

Council meeting: Wednesday, 5 August 2020

Notice is hereby given that an ordinary meeting of Warwick District Council will be held remotely on Wednesday, 5 August 2020 at **6.00pm** and available for the public to watch via the Warwick District Council [YouTube channel](#).

Agenda

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct. Declarations should be entered on the form to be circulated with the attendance sheet and declared during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.

3. **Minutes**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 June 2020.

(Pages 1 to 18)

4. **Communications and Announcements**

5. **Petitions**

6. **Notices of Motion**

7. **Leader's and Portfolio Holders' Statements**

8. **Questions to the Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holders**

9. **End of term Reports**

Under Article 6 of the Constitution to consider the end of term report from

(a) Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee

(Pages 1 to 11)

(b) Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

(Pages 1 to 6)

10. **Overview & Scrutiny Committees**

That subject to the recommendation from the Joint meeting of the Finance & Audit and Overview & Scrutiny Committees on 29 July 2020 Council amends Council Procedure Rules 34 Public Speaking (c) Committees - Scrutiny committees to read as follows:

"Overview and Scrutiny Committees may invite people to address them, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions.

They may, for example, wish to hear from residents, stakeholders, members and officers in other parts of the public sector and shall invite such people to attend. Attendance is of course entirely optional.

Any request to speak on other items will be a matter of discretion for the Chairman *but must be made to Civic & Committee Services* committee@warwickdc.gov.uk or by calling 01926 456114 by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting.

Any member of the public addressing a Scrutiny Committee will be allocated between 3 and 5 minutes with no more than 30 minutes public speaking at any meeting."

11. **Executive Report**

To consider a report of the Executive meeting on

- (a) 13 July 2020
- (b) 30 July 2020

(Pages 1 to 11)
(To follow)

12. **Common Seal**

To authorise the affixing of the Common Seal of the Council to such deeds and documents as may be required for implementing decisions of the Council arrived at this day.



Chief Executive
Published Tuesday 28 July 2020

For enquiries about this meeting please contact Warwick District Council, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5HZ.

Telephone: 01926 456114

E-Mail: committee@warwickdc.gov.uk

Details of all the Council's committees, councillors and agenda papers are available via our website www.warwickdc.gov.uk/committees

The agenda is also available in large print, on request, prior to the meeting by calling 01926 456114.

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the meeting held remotely on Wednesday 24 June 2020, at 6.00pm, to be considered by Council on 5 August 2020.

PRESENT: Councillor Ashford (Chairman); Councillors Bartlett, Boad, Cooke, Cullinan, Davison, Day, A Dearing, J Dearing, K Dickson, R Dickson, Evans, Falp, B Gifford, C Gifford, Grainger, Grey, Hales, Heath, Illingworth, Jacques, Kennedy, Kohler, Leigh-Hunt, Luckhurst, Mangat, Margrave, Matecki, Milton, Murphy, Nicholls, Noone, Norris, Redford, Rhead, Roberts, Russell, Skinner, Syson, Tangri, Tracey and Weber.

8. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Morris and Wright

9. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

10. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on the 20 May 2020 were proposed, subject to the revised table as set out in the Addendum and included below, by Councillor Day, duly seconded by Councillor Cooke and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Minute 6 Appendix 2 Page 9 of the agenda be replaced as follows so that the role of Leader and Deputy Leader are shown in the correct section:

EXECUTIVE (7)

Councillor J Cooke
Councillor A Day
Councillor J Falp
Councillor M-A Grainger
Councillor R Hales
Councillor J Matecki
Councillor A Rhead

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, LEADER and DEPUTY LEADER OF THE EXECUTIVE

Strategic Leadership	Councillor	A Day (Leader)
Environment	Councillor	A Rhead
Culture and Neighbourhood Services	Councillor	M-A Grainger (Deputy Leader)
Development Services	Councillor	J Cooke
Finance & Business	Councillor	R Hales
Health & Community Protection	Councillor	J Falp
Housing & Property	Councillor	J Matecki

11. Communications and Announcements

The Chairman led a moment's reflection as a mark of respect for those who were affected by the terror attack in Reading.

The Chairman confirmed that the British Heart Foundation was his nominated Charity for the year.

The Chairman reminded Councillors that it was armed forces week, the armed forces day flag was being flown at the Town Hall, but the event to mark this had had to be cancelled.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the staff of Warwick District Council and the wider community for all their work in responding to Covid 19.

The Chairman informed Council that he had attended the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association Online Seminar on the topic of Race, Equality & Faith on 13 June.

The Chairman informed Council that there was no business to be considered under agenda items: 5 Petitions, 7 Public submissions and 19 Common Seal.

12. Notice of Motion

The Notice of Motion, as follows, that was revised in the addendum to the agenda was proposed by Councillor Mangat and seconded by Councillor Tangri, that this Council:

- (1) reaffirms its commitment not to tolerate discrimination in any form, as defined in the Equality Act 2010;
- (2) will engage actively with both individuals and groups within the local BAME community in Warwick District to identify ways in which the Council can overcome the many disadvantages experienced by those communities;
- (3) requests that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establish a Task and Finish Group. The Task and Finish Group would be charged with undertaking a review of the Council's approach to equality and diversity, especially with regard to race. Its report to the Committee would include an action plan with a view to the Executive adopting the Committee's recommendations in the report and its action plan. The progress and outcomes of the action plan would be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with the expectation that measurable improvements would be made by 2023;
- (4) proposes that, in order to support its consideration of the report and the monitoring of the action plan, the Council requires the publication of relevant annual data, including an Ethnicity Pay Gap report alongside the current Gender Pay Gap report.
- (5) resolves to work with other councils, authorities, and organisations to deliver its commitment to overcoming racial discrimination and inequality.

Councillors, Mangat, Tangri, Nicholls, Boad, R Dickson, Davison, Kohler, Weber and Day spoke on this item.

Councillor Grainger, raised a point of order that she did not have the revised motion.

The Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed for Council that it had been published online earlier in the day and that Councillor Mangat had read the revised version at the start of the debate.

At the request of the Chairman, Councillor Mangat read the motion to Council for their benefit.

Further points of clarification were made by Councillors Redford, Norris, B Gifford, Day and Nicholls in respect of the revised motion being available to Councillors and when it was circulated.

On being put to the vote it was

Resolved that the motion as set out above be approved.

13. Leader's & Portfolio Holders' Statements

There were statements from the Leader, Councillor Day and the Portfolio Holders for; Development, Councillor Cooke; Finance & Business, Councillor Hales; Health & Community Protection, Councillor Falp; Housing & Property, Councillor Matecki; and Culture & Neighbourhood, Councillor Grainger. These were shared before the meeting and are set out at Appendix 1 to the minutes.

In response to the statement from the Leader, Councillor Davison asked, if he was aware of the content of the devolution white paper, that other Councillors were not, will this work be a narrow view in the short term so resources were not used on reorganisation, and would the work be broader to consider work with other service providers?

In response the Leader, Councillor Day, explained that he was not aware of any more detail of the Government White Paper from the Government and that as soon as he had details he would share them. He had asked Senior Managers to look how we worked within the Council, with Stratford District Council there would be a report coming forward in July with more details. There were regular meetings with other District and Borough Council Leaders who had talked through these issues as well as other proposals. There was a different mix of businesses and communities across the County with a much closer relationship and mix between Stratford District and Warwick District.

14. Questions to the Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holders

Councillor Skinner asked the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection what were the recovery plans please to improve a resident's mental health and general well-being, that in addition to the economic recovery, could encourage and support people to find their way out of isolation, and for the Council to provide ongoing support to help relieve those anxieties and pressures the most vulnerable have?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, Councillor Falp, explained that she could understand the concern by some residents in coming out of their homes after many weeks of isolation. Mental well-being was one of the many issues that had arisen due to Covid 19. Loneliness had been an agenda item on the many health groups with a range of partners even before Covid.

The Council would look at the Covid Emergency Grant Criteria from activities by organisations to help during the crisis for activities to address issues such as loneliness and support. This should be ready in the next couple of weeks for Executive and Group leaders to agree. This would hopefully allow Charities and Voluntary organisations to support residents. Three years' funding was in place to Community Centres in Brunswick, Warwick and Lillington. There were also the job clubs funded by the Council in the centres. The Council had the Community Support team who when the law permitted, would restart their physical work in the Community as well as virtually.

The Council was supporting businesses to open safely with a range of measures to help keep infection down and they would enforce if needed. The Community Safety

Team along with the C.C.T.V control room would be monitoring Town Centres and measures had been put in place to help with social distancing.

The Executive had been working in their own Portfolio Areas to look at helping with finance, getting the economy going, parks and gardens, housing needs and of course the Environment. Communications were the key to all things so the Council would be working to make sure our residents knew where to go for support.

