EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2009 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Michael Doody (Chair), Councillors Mrs Bunker, Caborn, Mrs Gallagher, Mrs Grainger, Kirton, Mobbs and Shilton.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Blacklock (Representing Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Crowther (Labour Group Observer) and Councillor Mrs Knight (Chair of Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hammon and Ms De-Lara-Bond.

124. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute number 142 – Item 19 – Proposed Shared Legal Service

Councillors Caborn, Michael Doody, Kirton and Shilton declared personal interests as Warwickshire County Council Members.

125. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2009 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PART 1
(Items which a decision by Council is required)

126. **GENERAL FUND BASE ESTIMATES REVISED 2009/10 AND ORIGINAL 2010/11**

The Executive considered a report from Finance which set out the latest projections for the General Fund revenue estimates in respect of 2009/10 and 2010/11, based on current levels of service and previous decisions. The Council was required to determine its budget requirements in order to set the Council Tax for 2010/11.

Further matters needed to be reviewed in order to finalise the base position as part of the 2010/11 budget setting process. The proposed 2009/10 Revised Estimates presented a deficit over the Original Estimate of £102,900. The proposed 2010/11 Base Budget presented an increase in the Council's expenditure in continuing to provide its services and meet it's commitments of approximately £0.4m. The Service Planning Process had identified potential savings and two bids for growth for 2010/11 for a net total of £289,700 of which £281,300 would be ongoing.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. The Executive thanked the Committee for their support.

Officers were congratulated on the production of Appendix 2 which was considered to be a very useful and valuable document.

RECOMMENDED that

(1) the revised base budget revenue estimate for the General Fund services in respect of 2009/10 as outlined in Appendix 'B' to the report be approved;

(2) the base budget revenue estimate for the General Fund services in respect of 2010/11 as outlined in Appendix 'B' to the report be approved;

(3) the Senior Management proposals for budget savings and growth as outlined in Appendices 'D' and 'E' to the report be approved; and

(4) further investigations into the potential savings for the uncosted proposals in Appendix 'D' to the report be requested.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)
(Forward Plan reference 211)

127. **APPROVAL OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BASE ESTIMATES REVISED 2009/10 AND ORIGINAL 2010/11**

The Executive considered a report from Finance setting out the latest projections for the Housing Revenue Account revenue estimates in respect of 2009/10 and 2010/11 based on current levels of service and previous decisions.

The Council was required to determine its budget requirements in order to set Council Housing rents for 2010/11.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. The Executive thanked the Committee for their support.

RECOMMENDED that

(1) the revised base budget revenue estimate for Housing Revenue Account services in respect of 2009/10 as outlined in Appendix 'B' to the report be approved; and

(2) the base budget revenue estimate for Housing Revenue Account services in respect of 2010/11 as outlined in Appendix 'B' to the report be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Grainger)
(Forward Plan reference 212)

128. **PROPOSED ADDITION TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION - LICENSING**

The Executive considered a report from the Licensing Services Manager seeking delegated authority for Officers to use a process, under the Criminal Justice and

Police Act 2001, which provided powers to the Police and local authorities to close premises where unauthorised sales of alcohol took place, due to either there being no Premises Licence in place, or where conditions attached to a Premises Licence were not being complied with.

Closure orders issued under the Act were required to be issued by an authorised officer from the local authority. It was therefore necessary for the Council's scheme of delegation to be amended without delay in order to allow officers to issue orders during the course of their duties.

RECOMMENDED that authority be delegated to the Licensing Services Manager and Licensing Enforcement Officers, after consultation with the Licensing Services Manager, to exercise all powers of local authorities under sections 19 to 28 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 including:

- Serving and cancelling closure notices;
- Making applications for closure orders;
- Issuing certificates of termination of closure orders;
- Defending applications for the discharge of closure orders;
- Recommending appealing against the refusal to make closure orders;
- Enforcing closure orders;
- Recommending prosecuting for obstruction of authorised offices or for offences in connection with closure orders; and authorising officers to exercise all or any of these powers.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Kirton)

129. **HOUSING APPEAL REVIEW PANELS – GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE**

The Executive considered a report from Members' Services bringing forward a proposal on how the Housing Appeal Review Panels could be more effectively managed.

Members' Services were undertaking a review of the Constitution to ensure that was working effectively. This had involved discussion about the operation of Housing Appeal Review Panels, which had delegated authority under the Constitution to hear appeals against decisions of the Council relating to housing, including decisions in respect of homelessness applications and the service of notices seeking possession. There was currently no adopted procedure for Housing Appeal Review Panels, which were therefore governed by the Council's procedure rules.

The recommendation would allow for the adoption of local procedures for each Committee where it is felt that the omission of such procedures from the Constitution would allow the Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Forums more discretion on how to manage their meetings. In addition this could reduce the size of the Council's Constitution.

At present there was no adopted procedure for Housing Appeal Review Panels. This was not feasible due to the size of the Panel and the work they were responsible for. Housing Appeal Review Panels did not report directly to a Committee, nor did the members nominated to sit on them meet as a Committee. Therefore, they could not formally adopt the procedure. The only alternative was for the Executive to adopt the procedure on their behalf.

At present Council Procedure Rules did not specifically provide for the quorum for HARPs. Therefore it was recommended that quorum be set at 3 to replicate the approach used for Licensing Panels. In addition it had been recognised that the responsibilities for HARP set out in the constitution needed to be amended to reflect their actual responsibilities more accurately.

RECOMMENDED that

(1) Council approve the addition of Council Procedure Rule 32 which allows for Committees to adopt local procedures, in addition to the Council Procedure Rules, for the effective operation of Committees, their Sub-Committees Panels and Forums, to read as follows:

"That to enable the effective operation of Committees, their Sub-Committees, along with Panels or Forums of this Council be allowed to adopt local procedures for that body which build upon, but do not replace the procedure rules of the Council as set out within the Constitution.";

(2) the Executive on behalf of Housing Appeal Review Panels adopts the procedure attached at Appendix 1 to the report, from the date the Council approves recommendation 1; and

(3) Council approve amendment of the Constitution to specify that the quorum for HARP is three members appointed to the Panel and the delegated responsibilities for HARP is amended to that set out in section 3 of appendix 1 to the report.

