

**Response from the meeting of the Executive on Overview and Scrutiny Committee Comments –
24 November 2010**

Item no.	Title	Requested by	Reason	Comment to Executive	Executive Response
4	Council Tax Discounts – Second Homes and Long Term Empty Properties	The Labour Group	Members had questions about the additional income expected to be raised.	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.	The Executive thanked the Committee for their comments.
7	WDC Play Areas	The Labour Group	Members had many questions including about consultation and analysis of needs, involvement of Councillors, different uses of space and their potential costs, and possible involvement of other agencies.	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that accessibility was a key part in providing play areas to residents within the District. They also asked for young people to be continually consulted about their play area and ways to improve them and ensure they contained play equipment they wanted and used. The Committee want the Executive to consider recommendation 2.4 in the report, which outlines the possibility of transferring these areas to groups or agencies.	The Executive thanked the Committee for their comments and the Play Area Working Party were to consider transferring of play areas to other agencies.

9	Review of Locality Working	The Labour Group	Members had questions about operation of Community Forums and other methods of involving and engaging the public.	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had concerns that the Community Forum meetings took up a lot of officer time, including the output after the meetings. They felt that the meetings were too structured and formal with the grant process dominating the meetings and that these should be changed to include more items put forward by the community. The Committee agreed that the people attending the Community Forum meetings were not a representative part of the community and that smaller groups spread across an area may attract more people and then these could feed back to the main Forum.	The Executive thanked the Committee for its comments, encouraged all members to submit their views to review and asked them to take the report to their forms to feed into the review process. The Executive also highlighted the importance of these forums and the need for members to attend them.
11	Audit Commission report on Housing Services	The Labour Group The Liberal Democrat Group	Members would like Jameel Malik to attend Overview & Scrutiny Committee to discuss how the service is responding to the report. Because of the need to find out in greater detail the methods to be used to communicate with officers,	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee concluded that they had confidence in the new Head of Service for Housing and Property Services and that the draft improvement plan was the right thing to do next. They felt that there were lessons that could be learnt from the	The Executive noted the comments of the committees but rejected the recommendation of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee because, while the principle was supported, there was a new tenant panel being developed which the

			<p>tenants, Councillors and the TSA.</p>	<p>problems that had been missed previously and that ways would be found to ensure that similar problems were not missed at such a magnitude in the future. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked that a sub-committee be established with all Councillors and tenants, including those from sheltered housing, who were aware of the system. This would enable Councillors to learn of the tenants issues and to both look at the improvement plan.</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder wanted to establish first before involving Councillors within it. However, once this had happened the involvement of Councillors in these Groups would be considered by Group Leaders in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.</p>
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