out prior to the setting of the HRA budget for 2009/10, be approved; and

RECOMMENDED that the Terms of Reference for Housing Appeal Review Panels be amended to include Appeals against Transfer Incentive Grant Schemes.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward plan ref 57)

707. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

The Executive considered a report from Policy, Projects and Conservation on the Annual Monitoring Report which monitored the performance of planning policies and the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The Council was required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) into its planning policies under the 2004 Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that the Annual Monitoring Report be approved for submission to the Secretary of State.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

708. 2007/2008 HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance on performance in relation to the period April to September 2007.

The regular and systematic reporting of performance results against target, trended over time and compared with other authorities was a fundamental element of the Councils integrated performance management framework. The performance management framework in turn was a key tool in ensuring the Council stayed focussed on what mattered to ensure it delivered its services efficiently and effectively.

As in previous years, reports relating to each Portfolio had been prepared and arranged to enable the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold portfolio holders to account for the performance of services within their portfolio area.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the performance in relation to each of the six portfolios for the period April 2007 to September 2007, as detailed within appendices 1 to 7 of the report be noted; and
- (2) the mitigation and corrective actions where results had fallen beyond 10% of target be approved as detailed within each appendix to the report, be noted.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)

709. GROWTH POINT BID

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Planning and Engineering which requested approval to submit a bid to Government for resources to assist assessment infrastructure issues.

The Government had made available provision of funds to assist local authorities in assessing and providing for infrastructure needs arising from future levels of growth. The money had been made available through the 'Growth Points' initiative which established criteria for future levels of anticipated growth for bidding eligibility.

The Regional Planning Partnership recently approved the preferred option of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) which proposed an additional 10,800 houses for WDC up to 2026. A further and fully comprehensive report on the RSS would be submitted to a future meeting of Executive. However the level

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of growth anticipated at this stage made the Council eligible for funding for infrastructure appraisal work.

The growth points initiative was communicated to Councils from the Government during the latter part of the summer with a closing date of 31 October 2007 for submissions to be made. Warwick District Council was not in a position to consider the appropriateness of such a bid prior to the approval at regional level of the RSS preferred option. However, when approved, the levels of growth incorporated within the preferred option qualified the District for submitting a bid. In order to ensure that a bid was submitted within Government timescales it was necessary to make the appropriate submission prior to being able to report to the Executive.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the action undertaken to submit a bid to Government for resources to assess and meet infrastructure needs arising from future growth be endorsed; and
- (2) the draft approach towards securing structures for cross boundary working to address growth issues as set out in appendix A to the report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)

710. TENDER FOR THE NEW CREMATORS AT OAKLEY WOOD

The Executive considered a report from Leisure and Amenities which set out the need to purchase and seek authority to tender for two new cremators together with mercury filtration equipment and a cool room, for Oakley Wood Crematorium.

The cremators were eleven years old and were purchased from a Scottish company (Parkgrove 2000 Ltd) who developed and installed them. Although the company honoured the initial guarantee, there were problems that led to modification, so the work involved in their maintenance was of a specialised nature. There were three cremators and one had been out of action for much of the early part of 2007/08 awaiting parts, although it was now working. In addition to concerns over the condition of the cremators at Oakley Wood the monitoring equipment made it difficult to provide the necessary information to comply with the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA).

The government had introduced legislation to abate the release of mercury into the environment and Parliamentary Guidance notes were issued in 2004 covering mercury abatement requirements for all new crematorium and setting a time frame for existing crematoria to meet 50% abatement by 2012.

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Both the Audit and Resources and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committees supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) a minimum of three tenders be sought to replace two cremators and associated mercury filtration equipment, which would meet the published legislative requirements for emissions;
- (2) a further report based on the whole life costing based on the tenders received be brought back to the Executive;
- (3) the Cremators be financed by a finance lease to ensure the Council remains within its de-minimus limit for reclaiming exempt VAT;
- (4) it be agreed in principle to engage Sector, our Treasury Management Consultants, to arrange the finance lease, for a fee of 0.75% plus VAT of the cost of the asset (cremators), should there be no change to VAT regulations; and
- (5) future financial plans consider the extent to which future replacement of cremators could be financed from a reserve built up from increased charges.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Coker and White)
(Forward plan ref 65)

711. PEST CONTROL REDUCTION SERVICE

The Executive considered a report from Environmental Health advising members on the changes in respect of the Pest Control Service.