Councillor Skinner asked a supplementary question of Councillor Falp that considering the concerns mentioned and lessons the Council must understand, what action was the Council taking to help build trust in recovery and beyond

In response Councillor Falp explained community and voluntary groups' important part, and there was the grant money to support during an emergency. Just before lock down the South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership held events to promote awareness of County Lines with over 400 people attending each one. Work with partners to support mental health was being investigated.

Councillor Luckhurst asked the Leader that in light of the climate emergency and new ways of working due to the coronavirus lockdown, could you please update us on these plans, specifically?

1. When were these plans going ahead?
2. Would all the new buildings be designed and built to be carbon neutral in use?
3. Would all new housing be 100% council housing offered at social or affordable rents?
4. Could the new offices be designed with 0.5 desks per council officer i.e. with approximately 50% working from home?
5. Could the car parking provision be redesigned to principally be an e-transport hub for electric vehicles (cars, taxis, buses and bikes)?

In response the Leader, Councillor Day, explained that the £300,000 was the estimated savings the Council would make if it moved to smaller premises. Likewise, the Town Hall saving was £85,000 per annum that would be achieved if the Council made the move it had previously proposed.

In February 2019 the then Executive agreed to pause the scheme and when I became Leader I said that there would be a review of the scheme with a particular view to maximising the community benefits. That review had not been concluded prior to the Coronavirus lockdown and as a result a further review of the plans was under way, that took advantage of the learning from the Coronavirus lockdown along with the advances that new technology offered. At present, there was a survey of all staff to understand what support could be provided so they could work more effectively at home but also in ways that helped to maintain the organisational 'glue' that enabled us to work cohesively.

The aim was to achieve net zero carbon emission overall as an organisation and our buildings needed to be used and/or designed in a way that helped achieve that objective. This would be influenced by our experience of working in the lockdown.

At the moment planning policy required that all new housing on sites above 10 properties, to be 40% affordable. This included a mixture of shared ownership, affordable rented and social rented housing, with the latter as the largest proportion.

In the light of our lockdown experience it was likely that offices would be for customer/community engagement; those who could not work at home; and, for

collaboration of teams and of project teams rather than the traditional rows of desks as before. It was likely there would be an even higher proportion of staff based at home visiting offices when needed. In the short term the plan for officers to return to the existing building was being worked on to ensure that it was properly managed to allow for social distancing and maintain staff safety.

Ideally any new structure would be designed to offer charging facilities for cars; and for bikes. Whether it was the right place for buses and taxis was a moot point and one that would need to be explored further.

In response Councillor Luckhurst asked a supplementary question of the Leader , that sought clarification on the time frame and if heat source or hydro energy would be considered for the development on the Riverside House site?

In response Councillor Day explained that any proposals would come forward in line with the climate change emergency declaration and once the review was completed, Members would be informed.

Councillor Kennedy asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property that in view of our declared climate emergency and unanimously agreed Climate Emergency Action Programme which aimed for zero carbon in the Council by 2025, was the application for six social-rent houses on Land East of Turpin Court, a missed opportunity to achieve this standard in the first buildings to be erected by the Council since the Emergency was declared? In view of the proposed Council Tax referendum next year, was it not important that the Council demonstrated its commitment to zero carbon buildings? Would the Council publish quantitative data on performance-in-use carbon emissions using robust methodologies for this development? Would all future planning applications by the District Council for social housing or other buildings be net zero carbon both by design and in use?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property, Councillor Matecki explained that Turpin Court was a pilot scheme which had changed a number of times through the planning process to address the concerns of surrounding neighbours and take account of planning advice. The project aimed to achieve net zero carbon and was using specialist consultants to provide advice and assessed outcomes so that the Council could identify the best product for the future housing programme. Now planning permission had been obtained, Officers would move to the detailed design of the scheme.

The project met a number of aims, such as regenerating a vacant garage site, increasing affordable housing supply and achieving value for money for the HRA which all had to be taken into account when developing new affordable housing.

Councillor Kennedy asked a supplementary question if it would it be possible to set a contract for District Council housing developments that required them to be net zero carbon so the designers had the challenge?

In response Councillor Matecki explained that the aim was to deliver social housing at net zero carbon.

Councillor Boad asked the Leader if he would consider setting up a working party comprised of administration and three opposition parties?

In response the Leader, Councillor Day, explained that how to progress this proposal and the associated work streams would be discussed at the Leadership Coordination Group.

Councillor Boad asked the Finance and Business Portfolio Holder to tell the Council what were the additional costs incurred by this Council following the Government's instruction 'to do whatever is necessary' to tackle issues arising from the Covid-19 pandemic?

In response Councillor, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business, Councillor Hales, explained that it was circa £34.5million at present.

Councillor Boad asked the Finance and Business Portfolio Holder if he could inform Council of the current value of the lost income due to the shut down?

In response Councillor Hales explained that at present it was circa £39million but this excluded income from Everyone Active and any reduction in Council Tax and business rates receipts.

Councillor Boad asked the Finance and Business Portfolio Holder if he could inform the Council of the value of the additional grants received by this Council to directly a) offset these costs, and b) provide support for the Council's lost income?

In response Councillor Hales explained that circa £71million had been received from the Government but after removing the losses, the Council was roughly £2.5 million down, based on current estimates.

Councillor Boad asked the Finance and Business Portfolio Holder that in the light of the additional unplanned expenditure this year, was there a need to review current planned expenditure and introduce an emergency budget for the remainder of 2020/21 which could reduce this year's impact on the 2021/22 budget?

In response Councillor Hales, explained that the Council should be able to balance the budget this year by using the Business Rate volatility reserve but there would be a report to the Executive in August and there would be cross party working to look at a wider strategy coming forward.

Councillor Milton asked the Portfolio Holder of Culture & Neighbourhood as the Castle Farm Leisure Centre project reached a crucial stage could you outline to Council what would be done to keep residents informed?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood, Councillor Grainger explained that there had been significant work to ensure residents and stakeholders had been kept informed on both the Castle Farm and Abbey Fields proposals. For example, there had been two stages of consultation, media briefings, targeted residents and stake holders briefings and bin hanger promoting the consultation to every house in Kenilworth. Lockdown had impacted on work but steps had been taken to arrange a briefing with Kenilworth Town Council, prior to its recent Notice of Motion, and work was underway for a further briefing of residents before the planning applications were submitted. It should also be noted the designs had changed significantly since they were last shared in public.

Councillor Milton asked the Portfolio Holder of Culture & Neighbourhood if she could tell Council when a timescale for the Abbey Fields Management Plan to be produced would be available?

In response Councillor Grainger explained that initial consultation was undertaken in late 2019 with an intended response in February 2020. This was delayed due to

lockdown and a revised programme has been produced. The Ecology survey and the issue of cycling were the primary points that needed time. Cycling was being looked at across the District by the Environment Portfolio Holder and she was leading on the Ecology survey. A further update would be provided to Councillors and stake holders as work progressed in these areas.

Councillor Weber asked the Leader that in view of the tweets by Alexander Hall who was the Conservative Party agent and paid for by the party on 20 June 2020, did he agree they were shocking, inappropriate and insensitive and that Mr Hall should receive E&D training?

In response the Leader, Councillor Day, thanked Councillor Weber for the courtesy of advising that he would be asking a question about the 20 June in respect of Twitter comments made by our local Conservative Agent, Alexander Hall.

The Leader offered all Councillors a clear and unambiguous response that he found the comments, by Mr Hall, utterly offensive and unacceptable; the Conservative Group of Warwick District Councillors was appalled by these Tweets and if Mr Hall had been a member of our group, they would have had no hesitation in removing the whip and explaining that the Council did not tolerate bigotry in any of its forms. He asked Councillors to act together to champion equality and seek out intolerance wherever it was encountered.

The Leader explained that this District was a diverse, well-educated and largely cohesive community; the incident highlighted, that it could not be complacent in protecting our values. It was important to confront and 'call-out' anyone who degraded community diversity (in all forms) whether it be on Twitter or in any place where these corrosive views could ferment.

Councillor R Dickson asked the Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection would you join with me in also praising the magnificent unpaid work done by a range of voluntary community groups across the District during lockdown and what plans existed for the Council to carry out a review of its Covid-19 activities so far so that the District was as fully prepared as possible for any second spike later this year and for any subsequent civil emergency?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection, Councillor Falp, explained that the Council continued to work as part of the Local Resilience Forum to manage the local response to the Covid 19 emergency including planning for possible spikes or other civil emergencies. In addition, the Council was planning and delivering recovery works to support the residents, communities, businesses and our own organisation both in its own right and as part of the wider multi agency arena.

Councillor R Dickson asked the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood and Culture to advise Council when the residents close to Glendale Avenue park in Kenilworth would have the new children's play equipment that, in November 2018, was promised would be delivered by May 2019, more than 12 months ago?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood, Councillor Grainger explained they did not know but would get a written response for all Councillors. (The written response is set out at Appendix 2 to the minutes.)