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

Executive 2/12/2009

PART 2

(Items upon which the approval of the Council is not required)

130. BUDGET & IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME REPORT

The Executive considered a first quarter update report from the Chief Executive's Office outlining the progress to date of the Budget and Improvement Programme (BIP), which had been devised to respond to the continued budget challenge over the next 3 years and included a range of projects to support customer focussed improvement work and to make significant savings. The report also provided additional details of projects.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. The Executive thanked the Committee for their support.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Caborn and Doody)
(Forward Plan reference 221)

131. WARWICK TOWN CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN – ISSUES CONSULTATION PAPER

The Executive considered a report from Policy, Projects and Conservation seeking approval to undertake public consultation on the "issues" for the Council's Warwick Town Centre Area Action Plan.

Members resolved at the July Executive to commence preparation of an Area Action Plan (AAP) for Warwick Town Centre and, accordingly, submitted an addendum to the Council's Local Development Scheme to the Government Office for the West Midlands to that effect. The addendum was subsequently approved by the Government Office and now formed part of the approved Local Development Scheme (LDS).

In accordance with the LDS, a first stage of public consultation was to be undertaken to seek consensus on key issues facing Warwick town centre that should be addressed by the AAP.

The "issues" paper attached to the report had been prepared to form the basis for this consultation by the Planning Policy Team in consultation with the Warwick Town Centre Partnership, consisting of members and officers of the County, District and Town Councils, the Warwick Society and the Chamber of Trade, and the Development Plans Working Party. The paper had been informed by evidence gathered from partner organisations and from previous public consultations within Warwick town centre.

The paper would form the basis for public consultation for an eight week period running through January into March 2010. In accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, the consultation would include the following elements:

- Advertisement in the local press and press release to the local media;
- Published on the Council's and our partners websites;
- Hard copies made available at all public deposit points around the District;
- Letters or e-mail alerts to all people and organisations on our database of interested parties and individuals;
- Questionnaire form to guide respondents;
- Visioning event with selected groups/individuals;
- Public Meeting/Exhibition in Warwick town centre; and,
- Attendance at other meetings/groups/community forum where requested.

Exact details of the consultation would be considered by a sub group of the Warwick Town Centre Partnership, before being agreed by the Partnership.

Following public consultation, all comments would be analysed by the Planning Policy Team and reported back to Members in order to inform the next stage of the process.

The Deputy Chief Executive pointed out minor grammatical errors in the report which would need to be corrected, but the Executive were happy for the changes to be made following their endorsement of it.

RESOLVED that

(1) Warwick District Council should undertake public consultation on the "Issues" for the Warwick Town Centre Area Action Plan;

(2) the "Issues" paper attached as Appendix A to the report forms the basis for the public consultation; and

(3) Executive receive an "Options" paper in due course, taking into account the responses from the public consultation where appropriate.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)

132. **FUNDING OF SECURITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE GYPSY AND TRAVELLER EVENTS**

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Neighbourhood Services detailing costs associated with the provision of security for the three Horse Fairs, held in the district in April, June and September, and the Christian Traveller event held in July and looking at how these costs could be met in future years.

Officers had been instructed by Members to provide additional security when events of this nature took place, resulting in an additional cost to the Council that could not be contained within the service area budget.

The Interim Head of Legal Services had been given delegated authority by the Planning Committee to conclude negotiations with the owners of the land on which the Horse Fair was held at Thickthorn, Kenilworth to enter into an agreement under s. 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A draft management

agreement on the future management of Horse Fairs had subsequently been drawn up, set out in the appendix to the report. The draft contained a clause which stated "the Landowner shall pay the reasonable costs of the Council (up to a maximum of £2,000 per Event) in monitoring each event to ensure compliance with these conditions and other costs incurred by the Council in association with an event". If this clause were to be approved it would be used to recoup the costs of providing additional security, primarily at Abbey Fields, over the weekend of the Horse Fair. On-going negotiations would therefore be progressed with the aim of getting the agreement signed prior to the next Horse Fair, which was scheduled to take place on the last Sunday in April 2010.

Whilst the draft management agreement had not been signed, the organisers and landowner had agreed to manage the June and September 2009 Horse Fairs on the basis of the conditions in the draft agreement, other than the clause relating to the Council's costs. Both events passed off with minimal disruption to the locality. Police and Council officers were happy with the revised management arrangements.

There was as yet no agreement on the contentious clause. If agreement could not be reached then a further report would be brought to Executive prior to the next Horse Fair, to allow a decision to be made on the provision and cost of additional security.

A management plan for the Christian Traveller event was drawn up to set out the obligations of the organiser, the police, and the district and parish councils, with a view to minimising disruption to those living in the area. To that extent it appeared to have been successful, but no reference had been made to payment of the costs of the Council or the police.

RESOLVED that

(1) the expenditure totalling £10,660 (excluding vat) agreed by the Chief Executive under emergency power G17 of the Constitution to provide additional security for the three horse fairs and the Christian Traveller event be noted;

(2) funding of this expenditure from the contingency budget be approved;

(3) the draft management agreement for the Horse Fair, set out at Appendix One to the report, and the progress of the on-going negotiations with the representative of the owners of the land on which the Horse Fair takes place be noted; and

(4) in the event of another Christian Traveller event being planned for the district that every effort will be made to agree that the organisers will cover the Council's costs associated with the event be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Shilton)

133. USE OF RESOURCES

The Executive considered a report from Finance providing information on the 2008/09 Use of Resources assessment and issues coming out of that assessment.

The Council had recently received the results of its Use of Resources assessment as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment for 2008/09. The full report was included as appendix 1 to the report. Additionally, an Action Plan (appendix 2) was being prepared that should move the authority forward so as to improve in its assessment in future years.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. Additionally, they recommended that the Executive note the significant work already undertaken by officers and the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee in addressing the recommendations made by the Audit Commission and the short timescale available to embed further improvements before the next assessment. The Executive accepted this recommendation.