In response to the pressure on budgets within the Environmental Health Department, the Pest Control Service had been reviewed. As a result it was intended to reduce the number of in-house Technical Assistants from 3 to 2. However, in the year 2008/9, it was also intended to retain the budget for half of the post being suspended, to enable 'backfilling' of work through private contractors, should it become necessary. This would provide some resilience. After a year the service could again be reviewed to determine whether the budget allocation was satisfactory.

The Pest Control Service had, for a number of years, been provided by three in-house Technical Officers plus an additional 0.4 post utilised for a contractor to manage fluctuations in demand. The Technical Assistants were also involved with other areas of work in addition to Pest Control e.g. drainage investigation work.

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The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report but suggested that it might be a good idea to compile a list of recommended contractors to pass on to members of the public.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder and Head of Environmental Health consult action with the Monitoring Officer about the possibility of creating a recommended list of contractors to deal with pest control which could be made available to the public.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Kinson)

712. LAND CHARGES

As per the letter of 30 November 2007 to all Councillors this matter was not considered by the Executive due to the report being unavailable.

713. GENERAL REPORT

(A) RISK REGISTER

The Executive considered a report from the Strategic Director for Community Resources to review the Corporate Risk register items which had a medium risk rating and above.

At its meeting in June 2005, the Executive considered a report on Risk Management and asked for all items which scored 12 or above on the Corporate Risk Register to be monitored and reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis. At its last meeting the Audit and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggested some refinements to the register. It now showed the items that had changed from the last report, as well as a timescale for the further actions required to bring the risk back to an acceptable level.

The corporate risk register considered all risks to the Councils operations, key priorities, and major projects. Individual services also had their own risk register which helped to inform this process.

The register was last reviewed by the Corporate Management Team on 6 November 2007; it was reviewed in full on a quarterly basis. The full register was reported to meeting of the Executive in July 2007, with the Risk Management Progress report. Further reporting of those items marked 12 or above were set out in the report for the current municipal year.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report and applauded the officers for the format of appendix on this item as they felt that it was very useful and easy to understand.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

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RESOLVED that the Corporate Risk Register for those items scoring 12 and above, be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)

(B) PROGRESS ON THE OUTSTANDING RURAL INITIATIVES GRANTS

The Executive considered a report from Finance on the progress of the outstanding Rural Initiatives Grants and whether it concurred with the informal time limits, where appropriate, for each grant as identified within the report.

Each of the grant recipients with outstanding grants had been contacted to ascertain the latest progress on their scheme and provided an approximate date when they might be drawing down the Councils grant. Grants were still outstanding on the following: -

Budbrooke Community Centre
Whitnash Town Council
Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council
Cubbington Parish Council
Hunningham Cricket Club
Barford Village Shop
Norton Lindsey Play Group
Hatton Village Hall
Baginton Parish Council
Ferncumbe Youth Club
Bubbenhall Spring & Village Green Restoration Project

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report and suggested that where completion dates were set, judged upon a case by case basis, these dates should become mandatory.

RESOLVED that the progress as set out in the report be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Bunker)

(C) PERFORMANCE OF WDC EXTERNAL FUND MANAGER – FIRST HALF YEAR 2007/2008

The Executive considered a report from Finance asking them to note the performance of Invesco for the first half year of 2007/2008 and its use of the revised limits agreed by the Executive at its meeting in July 2007.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report and asked for a further report to be submitted in six months.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the performance of Invesco for the first half year of 2007/2008 and its use of the revised limits be noted; and
- (2) no further action with regard to the contract be taken at present but that Invesco's performance continues to be monitored.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)
(Forward plan ref 30)

(D) RELEASE OF LICENCE OF WESTGATE CAR PARK TO WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Executive considered a report from Leisure and Amenities requesting delegated powers be given to officers to allow the release on licence of land at West Gate car park Warwick for the construction of a bus terminus.

The Executive agreed in February 2007 to the release on licence of land at West Gate car park on 1 January 2008. This was conditional on the County Council completing the VMS scheme in Warwick by that time.