Councillor Norris asked the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood, if she could provide an update on the status of the Major Contracts tender process?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood, Councillor Grainger explained that a small working party had reviewed the three contracts and two would be awarded in near future. The third contract was being reviewed with further legal advice being taken at this time. Councillors would be provided with updates as soon as possible.

Councillor K Dickson asked the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood when the street information boards and road system changes would be in place and if the contractors manning them would be trained to ensure key workers could get through to those who needed them and lived in the traffic free areas??

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood, Councillor Grainger, replied that the work should be in place within the next week and the contractor would be trained.

Councillor A Dearing asked the Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection when the walking for health walks would restart?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection, Mrs Falp, recognised the impact on all who had been shielding and explained that officers were waiting for guidance on when walks could start again.

Councillor Norris asked the Portfolio Holder for Environment what projects on carbon neutrality were being developed?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Rhead, explained that at present he was reviewing the programme for work with the Climate Change Director because much has changed due to the lockdown. However, it was anticipated that a report would come forward in the next two months with regard to tree planting.

15. **Appointment to Outside Bodies**

The Chairman informed Council of the Executive appointment of Councillor Matecki as substitute representative for all District Councils to West Midlands Employers for 2020/21, as set out on the agenda.

16. **Independent Person for Standards Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor Illingworth, seconded by Councillor Murphy and

Resolved that Belinda Pyke be appointed as Independent Person to the Council under the Localism Act 2011.

The Chairman had agreed to take this as an urgent item to enable the Council to have two Independent Persons in place as soon as possible.

17. **Change to the Scheme of Delegation**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Day and

Resolved that the wording of Executive delegation DS (84) be amended in the Constitution to read as follows: the Head of Development Services has authority to enter into agreements providing for the transfer of funds received, as a result of payments to the Council under the Community

Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (CIL), to an infrastructure provider for a scheme which has been agreed by the Council.

(The Chairman had agreed to take this as an urgent item to ensure that the Constitution reflected the delegated authority in place.)

18. **Licensing and Regulatory Committee**

At the request of the Chairman, the Chairman of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee explained that late last week officers identified that there was not authority in place to undertake consultation on the proposed revisions to the Public Space Protection Orders. This occurred due to a genuine oversight.

On reviewing where the authority rested it was identified that Licensing & Regulatory Committee did not explicitly hold delegated authority to approve consultation on any revisions to existing orders or any new orders or authority to revise any current Public Space Protection Orders.

Officers considered the intention of Council was to provide this authority to Licensing and Regulatory Committee based on the delegation as at present to the Committee. While the current delegation could be interpreted as being suitable they, along with work completed under them, could be subject to challenge if not amended.

Due to the ambiguity it was considered at present the authority to approve going out to consultation or amending any orders rested with Council but confirmation of any new orders rested with the Licensing & Regulatory Committee

The next Council meeting was not until 2 September and there was an understanding that the Council wanted the orders consulted on and in place as soon as possible. There was no reasonable way that a report proposing the draft orders could have come to Council tonight at such short notice.

Therefore, the proposal was that the remit of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee was amended to enable it to undertake this work. If Council approved the change then an urgent meeting of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee would be arranged within the next two weeks to look at the proposals for consultation.

The Council's legal team agreed with this approach and interpretation, which also minimised risk to the Council from any challenge.

Councillor Heath therefore proposed revision to the remit of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee from "All powers and duties of the Council relating to the making of Public Spaces Protection Orders under the Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014" to "All powers and duties of the Council relating to the making, variation or discharge of Public Spaces Protection Orders under the Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014.

This was duly seconded by Councillor Murphy and

Resolved that the responsibility for Licensing & Regulatory Committee be amended to read as follows: All powers and duties of the Council relating to the making, variation or discharge of Public Spaces Protection Orders under the Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014.

(The meeting ended at 8.25pm)

CHAIRMAN
2 September 2020

Minute 14 Leader's and Portfolio Holders' Statements

Joint statement from the Leader of Warwick District & Stratford on Avon District Councils

Taking a fresh look at local government in South Warwickshire

The Stratford on Avon District Council Cabinet met informally with the Executive from Warwick District Council to explore ways to work together for the benefit of the people of South Warwickshire and indeed the wider County.

The purpose of these discussions was to consider the best way for our local government to evolve for the benefit of our residents ahead of an expected white paper in relation to devolution scheduled to be released by government later this year.

We already have successful experience of working together, through the South Warwickshire Health Improvement Partnership; the South Warwickshire Crime reduction partnership and Shakespeare's England, our destination management organisation which we jointly founded to promote our local tourism offer around the World. The two authorities share a number of characteristics and a large proportion of our residents live in one authority area and travel to work in the other.

As we look to the future of our communities across South Warwickshire now is the time to capture the lessons learnt from the current COVID crisis and review the way our Councils could better meet the needs of our residents, taking advantage of new opportunities that are emerging for our communities and businesses.

Local government is playing a significant role in positively addressing the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our way of life. Supporting our businesses and communities as we adjust during this period of uncertainty, has required our Councils to embrace changes to the way we work.

Like so many other organisations at this time, our Councils are looking to be more agile and efficient, to address the emerging economic challenges and capitalising on the issues around the climate emergency, all the while providing the best possible services to you. There are also a number of opportunities which could be developed quickly including jointly procuring contracts; addressing a number of vacancies at senior officer level that could lead to the possibility of sharing posts across the two management teams, as well as the possibility of producing a joint Core Strategy / Local Plan for our communities to secure long-term benefits.

These initial discussions are at an early stage and would need to be subject to formal decisions at both authorities. However, our discussions will hopefully pave the way for a wider dialogue with other local government partners with the view of forming a common position for debate with central government as the anticipated devolution white paper comes forward, which is expected in the Autumn.

Portfolio Holder Development Councillor Cooke

Building Control

Warwick Building Control are in the process of securing the new Development for Kenilworth School and providing the Building Control Service. This is a great achievement as this site was previously awarded to an Independent Approved Inspector. The Scheme is due to change and we were asked if we could assist in the redesign of certain elements of the development in the interest of reducing overall build costs. We were able to promote that we were already working with Developer Morgan Sindall at the new Rugby Radio School Development and that we can remain competitive and practical when it comes to finding design solutions.

Planning Committee Back in Action

The Council successfully delivered the first 2 full virtual Planning Committee meetings last week which included the consideration of some challenging and controversial cases. Whilst the meetings were not without technical challenge, everyone persevered, especially the Chairman who calmly kept his cool during the technical issues and at both meetings decisions were made on all of the items. There were, as is to be expected a number of learning points which have been identified and are being kept under review. Mr Leach feels he might have some solutions for some of the technical issues.

Portfolio Holder Finance & Business Councillor Hales

Phased Market Return Plan

Very positive feedback following the first food-only market in Warwick (23rd May) and Kenilworth (28th). Reviewing how these can be broadened out, following announcement by Prime Minister to re-open all markets in June (including for the sale of non-food and non-essential items). Government is using our work as a case study of good practice.

Local business grant funds scheme

Business Grant Scheme has distributed over £30.5m to more than 2350 local businesses, which is over 92% of the funds that were distributed by central government to us. The Council was amongst the very first local authorities to commence these grants payments, and has continued to be amongst top local authorities in terms of allocating the funding in accordance with the scheme. This is a phenomenal achievement and I would like to thank all the hard work of officers, especially Paul Town.

In regards to the discretionary Business Grant Scheme has had 102 bids & the team are now working through those bids, with aim of funds being distributed as quickly as possible, while ensuring they follow the right audit process. Again many thanks to the team for their hard work & will keep members updated.

Town Centre Reopening

WCC has also prepared some proposals for re-allocating road space to support social distancing and walking/cycling in all three town centres. Current situation is as follows:-

- **Leamington:** Road closures implemented on Sunday 14th and have now been in place for a week. Very regular liaison with BID Leamington. A review meeting with WCC and BID scheduled for Friday 26th.
- **Warwick:** Road closures partially implemented 18th/19th. Remainder due imminently (constrained by (national) shortage of signing etc).
- **Kenilworth:** new proposal (20 mph along Warwick Road) has been proposed by WCC for implementation shortly.
- **All town centres:-**
 - o Marshalls to control street closures are in place for Leamington and Warwick. WDC has agreed that from today (22nd), WDC (Events Team) will take over running of this service.
 - o Streetscape improvements (bunting, banners, pedestrian signage, street dressing, additional cycle parking, etc) are in preparation. Will also include Acre Close in **Whitnash**.
 - o WDC website pages created to support town centre re-opening. More proactive promotional campaign planned once lessons are learned from the initial re-opening.