RESOLVED that

(1) the results of the 2008/09 Use of Resources assessment be noted;

(2) the Action Plan addressing the issues arising out of the Use of Resources assessment be noted and it be agreed that the Finance and Audit Scrutiny should monitor on a quarterly basis;

(3) the more demanding requirements of the new harder Use of Resources and how these will impact upon the scoring of all local authorities be noted; and

(4) the significant work already undertaken by officers and the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee in addressing the recommendations made by the Audit Commission and the short timescale available to embed further improvements before the next assessment be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)

134. 2009/10 2nd QUARTER PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive's Office presenting the half year performance results for 2009/10 along with the mitigations and corrective actions for those indicators that were off target.

The regular and systematic reporting of performance results against target, trended over time and compared with other authorities was a fundamental element of the Council's integrated performance management framework. The performance management framework in turn remained a key tool for ensuring the Council stayed

focused on what mattered to ensure it delivered its services efficiently and effectively.
As in previous quarters, a report relating to each portfolio had been prepared and arranged to enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold portfolio holders to account for the performance of services within their portfolio area. The information in section 8 of the report contained full exception, mitigation and correction actions.

Members expressed some disappointment that strategic leadership figures had dropped and felt that urgent action was required to remedy the situation.

The Executive were particularly pleased that the migration of the call centre to a joint service with the County Council had gone so smoothly, and thanked staff for their hard work.

RESOLVED that

(1) performance in relation to each of the nine portfolios for the period April 2009 to September 2009 be noted; and

(2) mitigation and corrective actions where results have fallen beyond 10% of target be noted and approved as detailed in the report, be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)

135. **FREE SWIMMING**

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services which sought approval for extending free swimming provision to under-16's until 31 March 2011, with a further report to Executive in September 2010 identifying the prospects for an extension of free swimming for both under 16's and over 60's after March 2011. The report provided best estimate details on the financial implications of the Council participating in the free swimming for under 16's initiative.

On 25 August the Executive agreed to an in principle application being made to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) for under-16's Free Swimming grant funding but asked officers to bring a further report with a more detailed business plan

The revised offer for Under 16's (Aug 2009) grant funding from the DCMS was the original £59,212 plus an uplift of 20% - a total of £71,054 for a full year.

The introduction of free swimming for under 16's would mean a loss of income to the Council from under 16's as well as increased staffing, cleaning and administration costs.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report but were mindful that the scheme should be time limited and reviewed and that the collection of the data would need to be implemented properly. They were keen to see progress after one year, hoping that there would not be too much migration to WDC pools from adjoining districts where there was no free swimming.

The Executive agreed with the Committee's comments, recognising a need for the public to see that this would be a time limited offer which the Council would ideally like to support long term but which it could not guarantee to do at this stage.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Executive took full account of the proposals in 3.8 of the Executive report and were particularly concerned that the scheme may be started and then not continued after 2011. Once sufficient data was collected the Committee would like regular monitoring reports to the Executive, which includes information on take up of the scheme and the number of 17 year olds who continue to use the facilities.

The Executive took account of the proposals in 3.8 of the report as requested, but pointed out to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the recommendations in the report included a report back to the Executive in September 2010, which covered the Committee's request for a regular monitoring report.

RESOLVED that

(1) Central Government grant funding be accepted and agree to extend the Free Swimming initiative to under-16's with effect from 1 January 2010 until 31 March 2011;

(2) a chargeable Leisure card for under-16's and for those over 60's joining the Free Swimming scheme on or after 1st Jan 2010 be approved;

(3) the subsidy from Central Government for both under 16's and over 60's Free Swimming ends in March 2011 be noted; and

(4) officers are asked to identify funding opportunities to make a Free Swimming scheme sustainable beyond March 2011 and report back to Executive in September 2010.

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

136. **ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT/REVIEW OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

The Executive considered a report from Policy, Projects and Conservation seeking approval for the Annual Monitoring Report 2009 (AMR) to be submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with Local Development Regulations. The AMR was part of the Local Development Framework and its purpose was to assess the extent to which existing planning policies and proposals were being implemented against a range of indicators.

The AMR also monitored progress on the preparation of planning policy documents and therefore informed the review of the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS). This was a project plan that outlined what planning policy documents the Council intended to prepare. The Council approved the current LDS in December

2008 and it was brought into effect in February 2009 following submission to the Secretary of State. The report also therefore sought approval for a revised LDS to be submitted to the Secretary of State in light of progress that the Council had made during 2009.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were concerned about the potential slippage with regard to the date of publication of the Core Strategy in May 2010 and felt that every effort should be made to have it in place by August 2010, and meet all the stated deadlines. The Executive recognised the possible consequences of slippage and had taken this into account.

While the purpose of the report before the Executive was concerned principally with approval of the AMR, Members voiced concerns about Government handling of the Local Development targets. The Executive thanked Gary Stephens for his hard work in terms of defending the District in this regard.

RESOLVED that

(1) the Annual Monitoring Report be approved for submission to the Secretary of State;

(2) the changes to the current Local Development Scheme attached as appendix A to the report be approved for submission to the Secretary of State and it be noted that the Local Development Scheme shall 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) authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Development Portfolio holder to agree any further minor amendments to 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 reference 216)

137. **REVIEW OF THE DISCRETIONARY ASSISTED TRAVEL SCHEME**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive requesting an amendment to the eligibility criteria of the Council's discretionary assisted travel scheme to include disabled (as defined at Appendix A to the report) residents throughout the district. The report also set out some minor amendments to take account of issues raised during the first five months of the scheme.

The report proposed that in collaboration with the County Council and Community/Voluntary sector, the Head of Customer and Information Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Information Services, undertake a comprehensive review of the community transport arrangements available to the District's residents and report back to Executive with an interim report by March 2010.

The review was to focus on the take-up of the scheme as, although there was a desire to extend the entitlement more broadly, the Executive wanted to ensure that any extension of the provision was affordable. As at 9 November 2009, £11,450 of tokens had been issued, with £2,750 received in administration charges. The overall budget for the scheme was £120,900 and therefore officers considered that it would not be imprudent to extend the scope of the scheme.