The County Council were now planning to complete the VMS scheme in Warwick by the end March of 2008 and to start work at West Gate car park during the early part of the financial year 08/09.

By giving officers delegated powers the release of the land could be made as soon as VMS was operating without the need to report back to the Executive thus speeding up the delivery of the project.

A licence agreement between Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council for the release of part of West Gate car park for a bus terminus had now been finalised by the Head of Legal who was given delegated powers in February 2007 to negotiate an agreement. The licence agreement was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to officers to release West Gate car park as soon as they are satisfied the Variable Message Sign (VMS) system is operating satisfactorily and that it does not trigger the option to purchase.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Kinson)
(Forward plan ref 23)

(E) HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME – RE-ROOFING WORK TO FLATS AT WHITES ROW IN KENILWORTH

The Executive considered a report from Property Services which sought approval for the conversion of existing flat roof of HRA flats at Whites Row, Kenilworth to a pitched roof construction and for the work to be tendered subject to the granting of appropriate Planning & Building Regulation approvals.

The existing flat roof construction was nearing the end of its usable and maintainable life and was in need of replacement.

A flat-to-pitch conversion was considered the best value option for the necessary replacement. Such a conversion had a higher initial outlay compared to a replacement flat roof but offered a significantly improved life expectancy, of approximately 60 years, reduced maintenance costs over this life span and would be more aesthetically pleasing than the existing structure.

Subject to planning and Building Regulation approvals it was proposed to tender the specified work.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that the seeking of tenders to convert the existing flat roof at Whites Row residential flats to a pitched construction, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward plan ref 45)

(F) CONTRACT FOR GAS SYSTEM SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE TO HOUSING PROPERTIES

The Executive considered a report from Property Services which sought approval for the re-tendering of a contract to service and repair gas appliances to HRA residential properties.

The existing gas maintenance contract was due to expire at the end of 2008/09, requiring re-tendering during the next financial year.

Due to the value of the contract the tender process would need to comply with European procurement directives. These require the publication of a notice allowing suitable companies to express their interest in undertaking the advertised work.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The OJEU procurement process was lengthier than past tendering methods and would need to commence no later than June 2008 to ensure a new contract would be in place from April 2009.

Approval to commence the re-tendering process was being sought early as there were some current concerns over the performance of the existing contractor. These were being addressed through the contract management framework and were capable of being resolved satisfactorily. However, if such resolution was not achieved or if performance subsequently declined officers would wish to commence the OJEU procurement process earlier than June 2008.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the tendering of the contract to repair and service all gas appliances within the Council's housing stock be approved; and
- (2) tenders are sought under the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) process for an annual contract which includes the option for a further annual extension up to a maximum of five years, subject to the contractor satisfying key performance indicators.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward plan ref 56)

(G) FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME FOR WARWICK DISTRICT RESIDENTS

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance on the use of the Flood Relief Grant from the Government to establish a scheme to provide financial assistance to households at risk of flooding and to inform members on the progress of the claim against the Bellwin Scheme.

From records gathered at the time, it would appear that approximately 200 properties suffered directly as a result of the floods in June and July 2007. It was a devastating incident for many individuals, families and communities. The actual number of properties affected, in Warwick District was likely to be higher than 200 since it was unknown if all householders had let the Council know if they were flooded. Some may feel that they do not want to share this information.

The Council applied for funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Flooding Recovery Grant Scheme. This provided £60,000 for support across the District and was allocated on the basis of the number of reported flooded properties. It was divided into £30,000 revenue money for direct support for communities and

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

£30,000 for capital expenditure, also assumed to be for the benefit of the communities affected.

The Audit and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were happy with the report.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Council uses £30,000 provided by the Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) to assist communities directly affected by the floods during June and July 2007 by setting up a specific grant scheme;
- (2) the Council transfers £30,000 of the grant provided by the Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) to the Capital Programme. The monies to be used for the repair or enhancement of flood prevention schemes in the areas affected by the summer floods; and
- (3) the progress in respect of claiming eligible flood related costs from the Government's "Bellwin Scheme" and the implications should such a claim not be accepted, be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)

(H) AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Executive considered a report from Housing Services on the proposed amendments to the Council's Scheme of Delegation, following the retirement of the Head of Property Services and the recent approval of the Building on Excellence proposals to revise the staffing structure.

