

 WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee - 7 August 2012	Agenda Item No. 7
Title	Comments from the Executive	
For further information about this report please contact	Peter Dixon Committee Services Officer 01926 456114 committee@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Service Area	Members' Services	
Wards of the District directly affected	N/A	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers	Finance & Audit minutes 10/07/2012 and Executive minutes 11/07/2012	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports <i>must</i> be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Deputy Chief Executive	19.07.2012	Andrew Jones
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer	25.07.2012	Mike Snow
Legal		
Finance	25.07.2012	Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holders		

Consultation Undertaken	
N/A	
Final Decision?	Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the Executive's response to comments given by the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee on reports submitted to the Executive on 11 July 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The responses made by the Executive be noted.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 This report is produced to create a dialogue between the Executive and the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee, ensuring that the Scrutiny Committee is formally made aware of the Executive's responses.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Committee receives and notes the minutes of the Executive instead.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 There is no impact on the budgetary framework. This is for the Committee's information only.

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The work carried out by the Committee helps the Council to improve in line with its priority to manage services openly, efficiently and effectively.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 As part of the new scrutiny process, the Committee no longer considers the whole of the Executive agenda.
- 7.2 Councillors are emailed at the time of the publication of the Executive and Scrutiny Committee agendas, asking them to contact Committee Services by 9.00am on the day of the Scrutiny Committee, to advise which Executive items they wish the Scrutiny Committee to pass comment on, and the reasons why.
- 7.3 As a result, at its meeting on 10 July 2012, the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the items detailed in appendix 1. The responses which Executive gave are also shown.

Responses from the meeting of the Executive held on 11 July 2012 on the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee's Comments

Item no.	5	Title	Council Tax Support	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Committee was concerned that taking the scheme forward would be difficult, but felt that the proposed approach was the right one and supported the recommendations in the report.</p> <p>It was suggested that in order to reach the most vulnerable people to be affected by the changes, the consultation information should be circulated in the next issue of 'Home News'.</p> <p>Members wanted assurance that both Warwickshire County Council and the Police would carry a fair share of the work load, particularly in respect of council tax collection after 2012/13, and asked the Executive to pursue this further with those authorities.</p>				
Executive Response	<p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance assured members that the consultation process would be robust and would involve all interested parties. Councillor Boad highlighted that one of the consequences of this proposal was that cuts made could impact on lower income families and hoped that the County Council were mindful of this. Councillor Mobbs assured Councillor Mrs Knight that the working group would continue to meet regularly.</p>				

Item no.	6	Title	Business Rates Retention	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications for the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Committee was keen to know how the scheme would work in practice, but noted that governance arrangements had yet to be finalised. Members were optimistic that the scheme would benefit Warwick District, given that the authority was doing well in comparison to many others, but recognised there could be significant problems if government set the bar in the wrong place. The Committee supported the recommendations.</p>				
Executive Response	<p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance endorsed the report and highlighted the benefits in terms of growth for the Council. He also signposted Members to recommendation 2.4 which would ensure that officers would have time to investigate the scheme and ascertain if the proposals were acceptable.</p>				

Item no.	9	Title	Neighbourhood Planning	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	To consider the financial implications				
Scrutiny Comment	The Committee looked specifically at recommendations 2.3 and 2.6 and supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	Thanked the Committee for its comments.				

Item no.	10 B	Title	Significant Business Risk Register	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Mitigation of risk				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and suggested that, to make the register a more active document, it would be helpful if any changes from the period of one report to the next could be noted - such as risks being lowered, increased, or even dropped from the register.</p> <p>Responding to questions about why the percentage of completed staff appraisals was no longer reported to this Committee, Officers pointed out that it was the Employment Committee's responsibility to consider this information and assured Members that the information was presented to that Committee on a regular basis.</p>				
Executive Response	-				

Item no.	12	Title	Purchase of property in Kenilworth	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications				
Scrutiny Comment	The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	-				

Item no.	14	Title	Old Art Gallery	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications				
Scrutiny Comment	The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	-				

Item no.	15	Title	Legal Support for the Local Plan	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications				
Scrutiny Comment	The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	-				