Teams of ambassadors will be working on the ground in each of the three towns over the next couple of weeks to support public confidence. This includes the Events Team, Rangers and staff from the Deployment Pool. Training of these has taken place in Leamington.

The team are working with other partners, including Shakespeare England & Stratford District Council, with regards to tourism and both Castles have now partially reopened, which is great news for the district.

2019/20 draft Statement of Accounts

The Draft Statement of Accounts was published on website on 18 June. Whilst this is outside of the previous deadline of 31 May, it is well ahead of the new date agreed by the Government of end of August. In view of the current circumstances, and the

challenge of completing the Statement of Accounts promptly, this an excellent achievement. This reflects the hard work of the Accountancy Team, and the contributions that need to be made from officers across the Council.

The Accounts are currently being audited, with the audited Statements of Accounts due to be reported to Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 19 August.

Council Finances

Like all business and local authorities, the Council has been severely impacted financially as a result of the current pandemic. Income streams have been severely hit, notably parking fees, planning fees income from the Spa Centre and Pump Room. In addition council tax and business rates cashflow has been adversely impacted.

The Council has received £1.48m additional grant from the Government towards increased costs and reduced income. However, this one-off funding is totally insufficient to make up for the income losses that the Council is facing.

The overall impact continues to be studied. However, there is total uncertainty over how long the various income streams will be suppressed and when, if ever, they revert to their previous levels as the Country recovers from the pandemic.

Fortunately the Council does have some reserves which it can utilise in the short term to protect its position in 2020/21. However, as these reserves can only be utilised once, using the reserves now will impact on the Council's financial position for the future. Significant savings still remain to be found. Using the reserves in 2020/21 will undoubtedly make the Budget setting process for 2021/22 that much harder. In addition, the Council will have less resources to invest in various projects and initiatives.

Whilst the Council is in a better place financially than many local authorities, we as members will have to face difficult decisions in the future in terms of agreeing Council Budgets and the potential impact on services and projects.

Portfolio Holder Health & Community Protection Councillor Falp

I would like to give thanks to all the Health and Community Protection team for their work during the Covid emergency.

Just a brief update on what they undertook since March. Co-ordinating and working in the Shielding Hub, producing policy within a daily changing regime that was used across the County, supporting our residents who had concerns, helping in awarding grants to Community groups, giving advice to businesses and enforcement. They were an important part of the health agenda and Marianne Rolfe is involved with Test, Track and Trace along with leading on the recovery plans for the District. Oh and they also wherever possible continued with the day job. This was a brilliant team effort and along with many other officers of this Council a credit to the District.

I would like to inform members that the CCTV project upgrade that had been on hold due to Covid and Falcons will commence again in July. The bell tower will not be touched until it is clear the Falcons have flown the nest. While there was a delay to the project we are now looking forward to progressing as fast as we can while still allowing for the special circumstances.

I know a number of you have had issues with residents reporting rat infestations. Can I just inform the Council that the statutory duty we have is to inform land owners they have a rat problem and that they need to deal with it. That includes District Council land and we employ a private firm to deal with our land. We would then take the land owners to court if they failed to comply. We have only one officer who gives advice and if he can, will visit the property/properties affected. There has been no charge but we did bring a paper to Scrutiny to look to start to charge for rat treatment. We currently charge for all other pest control. Visits have not been possible during the Covid crisis and a full risk assessment will be undertaken before we can consider the return of any visits.

Portfolio Holder Housing and Property Services Councillor Matecki

Firstly, I would like to take the opportunity to thank those officers who, on behalf of the Council, have worked so hard to ensure that all rough sleepers were offered accommodation to enable them to be safe during this Coronavirus Pandemic. I would also like to thank the staff of the County Council, voluntary sector and businesses, all of who have gone above and beyond to provide support, meals and goods to those coming off the streets.

Our next goal is to keep rough sleeping in our District a thing of the past. Officers have already found permanent accommodation for 8 former rough sleepers, another 6 are in the process of being matched for their new homes. The officers are now working to find more settled accommodation for the remaining 40.

Next I would like to report that at Planning Committee on 17 June 2020, Members resolved to grant planning permission for Council-led affordable housing at land East of Turpin Court, Leamington Spa. This allows the Council to deliver on its ambitions to develop affordable homes to address the District's need, whilst progressing toward the Council's wider strategy for carbon neutrality. The development will provide two 1-bedroom bungalows and four 2-bedroom properties along with associated infrastructure including electric charge points, plot-specific cycle storage and accessible parking bays.

The design of the buildings seeks to diversify the type of homes built in the District both in design and construction. The homes will be built using timber structurally insulated panels, produced by Innovare Systems Ltd. This partnership means that the new homes will be manufactured and built within the District, adopting modern methods of construction to deliver energy efficient, spacious homes of a modern design that strive toward net carbon zero.

Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood & Culture Councillor Grainger

As you can imagine in this ever-changing situation has kept our Officers in Culture, Amenities and Neighbourhood Services fully occupied, not just with their normal WDC work now taking place from the new environment of their homes but for taking on many extra, varied and often very challenging new covid related activities

they have proved to be a fantastic team of which I'm very proud. I would like to thank everyone one of them for stepping up.

I'd also like to thank our contractors who have had to review and change their working methods to accommodate new restrictions but we got our public toilets open ahead of most LA's and apart from two weeks kept a full refuse and recycling service to our residents.

So far we have re-opened the boats on the Avon, the park cafes for take away drinks, food and ice creams, the fun golf in St Nicholas park, the bowling greens, the skate parks and as I'm sure you've all seen that our tennis courts are very busy, our car parks have been free during lockdown and remain so until 1st August. Officer are now busily trying to find extra space and time to accommodate the many local football teams who can now train not easy when school sites are still not available. With every Government announcement relaxing the lockdown our Officers are presented with a new set of issues to accommodate social distancing etc.

This week's announcements certainly came with some surprises as from the 4th July cinemas, museums, libraries and art galleries can open (we were expecting Gyms!) and David Guilding's team will be working as quickly as they can to open our culture offer to residents at the Pump Rooms. The new leaseholder of the Pump Room Café p should also relaunch toward the middle of July.

And form the 4th we can thankfully remove the tape from all play equipment and adult gyms!!!

During all this period of uncertainty the only real issue has been the rather sad instances of people leaving their litter for others to clear up. Thanks to the members of the public who have alerted us to the real problem's areas particularly in Newbold Comyn we are doing our best to keep the parks litter free – but everyone is responsible not just the council – please use a bin or better still take your litter home!!

While all this has been going on work has continued to on our major projects and we hope to bring to planning the application for both Castle Farm and Abbey Fields Leisure facilities in early autumn. There has been short delay due to the Covid situation and to ensure that final consultation with KTC and residents goes ahead as planned before submission.

Finally, this is the last week to have your say for both the Newbold Comyn and Country Park consultations; if you haven't yet completed the consultation document then please visit our website consultation closes 30th June - your views do matter

Minute 14 - Questions to the Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holders

Response from Councillor Grainger, portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood to Councillor Dickson, regarding Glendale Avenue Play Area, circulated after the meeting.

"There have been two Public Amenity Reserve schemes; Glendale Avenue and Weston Under Wetherley play areas which have been delayed out of the 6 in the original programme. Both projects have slipped due to the loss of officers in the Green Spaces team over the last 18 months. We have a new Officer taking up post and joining the Greenspace team on 13July and I have asked for the delivery of these two projects to be high on her priority as soon as she is settled in. I have also asked that local councillors are kept fully informed of the progress and expected implementation dates!"

*Councillor Moira-Ann Grainger
Portfolio Holder for Culture & Neighbourhood"*

**Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee
End of Term Report 2019/20****Chair's Introduction**

It has been a privilege to have been the Chair of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for the past year. Scrutiny is a statutory responsibility. At its best, it ensures that all Councillors and the public can be reassured by the effectiveness of the constructive challenge and questioning of policies brought forward by the Executive, that business cases are sound, and that value for money is at the forefront of decision-making. The Committee is therefore responsible for holding the Executive to account, and for examining the risks and resources in the delivery of services and amenities to residents in the District. Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee also has the responsibility of providing assurance on the processes and outcomes of internal audit and the identification of corporate business risks and their management. Internal audit not only tests assurance but also offers a window on the often invisible but vital work of many Council departments. Taken as a whole, the work of the Committee provides a system-wide map, through the lens of finance and risk, of how well the Council is performing. It also approves the annual accounts and works closely with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the finance team, and the external auditors, Grant Thornton, to that end.

A welcome characteristic of the work of the Committee this past year has been the cooperative approach that it has adopted with the senior officers and the Executive in discharging its responsibilities. The Committee is determinedly apolitical and also determinedly independent in coming to its views. It is to be welcomed that those views have been taken seriously by the Executive and have led to the improvement of policies and decisions it has wished to adopt. At its heart, the Committee has securing the best outcome for the Council as a whole.

