



<b>Title</b>	<b>Comments from the Executive</b>
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Peter Dixon Committee Services Officer 01926 456114 <a href="mailto:committee@warwickdc.gov.uk">committee@warwickdc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Service Area</b>	Civic & Committee Services
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	N/A
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006</b>	No
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	N/A
<b>Background Papers</b>	Finance & Audit minutes 29/07/2014 Executive minutes 30/07/2014

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

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
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).		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Deputy Chief Executive		Andrew Jones
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Legal		
Finance		Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holders		

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

## **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 30 July 2014.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That 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 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 9.00 am 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 29 July 2014, the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the items detailed in the appendices. The responses which the Executive gave are also shown.

**Responses from the meeting of the Executive held on 30 July 2014 to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee's comments**

Item no	3	Title	Budget Review to 30 June 2014	Requested by	Chair
<b>Scrutiny Comment</b>		<p>The Committee supported the recommendations but raised a number of concerns about the level of savings still needed a total of £1.01 million over the 5 year period, and notably a £496k in-year deficit arising in 2016/17. (Due to the modest surplus in 2015/16 this results in an on-going deficit of £433k in 2016/17)</p> <p>There was a general concern for the finances of local authorities, mainly as a result of the cuts made by central government. Members agreed that it was the scrutiny committee's role to remain cautious and vigilant and ensure that tight budgeting and robust business plans remained a priority. The Committee also urged managers to plan all projects well ahead and to avoid last minute reports requesting monies that had not been included in the original budgets.</p> <p>Members asked for clarification on recommendation 2.8 which referred to the increase in funding for a community hub/local centre for Whitnash. Although Members were satisfied with the explanation from officers, it was agreed that the recommendation could be strengthened and it was therefore proposed that recommendation 2.8 be amended to read "the Executive agree up to a maximum of £100,000 Contingency Budget funding".</p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>		<p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance thanked the Committee for its comments and agreed with its proposal of additional wording to recommendation 2.8. He assured Members that officers were monitoring the issues monthly and substantial measures had been put in place to keep the Council in a strong position.</p> <p>The Leader highlighted that the figure quoted in paragraph 8.7 of the report should read "£6,300" and not "£128,000", in relation to the savings still to be achieved in 2014/15. He also reminded Members that the delay in agreeing a new location for the District Council headquarters had increased the savings to be achieved by 2019/20. Councillor Mobbs supported the range of projects detailed in section 9.16 which would help to bring about financial savings. Finally, he reminded Members of the progress made since the initial savings were calculated at £2.7million, five years ago.</p>			

Item no	4	Title	Significant Business Risk Register	Requested by	Chair
<b>Scrutiny Comment</b>	<p>The Committee strongly supported the recommendations in the report and felt that all staff should be congratulated for their hard work during difficult financial times.</p> <p>The risks associated with the Local Plan (Risk 16) were noted and Members were mindful of the Planning Risks, in particular in relation to the Gypsy and Traveller Sites and Developer challenge elements of the Plan. Members were satisfied with the explanation from Officers that the crossing out of the Local Plan wording in the Risk description was an oversight and that this Risk still exists.</p>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Members agreed that this should be treated as a living document which needed to be updated continuously. It was felt that staff had been working under tight budgets and in difficult circumstances and should be congratulated for their efforts.</p>				