Using information from the last census and the previous travel token scheme, officers estimated that between 750 and 1,000 disabled residents not covered by the token scheme could be eligible. The maximum net cost to the authority of extending provision was therefore estimated to be £20,000 which would be within budget.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Executive commit to ring fencing any unspent money from this scheme so it was available to fund any future changes to the scheme, pending the outcome of the proposed Task and Finish Group Scrutiny review. It should also not be used for other developments ring fence it for any changes to the scheme in the future and not used for other future developments.

The Executive did not accept the recommendation for any unspent money to be ring-fenced but the Portfolio Holder undertook to consider how best to take forward the issue of future funding once the review proposed within the report had been undertaken. The Portfolio Holder would liaise with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to avoid any potential overlap between a future Task and Finish group and the scheduled review.

RESOLVED that

(1) the discretionary travel scheme be enhanced with immediate effect to make eligible for £25.00 travel tokens the residents in (a) and (b) upon payment of a £5.00 administration charge be approved:

(a) disabled (as defined at Appendix A to the report) residents in the parishes/towns of Barford, Cubbington, Kenilworth, Leamington Spa, Radford Semele, Warwick and Whitnash; and

(b) residents over 60 in the parish of Barford;

(2) the discretionary travel scheme be enhanced to make eligible for £50.00 travel tokens the residents in (a) and (b) upon payment of a £5.00 administration charge:

(a) disabled (as defined at Appendix A) residents in the parish of Blackdown; and

(b) residents over 60 in the parish of Blackdown;

(3) the Head of Customer and Information Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Information Services, to undertake a review of community transport arrangements in the district in collaboration with the County Council and the Community/Voluntary sector and report back to the Executive with an interim report by March 2010; and

(4) the issues as set out in Appendix B of the report raised by local residents with Customer Service staff based at the One Stop Shops and through the Customer Service Centre be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)

138. REVIEW OF CONCURRENT SERVICES SCHEME

The Executive considered a report from Finance containing findings from a further investigation into the Concurrent Services Scheme following presentation of the initial consultation report to the Executive in June. In light of future budgetary constraints within the Council, the report recommended the fairest way forward for future allocation of the Concurrent Services Budget.

The existing scheme for reimbursing Parish Councils for concurrent expenditure was instigated in 2005. Over the years, concerns had been raised that reimbursement was not sufficient to cover actual expenditure incurred. In February 2009, the Executive considered applying a minimum threshold to the Concurrent Service Allocations to Parish Councils undertaking such services and requested a full review of the Scheme be undertaken. Due to the low number of responses received in June and inconclusive details, a further investigation was commissioned. This report contained financial evaluation of the additional information and feedback from Parish Councils.

The 15 Parish Councils providing Concurrent Services had been asked to provide expenditure information for the last 3 financial years. To date there had been a 93% response rate, from which it could be seen that the average total amount of expenditure incurred on Concurrent Services by Parishes across the District was £59,500 against a budget of £54,600. In most cases, it could be seen that annual costs incurred were not consistent across the 3 years. Whilst this Council's budget was insufficient to meet all of this expenditure, the budget could be allocated across each of the Parishes in proportion to the average amount of costs they incurred.

By retaining the principles of the existing scheme with revised allocations, there would be certainty for both District and Parish Councils in that the level of funding requirement would be ascertained when the budget was set. All Council's said they benefited from this certainty.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report but noted that the recommendations were incorrectly numbered. The Executive thanked the Committee for pointing this out.

RESOLVED that

(1) the responses from the Town and Parish Councils be noted;

(2) the re-allocation of the 2010-11 budget across the Parishes in line with the 3 year average expenditure analysis in column 7 of appendix A of the report be approved;

(3) during the next 3 years (2010 to 2012), further consideration be given to alternative approaches as to how the scheme might operate;

(4) a further report be brought to the Executive during 2010 for reconsideration; and

(5) the guidance for applications for Rural Initiatives Grants and the mechanism for Concurrent Service Reimbursement be updated, endorsed and re-circulated to all Town and Parish Councils in Warwick District.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Caborn and Doody)
(Forward Plan reference 170)

139. **HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME – ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE AND RE-PROFILING OF EXISTING BUDGETS**

The Executive considered a report from Housing and Property Services seeking agreement for additional funding to complete extra works to meet the Decent Homes Standard and to replace heating systems that were becoming unserviceable.

The Council was currently working towards the Decent Homes Standard. Additional funding was required to complete the planned number of 400 kitchens and bathrooms during the 2009/10 financial year. Following a competitive tendering exercise earlier in the year, the Council had changed its kitchen and bathroom contractor. The successful contractor was chosen as being the most economically advantageous tender. The tendering exercise had resulted in a 12% increase in kitchen and bathroom replacement costs. Additionally, health and safety requirements for working in tenants' properties were more onerous than when the previous contract was let. Consequently costs associated with health and safety had increased.

When one-off kitchens and bathrooms were replaced under the Council's voids programme, the costs were charged to the kitchen and bathroom capital budget. These were one-off replacements additional to the programmed replacements. In the last 12 months there had been an increase in the number of kitchens and bathrooms being replaced and this had raised the expenditure on the HRA capital budget allocation for replacement kitchens and bathrooms. It was estimated that an additional £200,000 was needed to set against void replacements.

The gas servicing and maintenance contract for housing gas heating systems was awarded to a new contractor in April 2009. The change of contractor had highlighted problems with a large number of older heating systems. Together with the new contractor, officers were carrying out a comprehensive survey of the gas boilers installed in housing properties. It had become clear that an estimated 566 of older boilers contained a low level of asbestos. The new contractor's safety rules prohibited the dismantling of these boilers for servicing. It was permitted to test the flue gasses of a boiler and pass the boiler as safe if the composition of the flue gasses met specified criteria. However this only allowed for a maximum of 3 certifications, after which a physical inspection of the boiler was required. The typical cost of replacing a gas heating system was £2,800, so the total cost of replacing 566 boilers would be around £1,584,800. Splitting the programme across the current and next two financial years would require £528,000 per year.

During the first half of 2009/10, 100 heating systems that could not be repaired had to be replaced. It was anticipated that replacements would continue at this rate, meaning a total of 200 systems were expected to be replaced during the whole financial year, at a cost of £560,000 per year. This rate was unlikely to fall until a significant number of systems had been replaced.