The spirit of cooperation has been no more evident than in the work on the climate emergency and the resulting action plan. We have also welcomed the excellent work that led to the accounts being prepared on time in 2019, following the difficulties encountered with meeting the statutory deadline in the previous year. Dialogue between members and between the Chair, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, and the Head of Finance, and the Audit and Risk Manager, between meetings, have also contributed to the deeper spirit of cooperation and consultation that I have wished to promote.

Nonetheless, the Committee has also begun to reflect on how it can find time for a more strategic and thematic reflection on the matters for which it is responsible. That reflection was halted by the lockdown in the light of the Covid-19 emergency. It is however a matter to which the Committee will return in order that it can continue to improve the way in which it is able to provide oversight in the interests of the District's residents.

I wish to thank the members of the Committee, the officers and all Portfolio Holders for the open and constructive engagement they have brought to our work. And to express my and the Committee's gratitude to Grant Thornton, our external auditors, for their essential work and for bringing a wider external perspective to the District's financial audits.

Councillor Jonathan Nicholls

Items considered by the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee 2019/20

Audit Items

2019:

Internal Audit Quarter 4 2018/19 Progress Report
Internal Audit Annual Report 2018/19
Annual Governance Statement 2018/19
2018/19 Annual Treasury Management Report
Treasury Management Activity Report for the period 1 October 2018 to 31 March 2019
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Statement 2019-20
Finance – Service Area Update
Statement of Accounts and Audit Findings Report 2018/19
Internal Audit Quarter 1 2019/20 Progress Report
Risk Management Annual Report
National Fraud Initiative Update
Corporate Fraud Update
Treasury Management Activity Report for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019
Managing Securities in Council Contracts Update Report
Annual Audit Letter 2018/19
Internal Audit Quarter 2 2019/20 Progress Report

2020:

External Audit Progress Report

Scrutiny Items

2019:

Significant Business Risk Register
Update on Action Plan following Review of Closure of Accounts
Finance – Service Area Update
Housing & Property – Service Area Update
Update on Action Plan following Review of Closure of Accounts
Neighbourhood Services – Service Area Update
Pump Room Gardens Restoration Project
Procurement Progress update – annual for financial year 2019/2020
Significant Business Risk Register
Development Portfolio – Service Review
Closure of Accounts Review
Summary of the new Council house programme purchased or constructed since 2015
Environment & Business Portfolio – Service Review
Financial implications of the delayed HQ relocation

2020:

Strategic Leadership / Chief Executive – Service Area Update
Significant Business Risk Register

Routine Items

Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from the Executive

Executive Items Considered by the Committee

(This section details the comments and recommendations made by the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee to the Executive on reports being considered by the Executive. The decisions made at the Executive meeting have been detailed if the decision was different to the recommendations in the report.)

9 July 2019:

Commonwealth Games 2022 (CG 2022) – CWLEP funding bid

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Local Football Facilities Projects

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Councillor Grainger, thanked the Scrutiny Committee for the very good questions raised ahead of the meeting and proposed the report as laid out.

Project Officers – Cultural Services

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Grainger, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, reminded Members that there were some very big projects coming forward, and as one project was expected to finish, another one would be coming along.

The recommendations in the report were approved.

WDC Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Review

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Service Area Plans for 2019/20 & Fit For the Future Change Programme Update

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

New contract terms for Internal Health and Safety IT system – AssessNet

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection, Councillor Falp, emphasised that the Council was receiving a very good deal and thanked officers for all their hard work in securing this offer.

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Final Accounts 2018/19

The Committee received an addendum to the report that updated the table detailing the significant variations within the general fund so it includes the percentage or variation.

The Finance & Audit Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Recording & Broadcasting of Council meetings

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Significant Business Risk Register

The Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

The Significant Business Risk Register attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted; and the emerging risks identified in section 10 of the report, were noted

Update on Action Plan following Review of Closure of Accounts

The Committee received a briefing from the Council auditors (Grant Thornton) regarding an emerging issue for the potential increase in pension liability for the Council, as the result of a national case regarding public sector pensions. There is to be a formal conversation with officers on the potential need for the 2018/19 Accounts to be amended to reflect this before they are formally signed off by the Committee and Audit at the end of July.

The Committee took the opportunity to thank officers and Grant Thornton for their work completing the accounts on time.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Affordable housing purchase – Montague Road, Warwick

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Compulsory Purchase Order – Land at Warwick Road

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

20 August 2019:

Budget Review to 30th June 2019

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Warwick District Leisure Development Programme – Kenilworth Facilities
The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

In response to a question from Councillors, officers explained that they were aware of the traffic and parking situation at Castle Farm, and this remained a main concern for the development. Officers were committed to involving the local community in the plans as they emerged, at both pre-application stage and through a consultation process.

Councillor Grainger, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, thanked residents, the RKL Group, Councillors and officers for all their hard work and input. She emphasised that there was a need for additional indoor swimming capacity in the District, and that the proposals would benefit a large variety of residents and meet their different needs year-round. The Council had every intention to keep residents involved in the development at Castle Farm as much as possible and as early as possible. Officers produced a very high level piece of work regarding cold water swimming, and that would also be considered.

Councillor Grainger proposed the report as laid out, with the addition of a note regarding the Council's support should Kenilworth Town Council wish to bring forward any proposals for a lido.

Relocation of Kenilworth School

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report, with a request that the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) will request of ARUP, the developers, a clear description of the building design standards they are working towards, in view of the District's Climate Emergency.

Response from the Executive:

In response to the comments received from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee, the Portfolio Holder for Development Services, Councillor Cooke, proposed the report as laid out, subject to an additional recommendation 2.4, to read: *"2.4 That Executive recognises the need to make the scheme deliverable and supports the ambitions of the school, however, it would like some reassurance regarding the building design standards and requests that a meeting be arranged with the Portfolio Holders for Environment & Business and Development Services and the trustees of the school."*

Risk Management Annual Report 2018/19

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Update on Action Plan following Review of Closure of Accounts

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

2nd Warwick Sea Scouts

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report. Further details were provided in the confidential Summary of Comments.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved. Further details were provided in the confidential minutes of the Executive meeting.

PSP Warwick Limited Liability Partnership

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report. Further details were provided in the confidential Summary of Comments.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved. Further details were provided in the confidential minutes of the Executive meeting.

26 September 2019:

Fees and Charges

The Committee noted that Everyone Active had 18 core prices on which they had held the price of 7 last year and had informally indicated that 4 of these would be held again this year. It was also noted that officers would seek a contract amendment, with Everyone Active, so that the proposed fees could be considered earlier.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Significant Business Risk Register

The Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Affordable Housing Purchase – Spring Lane, Radford Semele

The Finance & Audit Committee noted the report and that the scheme is self-funding.

For the sake of clarity, the Committee requested a report at its next meeting to confirm the number of new Council houses, purchased or constructed since 2015, the cost of these and the money available within the HRA budget for such projects. The report should also detail the number of house types (i.e. social, affordable, or shared ownership) within each scheme.

The Committee also took the opportunity to thank Mr Bruno for his work with the Council and wished him well for the future.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Regeneration of the Leper Hospital Site, Saltisford, Birmingham Road, Warwick (St Michael's Chapel and Master House)

The Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Catering & Events Concessions Contract – Royal Pump Rooms and Jephson Gardens
Glasshouse – update report

The Committee noted the recommendation and that they would like to see a report following the first year of trading of the new arrangements.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

12 November 2019:

Housing Services Redesign – Additional Budget Requirement

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Budget Review to 30 September 2019 and Other Financial Matters

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Hales, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, passed his thanks to Members of the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee and thanked Councillor Nicholls, the Chairman, for his hard work.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020-2021

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Climate Change Emergency Action Plan Update

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Rhead, the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Business, emphasised that the report was only the very beginning of this work, and that Members would need to make a great resolve and prioritise this project in spite of the cost involved, details of which would be brought forward to the Executive in February 2020. He thanked the Scrutiny Committees for their very valuable work and then proposed the recommendations in the report and addendum as laid out.

Relocation of Kenilworth Wardens

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report but noted the risks concerning the possible sustainability and long term financial stability of Kenilworth Wardens Limited and asked the Executive that these risks be looked at carefully in the future.

Response from the Executive:

The Executive asked the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) to seek reassurance from Kenilworth Wardens Limited regarding its governance arrangements, in particular, regarding the risks concerning the possible sustainability and long term financial stability of Kenilworth Wardens Limited.