Proposals to revise the staffing structure of the Council were set out in the Building on Excellence report approved by Council in October 2007.

Under the approved changes the post of Head of Property Services, vacant since the retirement of the postholder, was deleted from the establishment with future responsibility for the majority of the existing Property Services unit moving to the Head of Housing Services. The exception to this was the existing Estates Manager post, which would cease to be part of the Property Services unit and would move to a new service area under a Head of Economic Development and Regeneration. These changes required revisions to the existing Scheme of Delegation.

The new staffing structure would not be fully implemented until early 2008. Until then, the Head of Housing Services had assumed interim

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

responsibility for the Property Services unit excluding the Estates Manager post that was reporting to the Strategic Director for Community Resources.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the proposed changes to the scheme of delegation set out at Appendix A to the report be approved; and
- (2) the new delegated power set out at Appendix B to the report be approved.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Doody and Hammon)

714. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCURTINY AND POLICY COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Audit and Resources and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committees held on 4 September 2007 and 16 October 2007, the Environment and Economic and Culture and Social Policy Committees held on 5 September 2007 and 17 October and the Joint Audit and Resources and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 September 2007, be noted.

715. JOINT COMMITTEE FOR WASTE

The Executive considered a report which sought approval in principle for Warwick District Council to negotiate and agree a constitution jointly with other members of the Waste Partnership for a joint committee discharging waste functions.

The proposal for a Joint Committee reflected the success of the Warwickshire Waste Partnership which was created in 1998 as an informal forum to help formulate and integrate waste management strategy within Warwickshire. The Partnership comprised of one elected member and an observer from each of the districts and boroughs in Warwickshire and five elected members from the County Council. It possessed no executive or decision making powers. If Executive action was required, the partnership must make a proposal requiring adoption by each of the constituent authorities concerned.

In a Memorandum of Understanding agreed in 2005 the Partnership agreed that the possibility of progressing to a more formal relationship should be explored in 2007.

A working group was set up earlier this year to examine options for a closer and more formal partnership and the outcome is the outline proposal for a

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

statutory joint committee. Attached at Appendix A was a report due to go to Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet on 6 December 2007 which detailed the principles and way forward for the Joint Committee.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that a Joint Committee to discharge waste functions be approved in principle, subject to:

- more detailed negotiations and agreement on the constitution taking place;
- a further report to the Executive to include the Partnership checklist and a risk register for the partnership;
- clarification of the arrangements which are put in place if any partner does not agree the budget;
- the arrangements for exit and/or the dissolution of the Joint Committee being included in a report requesting a final decision; and
- arrangements for a joint scrutiny being part of the final arrangements.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Kinson)

(This item was considered as a matter of urgency because a decision needed to be taken before the February meeting of the Executive)

716. PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items, by reason of a likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12(a) 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
722	1	Information relating to any individual
722	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 723 & 724	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

717. OPTIONS FOR THE DISCRETIONARY ASSISTED TRAVEL SCHEME

The Executive considered a report from Revenues and Customers Services for members to consider whether they wish to amend the discretionary elements of the Council's assisted travel arrangements.

The Council amended its assisted travel arrangements in 2006 to coincide with the introduction of free travel throughout Warwickshire for the elderly and disabled. The effect of the change was that the taxi token scheme was discontinued and in its place a community taxi scheme was established providing taxi and mini-bus travel at a subsidised rate.

Members were concerned that the new arrangements were not reaching those intended and so officers were asked at the Executive meeting on 22 October 2007 to consider whether any changes could be made to the assisted travel arrangements which would ensure that residents in the rural areas had better access to transport. Officers were asked to determine the financial impact of any change. The options for members were set out in section 7 of the report.

At its meeting on 22 October 2007, the Executive had also asked that it be advised of the costs of allowing disabled people to use their bus passes before 9.00 a.m. and the publicity provided for the community taxi scheme and that to be undertaken for the new scheme. These aspects were covered in Sections 8 and 9 of the report.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee felt that the information in the report did not provide adequate detail to make a recommendation on the scheme. The Committee requested that the Executive had further information on:

- who was using the service;
- where the journeys are from and to, and for what; and
- costings and a copy of the rules of use.