The total estimated annual cost of heating replacements for the current and next two financial years was £1,088,000 per year. The future cost of day-to-day repairs for heating systems was expected to fall as old heating systems were replaced.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report. The Executive thanked the Committee for their support.

RESOLVED that additional expenditure, bringing forward funding from the Housing Capital Programme, Improvement and Renewal Works be approved as set out below:

(a) £408,000 additional finance in 2009/10 to allow sufficient funds to refurbish kitchens and bathrooms to meet the Decent Homes Standard by the end of 2010. Warwick District Council has a commitment to the Department of Communities and Local Government to achieve this; and

(b) £1,168,000 brought forward, spread over 3 financial years, to replace an increasing number of failing and non-compliant back-boilers and older gas heating systems.

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

140. GENERAL REPORTS

(A) LOCAL LIST OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The Executive considered a report from Development Services setting out the findings of a public consultation exercise concerning the establishment of a Local List of Buildings of Historic and Architectural Interest in Warwick District, and proposing a way forward.

Approval was given at the March Executive to undertake public consultation, stemming from previous conservation area reviews of the rural areas which identified a series of buildings, and small groups of buildings which were of interest historically and locally, but which had no level of protection in terms of statutory listing and would not, by the nature of their being individual buildings or very small groups of buildings, be worthy of Conservation Area designation. In order to give these buildings a level of recognition, it was proposed that a local list be formed. When planning applications were received for these buildings, appropriate consideration could then be given to maintaining the character and salient features of each property. A similar list already existed for historic parks and gardens of local interest.

Parish Councils and Amenity Societies, together with English Heritage and Warwickshire County Council, were consulted for their views. Owners of each property proposed for inclusion in this list were also consulted in line with the format now used by English Heritage in terms of a statutory designation. There was general support from Town and Parish Councils, with some caution about an additional level of bureaucracy and opposition from one Parish Council. Two Parish Councils sent in additional candidates for the Local List, as did the Kenilworth Society. Of 51 individual properties consulted, 20 responses were received and 15 of these did not wish their properties to be included on the list, whilst the other 5 were supportive. Reasons for not wishing to be included were largely concerns about additional consents and bureaucracy, together with a view that their property was not an historic building thought worthy of designation. English Heritage were supportive of the process but, in light of responses received, recommended that criteria be developed in order to inform the decision as to whether a building was included on the list.

The absence of any agreed written criteria limited the ability of the Council to implement a Local List scheme consistently across the District and made the process less transparent for property owners. It was therefore proposed to investigate, prepare and consult on the establishment of criteria for Local Listing, having regard to the statutory criteria produced by English Heritage and criteria used by other local authorities with Local Lists. The criteria would then be brought to Executive for approval, before consultation took place with property owners on whether their properties should be included on the Local List having regard to any approved criteria.

RESOLVED that

(1) the preparation of draft criteria, to include a period of consultation, for selecting buildings of historic and architectural interest to be included on a local list, be approved; and

(2) a further report be brought back to Executive, following consultation, to approve the criteria for use by the Council in establishing a Local List of Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan reference 215)

(B) REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services presenting the findings of an audit of the condition of the Council's 47 children's play areas and providing a plan of action to rectify issues identified.

The ongoing management, maintenance and refurbishment of children's play areas required significant capital and revenue investment by the Council. During 2001- 2003 approximately £1,000,000 was invested to meet the recommendations of European Safety Standards. Whilst accepted as best practice at the time, it had since been recognised nationally that the practice of 'sanitising' play areas to make them 'safer' had the negative effect of reducing play value to the extent that, in many cases, they provided limited entertainment to children and young people. Such a situation could result in low levels of use and high levels of vandalism.

In response, Play England, The Department for Children Schools and Families and KIDS, had published documents in 2008 aiming to encourage the strategic development of more attractive, inclusive and environmentally sustainable play areas. One of the key recommendations was the use of natural materials and landscaping, which not only provided a high play value, but could be extremely cost effective and environmentally sustainable in comparison to traditional manufactured play structures. The two documents were consistent with the Council's Play Strategy adopted by members in 2008.

During February 2009 a representative of the Child Action Prevention Trust completed an independent inspection of all play areas. Part of their final report detailed the anticipated life expectancy of each individual piece of play equipment. This identified that, over the next 5 years, in order to maintain the District's play areas at current levels and ensure the provision of safe play opportunities, capital investment of £80,000 was required. This sum was not sufficient for wholesale replacement of play equipment but would allow individual items to be repaired or replaced, if deemed necessary, due to health and safety considerations.

In order to make the most effective use of resources and ensure that children's play opportunities were fully supported, a key action point of the Warwick District Play Strategy was to undertake an assessment and audit of all play areas. This was completed during the spring and summer of 2009 and utilised as its methodology a nationally recognised Play Area quality assessment tool developed jointly by Play England and the Children's Play Council.

The audit would form the basis of a review by the Play Working Party to consider the future of play area provision in the district. The results would provide an insight into whether play areas met the needs of the local community and therefore provide a worthwhile investment for the Council.

Retention of all 47 play areas would require a significant investment by the Council from 2015 – 2020 and therefore further detailed investigation into their long term suitability was required.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. It was pointed out that when new capital programmes were implemented, due regard should be given to long term revenue costs for future maintenance.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt there were some scores, shown in Appendix 2, which were not easy to understand. The Committee would also find it useful to have details of the methodology used to score the play areas and look forward to receiving the information on usage and the spatial relationship between the play areas.

The Executive acknowledged the scrutiny committee comments. A view was expressed that anti-graffiti play equipment should be installed where possible, as was a desire to see portfolio holders and heads of service evaluate their equipment reserves.

Officers reported that a much broader report on play areas would be presented to the Executive in the future.

