

***Summary of comments made on the Executive Agenda for
Wednesday 12 February 2020***

4. 2020/21 General Fund Budget and Council Tax

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the reports but had concerns about how the work on Climate Change Action Plan will be funded if the proposed increase does not get approved and in what time scale the changes proposed would occur.

They noted the intense programme to bring proposals forward to mitigate the budget deficit that are set within the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Therefore, the use of the business rate volatility deficit as a one off use up to 2022/23.

They also noted it would be very important for Scrutiny and all Councillors to ensure if the Climate Action Fund is not used for works other than the action plan agreed by Council and to ensure this was communicated to the public.

The Committee recommends to the Executive that the cost of the referendum comes from the new homes bonus and the proposed allocation to the service transformation reserve for the next year is reduced by the same amount.

The Executive are required to vote on this proposal because it includes a recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee

The Committee had concerns with the cost of the climate change programme director role being funded from the ring fenced climate change emergency because the original position was for this to be paid from the new homes bonus and this could be a cause of concern for the general public if a referendum was to take place. The Committee asked the Executive to check that it was comfortable with the proposed funding for the role and if it was not a correct use of the climate change emergency how would the post be funded without impacting on projects across the Council proposed within the new homes bonus funding plan.

The Committee asked for details to be circulated of how the Planning Appeals Reserves was calculated for future years.

5. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2020/21 and Housing Rents

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

6. Warwick District Climate Emergency Action Programme

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report and thanked officers involved for the hard work in bringing the report forward.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report and urged the Executive to progress them.

10. Adopting a Definition of Anti-Semitism

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report and recommended that the following two caveats be included in the definition of Anti-Semitism:

1. It is not antisemitic to criticise the Government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest antisemitic intent.
2. It is not antisemitic to hold the Israeli Government to the same standards as other liberal democracies, or to take a particular interest in the Israeli Government's policies or actions, without additional evidence to suggest antisemitic intent.

The Executive are required to vote on this proposal because it includes a recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee

13. Discretionary business rates relief as a tool for business growth and inward investment

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

17b. Significant Business Risk Register

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee asked for the Executive to review Risk 16 for climate change, in light of the declared climate change emergency and associated report, because it has risk score of a low likelihood and low impact.

The Committee asked that in future Risk Registers should show an indicative timeframe for completion of actions listed within the mitigation.

Confidential Report:

19. Purchase of Land for Affordable Housing – Europa Way, Warwick

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