In addition the Committee wanted to advise that Executive that the report incorrectly identifies the previous scheme as a taxi token scheme. It was a travel tokens scheme allowing all forms of transport to be used and not just taxis.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report, but suggested that Option C mentioned in 7.3 of the report needed to be monitored.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the 3 options for change be noted, with a preference for option c, the final decision being made in February 2008, when the Council knows its resource position;

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

- (2) the costs and other factors which would need to be taken into account if disabled people were allowed to use their bus passes before 9.00 a.m, be noted; and
- (3) the publicity that had been undertaken in respect of the community taxi scheme and the publicity to be undertaken in respect of the new concessionary fares scheme, be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Pratt)
(Forward plan ref 33)

718. KENILWORTH PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE FEASIBILITY STUDY AND SALE OF LAND

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Revenues and Customer Services updating on the latest position of the proposed Kenilworth Public Service Centre (PSC) and consider whether officers should to enter into negotiations for the sale of the Wilton House site.

Having supported the outline business case for the PSC, the Executive had requested that formal support was received from partners to progress and finance the next stage of the scheme preparation. Discussions had since continued with partners and requests for funding had been made so that essential site surveys could be undertaken.

Members were aware that there had been significant structural change in the organisations of some of the partners involved in the scheme. The changes had meant that the PSC proposal had not developed at the speed hoped for. There was a real danger that if significant progress was not made in the near future then many of the initiatives taken would be lost.

The Audit and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee did not want to see Kenilworth Town Council homeless and therefore supported the recommendations in the report as they felt this was an opportunity not to be missed.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the latest position in respect of the proposed Public Service Centre (PSC) at Smalley Place, Kenilworth, be noted;
- (2) the sale of the Wilton House site to Bromford Housing Group (subject to compliance with local and national Housing and Planning policies) should be approved and the PSC proposal prove feasible subject to the Strategic Director for

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Community Resources and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Strategic Leadership being satisfied with the allocation of the proceeds in respect of 18a and 18b Southbank Road

- (3) the Strategic Director for Community Resources and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Strategic Leadership be given delegated authority to consult Bromford Housing Group requesting that their offer be open for twelve months to cater for any slippage in negotiations.
- (4) officers enter into discussions with the current occupiers of the Wilton House site to possibly facilitate the sale of the land prior to the PSC proposal being agreed by all stakeholders; and
- (5) a further report be brought to the Executive prior to any sale taking place highlighting the cost benefit this scheme and our potential investment in it.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)
(Forward plan ref 36)

719. AREA OF LAND AT DUDLEY GREEN/RAWLINSON ROAD, LILLINGTON, LEAMINGTON SPA

The Executive considered a report from Property Services on the disposal of Council land at Dudley Green/Rawlinson Road, Leamington Spa.

The sale of land would normally be permitted under delegated authority DS (7) to the Head of Property Services in consultation with Ward Councillors. However, the Head of Property Services post had not been replaced following the retirement of the previous potholder and the new organisational structure would not be operational until January 2008.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that the Sale of land at Dudley Green / Rawlinson Road, Lillington, Leamington Spa to the adjoining home owners, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Coker and Doody)

720. ALTHORPE INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE CENTRE

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive to agree to complete the Funding Agreement with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) for the Innovation and Enterprise Centre in Althorpe Street, Leamington.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

AWM had approved funding of £890K to create an Enterprise Centre in Althorpe Street, Leamington Spa. Planning permission had been granted. The Council confirmed its intention to enter the Funding Agreement at the meeting of the Executive on 23 July 2007.

Since then discussions had been carried out on the terms of the agreement. A number of issues had proved problematic but had eventually been resolved. However, one issue remained to a degree but it created a risk that the Council needed to decide to accept it or not.

Both the Audit and Resources and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committees supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that Council enter the Funding Agreement with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) for the development of the Innovation and Enterprise Centre in Althorpe Street, Leamington Spa.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Coker and Hammon)

721. ASSET TRANSFER OF PAGEANT HOUSE AND GARDEN

The Executive considered a report from Leisure and Amenities on the Heritage Lottery Funded bid for the potential asset transfer of Pageant House and Garden in Warwick.