RESOLVED that

(1) the formal adoption of the "Design for Play Guide" and "Inclusion by Design" to inform the future development of play opportunities within the district, in line with the District's Play Strategy, be approved;

(2) a sum of £80,000 be allocated to the Equipment Renewal Reserve from the General Reserve to cover the five year period 2010-2015 to replace play equipment and/or provide other play features based on the above policies but that replacement/enhancement only occurs following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture; and

(3) the Head of Cultural Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Play Working Party, bring a future report to Executive with recommendations for future play area provision in the district and the financial implications of such provision.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Gallagher)
(Forward Plan reference 217)

(C) **ENDORSEMENT OF A JOINT PROTOCOL BETWEEN WDC AND WCC FOR RESPONDING TO PARISH APPRAISALS AND PLANS**

The Executive considered a report from the Community Partnership Team outlining the importance of the Parish Appraisal/Parish Plan process to rural

communities. The report proposed guidelines for the engagement of both district and county councils in the production of appraisals and plans, and identified how both authorities should respond to appraisals and plans presented.

The Parish Appraisal/Planning Process was a well-established way of articulating the needs and aspirations of rural communities. The approach proposed in the report aimed to add value to the process and help establish closer working relationships between the district council, county council and the rural communities they served.

Both local authorities did not currently have an agreed approach to participating in the production of appraisals and plans, nor was there a means of formally responding to such documents, once produced. The evolving community forums had provided greater opportunities for parishes to make their voices heard and for them to more easily access service providers, service information, advice and funding support. It was important that there was a clear and agreed process for them to do this and for community forums to play a key role in supporting the parish planning process through to implementation. The existence of the new Joint Community Partnership Team would facilitate a more joined up approach between the Authorities and Parishes and strengthen links between parish councils and community forums.

The emerging Core Strategy may also place greater emphasis on the role of Parish Plans or similar documents in demonstrating 'the needs of local communities' in rural areas. The Preferred Options Paper consulted on the option to provide a policy framework to enable development to come forward in the villages, once a need was identified locally through a parish plan or appraisal.

This approach would give a stronger role for parish plans than presently existed under the policies of the adopted Local Plan. It would, however, require close working with officers from Development Services to ensure that the output from such exercises could be incorporated into the local development framework, was in line with national and regional planning policies and could therefore influence the determination of future planning applications. The establishment of a protocol would clearly assist in that regard.

RESOLVED that

(1) the proposed joint protocol for responding to Parish Appraisals and Plans, set out in appendix 1 to the report, be endorsed;

(2) the proposal that Warwickshire County Council would wish this protocol to be piloted in Warwick District with a view to adopting it county-wide incorporating any revisions arising from the Warwick District pilot, be noted and approved; and

(3) following any further consultation with parish councils and community forums, minor amendments be agreed by the Head of Customer and Information Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Information Services.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)

(D) PROVISION OF CHARGING POINTS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN OFF-STREET CAR PARKS

The Executive considered a report from Neighbourhood Services highlighting the actions required and costs associated with the provision of charging points in two off-street car parks. This would support of the Coventry and Birmingham Low Emission Demonstration (CABLED) project based in the Midlands for the development of electric vehicles.

Officers had been asked to support the CABLED project due to be launched in 2010. Agreeing to the request would be a clear statement that the District was willing to support initiatives aimed at delivering a cleaner environment. In the longer term, provision of charging points would make the town centre accessible to users of electric vehicles and had the potential to increase the number of visitors.

RESOLVED that

(1) two parking spaces dedicated to electric vehicle charging in both Covent Garden and St Peter's multi-storey car parks be made available;

(2) £10,057 be allocated from the Car Park Improvement Programme budget and any grant received from the application for funding to the Department of Transport be added to the account;

(3) a free "charging facility" for users of electric vehicles be offered in the two car parks for an initial period of 24 months, to commence as agreed by the Head of Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services; and

(4) officers provide the Executive with an update 18 months into the scheme, so continued support for the initiative can be considered.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Shilton)

(E) COUNTY WIDE HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY REVIEW

The Executive considered a report from Housing and Property Services recommending the "in principle" agreement for the establishment of a future county wide Home Improvement Agency (HIA).

Warwickshire Councils had undertaken work to review the current HIA provision, culminating in a report to the Supporting People Commissioning Body, attached as appendix 1 to the report. A recommendation in this report was for all stakeholders to report to their respective governing bodies to seek agreement in principle for this work to be taken forward.

A decision had not yet been made as to the best way to deliver a County wide HIA, or whether it would involve pooling budgets or staff, or how services would be commissioned. An agreement in principle would allow the Council to investigate all options for future service delivery before a final decision was made.

The Council employed a number of staff within the Private Sector Housing Team who undertook HIA work. There might be staff implications if in the future the Council were to contract with any new single countywide HIA to provide services to replace those currently delivered in-house.

As well as the HIA review, work was underway to deliver improved adaptation services through the Strategic Advisory Group for Adaptations, of which Warwick District was a member. In direct response to the need for good quality advice on housing options for older people, Warwickshire Councils had collectively been awarded £192,000 for the provision of a countywide housing options and advice service for older people.

In taking this pilot forward it was intended to work with a new government sponsored advice service called FirstStop, a national advice service on housing and care options provided by Counsel and Care, Elderly Accommodation Counsel, Help the Aged and NHFA. Details of the Scheme were included in the appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that

(1) the principle that the Council engages in the development of a more efficient and effective customer focused county wide HIA service be agreed;

(2) the possible future implications for existing staff, should the Council decide to participate in a single county wide service, be noted; and

(3) work to develop a countywide housing options and advice service for older people in partnership with FirstStop be noted.

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

(F) **THE NEW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR WARWICK DISTRICT**

The Executive considered a report from the Community Partnership Team seeking the Council's adoption of the new Community Engagement

Strategy, a key tool to assist in the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The development of the strategy had been overseen by a Steering Group involving key partners from the County, Police, NHS Warwickshire and the voluntary community sector. The document was in the process of being circulated to key partners for approval and sign up by December 2009.

The purpose of developing the Strategy on behalf of the Warwick Partnership was to ensure there was a single cohesive strategy in Warwick District adopted by all key partners for a whole range of community engagement activities. It was a document that sought to add value through collaborative working.