Creative Quarter – Conclusion of Phase 1 and next steps

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Review of Final Accounts 2018/19

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Asset Management Strategy

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

17 December 2019:

Council Loans Policy

The Committee suggested to Executive that (1) they amend the Policy so that Officers can refuse loan requests that do not meet the criteria; (2) the policy clearly states it is for capital schemes only; and (3) there were some minor wording amendments that the Deputy Chief Executive would feedback to the Executive.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Hales, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, accepted the suggestions from the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and asked officers to include these changes in the final draft of the proposal. He thanked Councillor Nicholls, Councillor Syson and officers for all their work on this project and proposed a report as laid out.

General Fund Base Budgets 2020/21

The Committee noted the report and the addendum with regard to Shakespeare England.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Base Budgets 2020/21

Committee noted the report and that paragraph 8.2.4 is included by error and should not be considered.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Matecki proposed the report as laid out, subject to the removal of paragraph 8.2.2 in the report.

Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme (RUCIS) Changes

The Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Grainger thanked the Finance team for bringing the report forward and emphasised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would continue to play a big role in making sure that the funds were distributed evenly in both rural and urban areas.

Councillor Hales, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, proposed the report as laid out.

Relocation of Kenilworth School – playing pitch strategy and land purchase

The Committee were appreciative of the assurances from the Deputy Chief Executive in respect of the current governance structure for the project and the opportunities this project provided for the Council. The Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Finance Systems Replacement

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report and recommended to the Executive that a non-Executive member should be on the Project Board for the report.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Hales, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, supported the recommendation from the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and proposed the report as laid out, subject to an additional recommendation 2.3 to read, “a non-Executive Member be appointed on the Project Board for the report”.

Acquisitions and Disposals of Land and Property North of Gallows Hill, Warwick District Council

The Committee noted the report and that there was a known error with current Land Registry Certificate that Officers were in the process of resolving.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

11 February 2020:

2020/21 General Fund Budget and Council Tax

The 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 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.

Response from the Executive:

On behalf of the Executive and in answer to the recommendation from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee and questions from the Group Leaders, Councillor Day advised that it had always been the Executive's view that the cost of the referendum should come from the New Homes Bonus. He thanked the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee for the comments made and for noticing this error in the report.

In answer to the concerns raised by the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee, the Chief Executive reminded Members that when the Programme Director for Climate Change role was initially proposed, the intention had been to fund it from the New Homes Bonus. However, in the meantime, further proposals were made in relation to the council tax referendum. The Chief Executive reminded Members that the new post was specifically for climate change.

Councillor Hales, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, thanked Councillor Nicholls for his comments and support. He reminded Members of the significant savings that the Council would need to make over the coming years. He then proposed the report, subject to the amendments in the addendum and following changes:

- a) the amendment proposed by Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee, that the cost of the referendum should come from the New Homes Bonus and the proposed allocation to the service transformation reserve for the next year should be reduced by the same amount; and
- b) an amendment to fund the Programme Director for Climate Change role for 2020/21 financial year from the New Homes Bonus and the proposed allocation to the service transformation reserve for the next year should be reduced by the same amount.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2020/21 and Housing Rents
The Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Warwick District Climate Emergency Action Programme

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

Response from the Executive:

Councillors Falp, Grainger, Hales and Matecki emphasised the benefits of the cross-party collaboration and thanked officers and the Portfolio Holder for what had been achieved in a short period of time.

Councillor Rhead, the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Business, saw this as the most important decision taken in his years of service as a District Councillor, and emphasised how essential it was to develop a good communications strategy. He then proposed the report as laid out.

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

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Significant Business Risk Register

The 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.

Response from the Executive:

Councillor Day welcomed the comments from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee especially regarding Risk 16, and asked that this be changed with immediate effect. He then proposed the report as laid out.

Purchase of Land for Affordable Housing – Europa Way, Warwick

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee
End of Term Report 2019/20****Chair's Introduction**

Traditionally, scrutiny provides the main opportunity for opposition members to influence the administration's policies. However, this year, there has been a much more collaborative approach. This was particularly evident regarding the Climate Emergency actions, which have been a major part of the council's developmental work. With all parties involved in the Climate Emergency Working Party, scrutiny has focused on detail and implementation rather than the overall direction of travel.

This collaborative approach was also evident by Executive seriously engaging with scrutiny's comments and recommendations (see below); almost always they either agreed the recommendations or decided on sensible alternative actions. Also, not in the summary below, are the numerous questions raised by groups calling-in executive items that led to changes to reports prior to the scrutiny meetings. Although active and engaged during meetings, I would have preferred more items called in by members of the administration.

During the year, I've become aware of the desirability of several procedural changes. These include greater transparency regarding public speaking to the committee. I welcome involvement from members of the public as they may have expertise and can provide powerful testimony. The anti-Semitism discussion on 11th February was greatly helped in this way. Similarly, on 20th August a carer of a wheelchair user graphically described the challenges facing disabled users of the council's public conveniences. With committee services and the chair of F&A, we have agreed that residents need to request to speak by noon the previous day; but I would like this to be known more widely. Going forwards, for contentious issues, O&S may proactively wish to seek opposing views from residents. In the first few meetings there were very late adjustments to the proposed order of agenda items. Again, with committee services and the F&S chair, this has been tightened.

Unlike most recent years, O&S did not form any task and finish groups; it did not seem appropriate for O&S to initiate further developments with the substantial additional work required of officers associated with the Climate Emergency. Now with COVID-19 dominating all our lives, the task of scrutiny over the next few months appears to be to focus on the council's response to various aspects of the pandemic as well as addressing the climate emergency. This is a substantial task as: the council is rapidly adopting new ways of working; some council officers are under immense pressure; and the council is preparing for post COVID-19 recovery including major projects of its own.

At the start of the year, all parties agreed to consider changing governance arrangements to enable greater involvement of 'backbench' members in determining council policy. This would have a major impact on O&S going forwards. However, various reasons including the general election delayed these discussions, so formal implementation cannot be before May 2021. In the year up to that date, I'm keen that shadow portfolio groups have greater scrutiny roles and that O&S takes a more strategic approach focussing on major issues.

Cont....

I would like to thank all officers who have supported O&S and guided me through the required procedures. Also thanks go to the officers and portfolio holders who have presented written evidence and spoken to the committee. Their careful engagement and willingness to consider alternatives have made this a productive year.

Councillor Ian Davison

Items considered by Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2019/20

Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme Items

2019:

Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Affordable Housing Delivery

Review of Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Approach

Finance – Service Area Update

Review of Night Noise Service

Review of Housing Services – Service Area Update

Shared Environmental Enforcement with Rugby Borough Council

Public Convenience Review Timetable

Neighbourhood Services – Service Review

Development Portfolio – Service Review

Summary of the role, responsibilities and performance of the South Warwickshire

Community Safety Partnership (SWCSP)

Green Space Quality Audit

Environment and Business Portfolio – Service Review

Update on the Council's Brexit Preparations

Review of Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2018/19

2020:

Chief Executive's Office – Service Area Review

Routine Items

Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from the Executive

Executive Items Considered by the Committee

(This section details the comments and recommendations made by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to the Executive on reports being considered by the Executive. The decisions made at the Executive meeting have been detailed if the decision was different to the recommendations in the report.)

9 July 2019:

Affordable housing purchase – Montague Road, Warwick

The Committee welcomed the report for a number of reasons but primarily because it was a way of achieving a reduction in the Council's waiting list.

WDC Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Review

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Plastic Free Resolution for Leamington & Warwick and plastics Policy Update

The Committee welcomed the report and supported the recommendation and urged that speedy progress be made to go further. The Committee also recommended that the words "plastic free" were replaced with "single-use plastic free".

Response from the Executive:

The recommendation from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to replace the words "plastic free" with "single-use plastic free" was rejected. Instead, an additional recommendation was approved, to read *"authority is delegated to the Head of Health & Community Protection in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Health & Community Protection and Business & Environment, and Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to agree on a suitable re-wording."*

This was because the proposal from the Committee would have required significant changes to the report and instead, this additional recommendation would enable a dialogue to take place in order to ensure the aim was achieved.

Commonwealth Games 2022 (CG 2022) – CWLEP funding bid

The Committee welcomed the report and supported the recommendations.

20 August 2019:

Warwick District Leisure Development Programme – Kenilworth Facilities

A motion to support the recommendations in the report resulted in a tied vote, with the Chair using his casting vote to abstain. With no further motion forthcoming, the Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Note: The Executive would support and encourage Kenilworth Town Council if it was minded to consider putting forward a proposal for an outdoor lido in Kenilworth.

Newbold Comyn – Update and Approach to Engagement plus confidential Appendices

The Committee unanimously supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an amendment to recommendation 2.1 in the report, to add at the end of the sentence *"to deliver the greatest public benefit"*.

26 September 2019:

Draft Business Strategy 2019-2023

The Committee noted the report. It was felt that this was a positive, high level report and that more details would be required.