Warwick District Council had been selected as one of 20 pilot projects nationally to consider how local authorities and local community-led third sector organisations (i.e. voluntary and community groups) could be supported to develop joint plans for asset transfer, in line with the recommendations of the Quirk Review 'Making Assets Work', and to begin to implement them. The aim of Community Assets was community empowerment. It would achieve this by facilitating the transfer of genuine assets from local authorities to the third sector for their use as community resources.

Both the Audit and Resources and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committees supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the bid application in partnership with Action for Market Towns to the Heritage Lottery Fund, be supported;
- (2) subject to the views of Warwick Town Council, the principles of disposing of Pageant house on a long lease provided there was no net cost to the Council and it secured a better community use, be approved; and

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

- (3) provided the Lottery outline bid was successful, a detailed business case and risk assessment be submitted to the Executive.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Coker and Hammon)

722. LEGAL SERVICES

As per the letter of 30 November 2007 to all Councillors this matter was not considered by the Executive due to the report being unavailable.

723. COURT STREET CREATIVE ARCHES PROJECT

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive to approve the funding award from Advantage West Midlands and to consider a recommendation to increase the level of the Council's prudential borrowing.

In September 2007 Advantage West Midlands approved funding for the Creative Arches Project – one of the three Creating Uplift Provision (CUP) funding bids which the Council was pursuing as part of its Economic Development strategy. The funding allowed for the refurbishment of 13 railway arches in Court Street, Leamington Spa and the creation of affordable business premises targeted at “creative industries”.

The concession had benefits for the Council in that it secured the lowest possible rent for an increased number of arches. It also enhanced the scheme overall by ensuring that the front of the arches was kept clear of obstruction and preventing future development in the immediate vicinity. The 6-metre strip was the area currently used as the exit lane from the Court St Car Park. As the strip was at one side of the car park it would still leave a substantial area to be redeveloped if the Council so decided at a later stage.

Both the Audit and Resources and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committees supported the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the grant offer from Advantage West Midlands for the refurbishment of 13 railway arches in Court Street, Leamington Spa, be approved;
- (2) an increase in the previously agreed level of prudential borrowing, in order to offset a reduction in the grant award from that submitted, be approved and the Capital Programme be increased to reflect the revised cost and its funding sources;
- (3) Vehicular access rights to a 6-metre strip of land adjacent to the front entrances to the arches be given to Network Rail to enable them to service the arches as and when required; and

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

- (4) the revenue deficit arising during the first 2 years of the project from the Repairs and Renewals fund, be supported.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Coker and Hammon)
(Forward plan ref 60)

724. SPENCER YARD PHASE II PROJECT

The Executive considered a report from Economic Development on the Spencer Yard Phase II project and the resubmission of a funding application, taking into account the need to reduce the grant request as advised by Advantage West Midlands (AWM).

The Chief Executive had been in consultation with AWM and the situation with the Spencer Yard Phase II Project had been updated. It was suggested that a further report come back to the Executive at its next meeting for them to reconsider the most up to date information and outcomes.

Two members of the Audit and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee were uneasy with the recommendations but felt that they could support the submission of a bid as long as no documents were signed committing the Council to the project until a further risk assessment was taken, including one following a decision on the VAT issue and that there should be a business case produced illustrating the worth for the community. Two members of the Committee were in favour of the scheme progressing because of the effect on the community if it did not go ahead.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report but suggested that any further updated news be reported back to the Executive.

The Environment and Economic Policy Committee supported the recommendation in the report, but suggested that negotiations needed to be firmly settled with AWM and with the Loft Theatre. There also needed to be a definite decision on VAT, if this was not agreed then the Environment and Economic Policy Committee proposed that Warwick District Council do not go ahead.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and a further report be submitted to the Executive at its meeting on 11 February 2007.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Coker and Hammon)
(Forward plan ref 58)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

725. ADDITIONAL ITEM – APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE

The Executive received an additional item from the Chief Executive on the Approval of Expenditure.

RESOLVED that the report and the circumstances involved, be noted.

(This item was considered as a matter of urgency because of the nature of the item)

(The meeting ended at 8.50 pm)