RESOLVED that

(1) the new Community Engagement Strategy attached in appendix 1 to the report be adopted;

(2) it be noted that the Strategy has been circulated to key partners for their approval and sign up; and

(3) Members note that the Community Partnership Team will be responsible for facilitating the development of an action plan for the delivery of the Strategy on behalf of the Warwick Partnership Executive Group and will be therefore accountable to them in reporting progress.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)

(G) ENDORSEMENT OF THE WARWICKSHIRE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Executive considered a report from the Community Partnership Team asking for the Warwickshire Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) to be endorsed.

The strategy, attached as appendix 1 to the report, had been agreed by all partners in June through the Public Service Board and the Public Service Board Advisory Forum. There was a need to embed the Strategy within partner organisations in Warwickshire to ensure that the vision and outcomes contained therein were translated into action, most principally through the Local Area Agreement, which would act as a delivery vehicle for the longer term strategy.

Warwickshire County Council had gone to great lengths, through ongoing consultation, to ensure synergy between the county-wide Strategy and those of district and boroughs to ensure that the SCS was responsive to the needs of local communities.

Warwick District Council was a key partner in the Warwick Partnership. If the Council was expected to deliver on a key priority of the SCS that could

have additional resource implications, ta separate report would be brought to the Executive.

RESOLVED that the Warwickshire Sustainable Community Strategy be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)

(H) PUMP ROOM GARDENS

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services and the Chief Executive's Office which set out the business case for proposals for improvements to the Pump Room Gardens in Leamington Spa, developed in conjunction with a range of local bodies. As part of an overall funding bid, £13,000 had been agreed and a further £20,000 agreed subject to a business case demonstrating that the other funding had been secured.

The scheme agreed by the Executive in August had 3 elements, those being:

a) the re-introduction of 9 arches along Dormer place and Linden Avenue;
b) a mixture of bio diversity improvements and clearance along the river bank – both sides; and
c) improvements to drainage and footpaths.

The costs of the 3 elements had been estimated as £100,000, £30,000 and £77,000 respectively, totalling £207,000. There was the potential for fees and administration costs of between 10 and 15% to be added to (a) and (c). This would have to be funded from a combination of the cost forming part of the bids to be made and officer time given in kind.

The works set out in (b) were due to start this winter. Works under (a) and (c) would only begin as and when the other funding was achieved.

From the Council's perspective, the proposed investment of £68,000 from all sources would generate investment of £139,000 from all other sources in an asset which the Council owned, equating to almost £2 for every £1 invested.

Archie Pitt, Chairman of the Friends of Leamington Railway Station and Vice Chairman of the Leamington Society, attended the meeting and outlined how the Friends Group believed they could raise around £60,000 if the Group could demonstrate that the Council would invest £20,000. The Group did not expect the Council to hand over any money until the required sum had been successfully raised. Nevertheless, the Friends Group had pledged £3,500 from its reserves towards the scheme's cost.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report. The Executive thanked the Committee for their support.

In addition, Archie Pitt was congratulated by the Executive on the Railway Station winning the Country Life Award for the best garden in the country.

RESOLVED that a contribution of £20,000 be made from the contingency budget towards the cost of the Pump Room Gardens improvement scheme, subject to the other £60,000 being raised by the Friends of the Pump Room Gardens Group.

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

(I) **RURAL INITIATIVES GRANT APPLICATION**

The Executive considered a report from Finance providing an update on the progress of the Offchurch Sports Club's scheme to build a new pavilion.

In March 2009 the Executive had granted a request from the Club for a Rural Initiatives Grant of £35,000 towards their new pavilion. The report contained a request from the Sports Club for an additional grant of £20,000 to help fund a revised building, following the failure of an application to the Lottery Fund for grant aid towards the original scheme.

RESOLVED that the request for an additional grant of £20,000 under the Council's Rural Initiatives Scheme be approved, subject to the additional grant being only a 'safety net' in case the Offchurch Sports Club's search for other funding is not successful.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)

(K) **RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

The Executive considered a report from Finance setting out the latest update of the Corporate and Strategic Risk Register for those items scoring 12 or more.

The purpose of presenting the report was to assist Members to fulfil their role in overseeing the organisation's risk management framework.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendation in the report but highlighted that items were not getting proper scrutiny due to the volume of reports being circulated late and limited time available in the meeting to discuss them. This could incur risks. The Executive acknowledged these issues and thanked the Committee for its support.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were concerned that the risk score of the Core Strategy might be greater than 12 and felt that the Executive should be presented with the score as it currently stood.

RESOLVED that the updated Corporate and Strategic Risk Register be noted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)

141. **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 paragraphs 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
120, 121, 122 and 123	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

142. **PROPOSED SHARED LEGAL SERVICE**

The Executive considered a report from Legal Services regarding the proposed sharing of a legal service with Warwickshire County Council.

Officers from the County Council attended to respond to Members' questions and clarify how the proposal would work in practice. The Executive discussed the proposal in some detail, including the Service Level Agreement, a conflict of interest protocol and accessibility to solicitors.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report although they were not impressed by the financial business case. They highlighted that the report was not easy to decipher regarding the support services financial information. The Committee recommended that the Executive receive an annual report on the progress of the shared service, including the financial position.

The Executive accepted that the report was difficult to understand in places and agreed with the Committee's recommendation.

County Council officers were thanked for attending the meeting and for their very helpful input during the discussion.

RESOLVED that

(1) a joint legal service with Warwickshire County Council be established with effect from 1 March 2010 (or such other date as may be agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council);

(2) on the date of establishment of the joint legal service, the permanent members of staff of the Legal Section at that date transfer to the employment of WCC;

(3) the budget implications as set out in section 5 of this report and appendix 1 be noted and approved, with the

2010/11 budget for Legal Services being increased by £86,000 (paragraph 5.7);

(4) the requirement for the council to seek a further £27,000 rental/service charge income for Riverside House be noted (paragraph 5.4);

(5) the Chief Executive be given delegated authority in consultation with Group Leaders to approve a service level agreement (including a conflict of interest protocol) with the County Council for the future provision of the legal service to WDC;

(6) the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to make the necessary consequential management and organisational structural changes;

(7) a further report be brought forward on the necessary changes to the Scheme of Delegation; and

(8) the Executive receive an annual report on the progress of the shared service, including the financial position.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward Plan reference 220)

143. **REQUEST FOR EARLY RETIREMENT & REVIEW OF SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive's Office seeking a formal response to a request for early retirement from a senior officer, to agree some other minor organisational changes as a consequence of this and of other items on the agenda; and to agree to instigate a review of support services.