Catering and Events Concessions Contract – Royal Pump Rooms and Jephson Gardens Glasshouse – Update Report

The Committee noted the report

Fees and Charges 2020/21

The Committee did not scrutinise the report, other than the pest control charges in appendix A (page 39 in the report). The Committee asked the

Portfolio Holder to confirm that the charging reductions applied for mice infestation would also apply to the new charge for rat infestation.

If this was not the case, the Committee formally recommended to the Executive that the reductions should be applied.

Charges for Lifeline services – new tenants of designated properties

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

Response from the Executive:

Recommendation 2.1 in the report was approved. Recommendation 2.2 had been withdrawn prior to the meeting.

Affordable Housing Purchase – Spring Lane, Radford Semele

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and recommended that the Council determined the costs involved to improve the EPC energy rating to category A.

Regeneration of the Leper Hospital Site, Saltisford, Birmingham Road, Warwick (St Michael's Chapel and Master's House)

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report but recommended that the Council determined if energy efficiency improvements could be made and whether there would be ways to recover the costs of this.

Project Initiation Document for the replacement of various software

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report. The Committee recommended that the Project Manager referred to in 2.2 should review the PID and advise how the Overview & Scrutiny Committee could assist the Project Board through an oversight role.

Response from the Executive:

The Executive endorsed the recommendation of Overview & Scrutiny Committee as they recognised this would be a key project and the skills the Committee had would add value to the project.

The recommendations in the report were approved and along with the recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

12 November 2019:

Further technical work relating to Land East of Kenilworth Development

The Committee supported the recommendations. With the support of the Portfolio Holder, the Committee asked that when the additional highway study was completed if the view of the Head of Development Service was that further public consultation was not required, this should be a matter that the Executive took to enable public scrutiny of the decision.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an amendment to recommendation 2.3, to add at the end of the sentence: *"but if the decision is not to proceed to consultation, a further report will be presented to Executive setting out the reasons and seeking approval for the Design Brief to be confirmed as currently written."*

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – Request to Consult
The Committee noted the report.

Housing Services Redesign – Additional Budget Requirement

The Committee noted the report and agreed that their monitoring of service benefit would be via the annual Portfolio Holder report to the Scrutiny Committee.

Climate Change Emergency Action Plan Update

The Committee welcomed the report on the initial work, the steps being taken and the proposed action plan. The Committee asked the Executive to arrange a presentation to all Councillors on the work being undertaken and proposed when the action plan came forward.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report and addendum were approved. The Executive accepted the comment from Overview & Scrutiny Committee to add recommendation 2.13, to read: *"A presentation to all Councillors be arranged at a suitable date on the work being undertaken when the action plan comes forward"*.

Creative Quarter – Conclusion of Phase 1 and next steps

The Committee unanimously supported the recommendations in the report.

Affordable Housing SPD

The Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an amendment to recommendation 2.1 to replace "for an eight-week public consultation" with "for a twelve-week public consultation".

17 December 2019:

Finance Systems Replacement

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:

The recommendation from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee was approved. The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an additional recommendation 2.3 (recommended by F&A) to read, "a non-Executive Member be appointed on the Project Board for the report".

11 February 2020:

Adopting a Definition of Anti-Semitism

The 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 Anti-Semitic to criticise the Government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest Anti-Semitic intent; and
2. It is not Anti-Semitic 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 Anti-Semitic intent.

Response from the Executive:

The Executive approved the recommendations in the report but included the two caveats in the definition recommended by Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Warwick District Climate Emergency Action Programme

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and urged the Executive to progress them."

Items considered by Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2019/20

Health Scrutiny Work Programme Items

2019:

Refreshed Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2019-20

Review of Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2018/19

Annual Status Report – Air Quality Management

2020:

Health and Wellbeing Aspects in Private Sector Housing

Physical Activity Promotion and Development

Routine Items

Review of the Work Programme and Forward Plan

Health & Wellbeing Outside Bodies Updates (Standing Agenda Items):

- Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee; and
- Warwickshire County Council Health & Wellbeing Board

Executive

Excerpt of minutes of the meeting held remotely on Monday 13 July 2020, which was broadcast live via the Council's YouTube Channel.

Present: Councillors Day (Leader), Cooke, Falp, Grainger, Hales, Matecki and Rhead

Also present: Councillors: Boad (Liberal Democrat Group Observer), Nicholls (Chair of Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee); Milton (Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee); and Davison (Green Group Observer)

Part 1

(Items upon which a decision by Council was required)

10. **Review of Local Government Structure in Warwickshire**

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive seeking formal endorsement to provide the necessary decisions in relation to the joint statement that was issued by the present Leader of the Council and the Leader of Stratford District Council on 24 June 2020.

It was clear that the Government was committed to a white paper that considered the development of devolution across England. This white paper was expected to have significant implications for local government structures, especially in two-tier areas, and was expected to be released in the autumn of 2020. In order for the Councils to influence this debate, it was considered that a jointly commissioned review of the existing and potential options for local government structures within Warwickshire should be undertaken urgently.

In addition to this review and ahead of its findings, it was identified that there were a number of opportunities for closer working with Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) that could be explored in order to assist with the financial pressures that both authorities were facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 24 June 2020, a joint statement entitled "Taking a fresh look at local government in South Warwickshire" was issued by the Leader of the Council and the Leader of SDC. This followed an informal meeting of the Cabinet from Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Executive from Warwick District Council. A copy of the statement was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. The main purpose of these discussions was to consider the impact of the anticipated white paper in relation to devolution that was announced within the Queen's speech before Christmas. It was widely reported that in considering the devolution and "levelling-up" agenda, there would need to be reform of local government, especially in two-tier areas. It was expected that the white paper would be issued in the Autumn of 2020.

The collective view from the Leaders was that in order to ensure that Warwick District Council was prepared and able to influence the debate on

this issue within Warwickshire, that work needed to commence on undertaking a review of the local government structures within the County. It was proposed that this review should be jointly commissioned by all of the Districts and Boroughs, the County Council and the Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Councils (WALC), (representing parish and town Councils) and that the results should then be used for submissions to central government in proposing any changes necessary. This needed to be supported by regular communications with all Councils and with the community.

In addition to the opportunities surrounding future devolution, there were also a number of other reasons why this was an appropriate time to undertake such a review, including:

- the tremendous pressures on services faced by all tiers of local government from communities wanting improvements in public services and in the management of place;
- the tremendous financial pressures faced by all tiers of local government over the previous 10 years and exacerbated by the COVID-19 emergency, potentially compromising the delivery of public services;
- the erosion of the connection between people's association with a sense of place and the span of democratic arrangements in place governing them;
- the continued lack of clarity, transparency and democratic accountability for local community leadership between the tiers of local government to the detriment of local communities; and
- the barriers between local government and other public agencies that prevented effective action to address important local issues.

It was expected that in undertaking the review, each of the potential options for local government reorganisation needed to be assessed against jointly agreed criteria, which was expected to include areas such as the need to:

- reflect and deliver a clearly understood sense of place;
- provide clarity of local community political leadership to local people, to government and to other public agencies for a clearly understood sense of local place;
- offer clarity of vision reflecting community ambitions for a clearly understood sense of place;
- deliver effective and efficient arrangements for the provision of quality services whether directly, indirectly or shared, to achieve the set vision for community ambitions for a clearly understood sense of place; and
- deliver wider improvement changes to public sector service delivery arrangements for the local community for a clearly understood sense of place.

Whilst it was up to the review to identify what options needed to be considered for such a review, it was likely that there were at least four that would need to be fully evaluated including:

1. Status Quo – no changes from the present political/administrative arrangements;

2. Creation of a South Warwickshire "Super-District" – this option would have seen the full merger of Stratford-on-Avon DC and Warwick DC, but would still operate in a two-tier environment;
3. Single Council Unitary Warwickshire - the creation of a Warwickshire wide unitary authority; and
4. Two Council Unitary Warwickshire – in relation to this option government had already stated "*any new unitary Council's population would be expected to be in excess of 300,000*". The current population of Warwickshire was estimated to be 571,000 (mid 2018) and by 2030 would be in excess of 600,000, and therefore would lend itself to a maximum of two authority areas.

In relation to all of the above options, the potential for changing role of town and parish councils needed to feature. Likewise, Members also needed to be aware that changes in the local government sector could have and should have presaged changes in linked public sector areas such as health and social care; community safety; and in supporting the local economy/training.

Attached at Appendix 2 to the report was a Briefing Paper in relation to "*Local government in England; structures*" which was prepared for the House of Commons library. This was a useful analysis of the options and issues that needed to be considered under such a review.

At the time of writing the report, the cost of undertaking the review of options and the research with the local community had not been determined but an update would be given by the time of the meeting. In addition, it was unclear how many of the other local authorities would wish to participate in the review. However, authority was requested to proceed with the wider dialogue on this issue and if successful, then to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council to participate in the review with the Leaders of the other Borough/District Councils, the County Council and representatives of WALC. Within Warwick District Council, it was suggested that the Leadership Co-ordinating Group which brought the Executive and the Leaders of all the political groups of the Council together, should act as the Council's internal steering group for the review and the work with SDC. This governance activity would be enabled by informal senior officer meetings and Leader/Deputy Leader meetings.