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

RESOLVED that

(1) the request for early retirement to be granted as from 30 September 2010 and that the provision of an estimated £27,300 additional pension strain cost be met from the early retirement reserve;

(2) a review of the Council's support services and their costs be instigated as a BIP project and that a further report on the outcomes in time to be implemented by 30 September 2010;

(3) subject to the recommendations elsewhere on this agenda in respect of a shared Legal Service being agreed, the Head of Member Services and Monitoring Officer take on the duties of managing the Land Charges

team and act as Client Officer for the Council in respect of Legal Services for the remainder of his employment with the Council; and

(4) the preparation of a Communication and Marketing Strategy be noted and a Communications and Marketing BIP Project and that the post of Communications and Marketing Manager will remain frozen until such the strategy and project are complete and its findings are reported and approved by the Executive.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Caborn, Doody and Mobbs)

144. **REVIEW OF FINANCE STAFFING**

The Executive considered a report from Finance seeking approval for changes to the staffing structure within Finance, notably with regards to the Benefits Fraud Investigation service.

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

RESOLVED that

(1) the Benefits Fraud Investigation Section should become part of the Benefits Section within Customer and Information Services from 1 April 2010;

(2) the Benefits Fraud Investigation Manager post is made redundant with effect from 1 April 2010, with the consequent redundancy costs of this being financed from the Early Retirement Reserve;

(3) a Benefits Fraud Investigation Team Leader post (reporting to the Principal Benefits Officer) will be created from within existing Benefits Fraud Investigator posts, with there being ring-fenced recruitment; and

(4) the post of Strategic Finance Manager become the Council's Deputy Section 151 Officer, backdated to 1 April 2009.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)

145. **BUILDING ON EXCELLENCE RESTRUCTURE UPDATE**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive updating members on progress in relation to the Building on Excellence Two restructure and in relation to the creation of the new Development Services and the expanded Housing and Property Services' service areas.

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

RESOLVED that

(1) the employment position of the Head of Housing Strategy and Head of Economic Development and Regeneration, and the consequential revenue savings, as detailed in the report, be noted; and

(2) the necessary redundancy payment be funded from the Early Retirement Reserve;

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

146. **REVIEW OF TOURISM AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE VISITOR ECONOMY**

The Executive considered a report from Economic Development and Regeneration, the purpose of which was to examine the future provision of tourism and the management of the visitor economy as requested by the Executive on 26 August 2009. In order to do this, the report, in principle, established the components that should be delivered to ensure that there was effective management of the visitor economy in the District.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. The Committee was not satisfied that the visitor economy could be more effectively delivered at the sub – regional level.

RESOLVED that

(1) the principle of supporting the effective delivery of tourism and the visitor economy in the District in relation to all the elements set out in 7.4.2 of the report be approved;

(2) the proposed investigation with partners at the sub-regional level on the potential for a wider partnership approach to strategic tourism delivery be supported;

(3) a further report be brought to the March 2010 Executive on the practical delivery of tourism and visitor management outputs; and

(4) Officers further investigate the Charter for Destination Management, established by Visit Britain.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan reference G1)

147. CHANDOS STREET UPDATE

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive updating members on the current position regarding the proposed retail development on the Chandos Street site and seeking approval for further action to enable a planning application to be brought forward.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report but recommended that the Executive request an updated risk register for their consideration and for the consideration of Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee. The Executive agreed with this recommendation.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee support the recommendations set out in the report and supported the recommendation a member working group be set up.

Members noted slight changes to the wording in the letter attached at appendix 4 to the report. In addition they requested an updated risk register for consideration by the Executive and the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that

(1) the progress of discussions with the developer and the draft Development Agreement be noted;

(2) the revised provisions relating to the longstop date for development of the scheme as set out in the draft Development Agreement be approved;

(3) authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Development Portfolio Holder, to conclude negotiations with the developer to finalise the Development Agreement, and subsequently to the Head of Legal Services (or, in their absence the Chief Executive) to subsequently sign the Development Agreement;

(4) potential alternative town centre development sites will not be marketed for retail development by the Council until the completion of the CPO process for the Chandos Street site and the conclusion and appraisal of the second viability test as set out in the Development Agreement and that the developer will be fully informed of the Council's developing plans for the town centre;

(5) the timetable for the development of an Area Action Plan for Leamington Town Centre be noted and that the wider issues relating to the future car parking strategy for the town centre and, in particular, the future of the Covent Garden car parks will be progressed through this process; and

(6) a cross-party member Working Group to oversee the project be established, comprising Councillors Boad, Coker, Crowther and Hammon.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan reference 174)

148. **SUB REGIONAL JOINT WORKING AND SHARED SERVICES**

The Executive considered an urgent report from the Chief Executive's Office summarising the work progressing on Sub Regional Joint Working and Shared Services.

Some concern was expressed regarding income generation from shared services over the long term, and that there would be a need to increase income bearing in mind the economic climate and future financial pressures on local authorities. However, Members noted that income generation was a separate project being undertaken by Officers.

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

RESOLVED that

(1) the principles of sub regional joint working set out at appendix 1 to the report and the areas for further development as set out at appendix 2 be agreed;

(2) the Southern Housing Market Area (SHMA) partners be informed of the Council's intention to withdraw and to seek the Homes and Communities formal affirmation of support for the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW) area as the basis for the Sub Regional approach;

(3) the proposed changes to the structure of the Local Area Agreement under the Public Service Board for Warwickshire and makes any comments as appropriate be noted;

(4) the request from Warwickshire County Council on behalf of the Public Service Board be noted and a response as suggested at paragraph 3.7 be agreed; and

(5) the progress on several fronts regarding joint working and shared services and this Council's involvement be noted.

(The Leader of the Executive agreed that, although this item was not included on the agenda for the meeting, it should be considered as a matter of urgency, because of the need to respond prior to the next meeting of the Executive.)
(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Caborn, Doody, Mrs Grainger and Hammon)

(The meeting ended at 8.40pm)