The brief for the review needed to be agreed and procured as soon as was possible, and it was suggested that the brief for the review should be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leadership Co-ordinating Group, on behalf of Warwick District Council.

The joint statement also identified that there were a number of joint working arrangements already in place between Stratford on Avon District Council and Warwick District Council, namely:

- the South Warwickshire Health Improvement Partnership;
- the South Warwickshire Crime Reduction Partnership; and
- Shakespeare's England, our destination management organisation which was jointly founded to promote our local tourism.

In addition to these joint partnerships, there was also a shared Business Rates team and the Councils also shared an Information Governance Officer post. Given the financial pressures that both authorities faced as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the discussions between the Cabinet/Executives also considered potential areas where joint working could be extended including:

- i) Senior Management Team – across the two authorities, there were four vacancies at Senior Management Team level. It was suggested that proposals should be developed to take advantage of these vacancies across the two authorities and share a number of specific posts. Whilst at least at this stage, two discrete Senior Management Teams could be maintained, the financial benefits could be shared across the two authorities. The sharing of posts in this way could be achieved through s113 of the Local Government Act 1972. These would be interim arrangements until the review of local government structures was completed/implemented. A further report would be presented on the detail of this if agreed.
- ii) Joint Contracts – both Councils had contracts of significant value which were approaching retendering. It was suggested that through joint working, single tenders could be placed to ensure that the greatest economies of scale and good service across South Warwickshire could be achieved. This would have both preserved service provision and would also have helped to reduce costs during the current challenging financial environment. It was also expected that further efficiencies could be achieved through the joint management of contractors by each authority. A further report would be presented on the detail of this, if agreed.
- iii) Joint Spatial Planning – Within the Coventry and Warwickshire sub region, there had been extensive ongoing discussions about developing a sub-regional spatial framework. Both Councils were part of that discussion. Whilst there seemed to be general agreement, there was no agreed proposal to consider and implement. Meanwhile, both SDC and WDC were committed to reviewing their respective Local Plans/Core Strategies in 2021, though in reality, preparatory work needed to start immediately. Given the close relationship between the plans, as demonstrated by the extensive joint work undertaken in the development of the existing agreed Local Plan/Core Strategy proposals; it made sense to undertake the planned reviews at the same time as one co-ordinated effort.

It was suggested therefore that agreement should be given in principle for the reviews to be undertaken jointly and that a detailed report should be brought forward to Cabinet/Executive as soon as was possible, setting out the proposed programme and the governance of the work, both from a Members and an officer perspective. Of necessity, this may have also covered other work that each Council's respective policy terms may also have undertaken. Such statutory work could have been dovetailed with a sub-regional framework, should that have proceeded. Given the strong shared economic geography between Stratford-On-Avon and Warwick DC, the proposal for a joint plan would not only have delivered significant savings

in relation to the commissioning of the evidence base, there would have also been savings through the examination stage by the Planning inspector.

Whilst the areas above needed to be developed further, it was proposed that given the need to provide capacity at Senior Management Team, the principle of sharing posts with SDC should be adopted and that a business case should be developed as a matter of urgency which, if positive, would be subject to Employment Committee approval. It would be necessary for Council to approve the principle of extending the use of s113 agreements to SDC.

In terms of alternative options, the Executive could have decided not to endorse the statement or follow through on the proposed actions. However, such a response would have left the Council and its citizens exposed, pending the White Paper in the autumn.

The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report at their joint meeting.

They highlighted the Council needed to keep focused on the overall strategic advantages of working with Stratford and from possible local government reorganisation. Therefore, it needed to be mindful, on this twin track approach, that the project on working with Stratford did not pre-determine the possible shape of local government reorganisation or preclude possible working with other boroughs and districts where that would be beneficial for residents and provide value for money.

During the meeting, the Chief Executive informed Members of two additional recommendations to read:

"That £35,000 is provided from the Service Transformation Reserve to fund the Council's contribution to the joint study and for additional support in respect of communications"; and

"That the Cabinet of the County Council is asked to reconsider its informal decision to commission a separate business case for a single unitary Council and instead to participate in the joint study with the other Borough and District Councils to look at all options and to listen to the public's views".

This was because the estimated cost of the joint study was circa £100,000 and it was expected that all the other five Districts would participate, meaning that Warwick District Council's cost would be circa £25,000. It was also proposed that some additional external resource should be sought to help to deal with communications on this matter and £10,000 was sought to achieve that assistance.

In relation to the second additional recommendation, the County Council had been invited to participate in the joint study. However, whilst initially accepting, the Cabinet made an informal decision to commission a business case for a single unitary Council. This appeared to have been made without any reference to local residents' views or a proper examination of all options

for the future governance of the Warwickshire area. This was a regrettable step and so it was proposed that the County Cabinet should be asked to reconsider its decision and to commit to working with the Borough and District Councils and the Parish and Town Councils on a full examination of all options and to listen to resident's views before arriving at a decision. Other Councils were understood to be seeking the same decision.

Councillor Day proposed the report as laid out, subject to the addition of the two recommendations above.

Resolved that

- (1) the joint statement issued by the Leader of the Council and the Leader of Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) be endorsed, and in doing so:
 - i. a jointly commissioned review of local government across South Warwickshire and the wider Warwickshire County area, be agreed;
 - ii. the Leaders of this Council and of SDC invite all of the other Borough/District Councils in the County, Warwickshire County Council and the Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) on behalf of the town and parish councils, to participate in the review as equal partners;
 - iii. the Leader of the Council be the Council's nominee on a multi Council working party to steer the review;
 - iv. the Leadership Co-ordinating Group (i.e. all the Political Group Leaders and the Executive) act as Warwick District Council's internal steering group of the review and the joint work with SDC;
 - v. the brief for the review be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and the Leadership Co-ordinating Group and the report be procured as a matter of urgency; and
 - vi. provision of cost for the review be made from a source to be determined by the S151 Officer (at the time of writing the cost has not been determined and will be affected by the number of Councils participating).
- (2) in the context of the joint statement, exploring with SDC in relation to the following, be agreed:
 - i. sharing of Senior Management Team posts across the two authorities;

- ii. exploration of shared contracts across the two authorities; and
- iii. agreement be given in principle to conducting a Joint Core Strategy/Local Plan Review, and a further paper be presented setting out details of a proposed programme, a member and officer governance.

Further reports be presented to Employment and/or Executive on all of the items above as soon as possible;

- (3) £35,000 be provided from the Service Transformation Reserve to fund the Council's contribution to the joint study and for additional support in respect of communications; and
- (4) the cabinet of the County Council be asked to reconsider its informal decision to commission a separate business case for a single unitary Council and instead, to participate in the joint study with the other Borough and District Councils to look at all options and to listen to the public's views

Recommended to Council that:

- (1) the principle of joint working with SDC be included as part of the Council's Business Strategy; and
- (2) agreement(s) be entered into with SDC pursuant to section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 and all other enabling powers so that employees can be placed at the disposal of the other Council's as may be required.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Day)

16. **Community Stadium and Associated Developments**

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services seeking funding so that the next steps in the development of a new Community Stadium to complete the RIBA Stage 1 design for the stadium and to commence RIBA Stage 2 could be undertaken and alongside that, an assessment of the sources of finance. A further report would then come forward which would enable a conclusion to be reached on the feasibility of the project in Spring 2021.

The Community Stadium Scheme was part of a wider multi-faceted project. In outline form if implemented, the Stadium could have delivered:

- 5,000 capacity stadium and facilitated the relocation of Leamington FC from its current ground on Harbury Lane;

- all weather artificial grass pitch to allow for wider community use;
- provision for Adult Community Mental Health Services and Children and Young People's Mental Health Services;
- gym and studio space; and
- bar/catering/coffee shop provision.

All of this would be subject to confirmation of demand.

The relocation of the football club would have enabled it to expand its community sports development activities and the Council to then re-use its site as a gypsy and traveller site, thus enabling positive provision to be made, but also to reinforce protection against other sites being used in an unauthorised fashion.

The Council acquired land from the County Council in December 2018 in order to secure the site for the stadium and land that it could have sold in order to help fund the stadium. That land, five acres fronting Gallows Hill, was the subject of a negotiation which, by the time the report was considered, would have been exchanged with completion on four of the five acres by December. That scheme for a relocated car showroom and a hotel would have both protected and generated jobs, as well as generate a £5.585m capital receipt for the Council.

The potential inclusion of accommodation for the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (Mental Health) also gave the project a clear health and well-being outcome, as well as the opportunity to consider some of its sites in Warwick and Leamington for alternative use as housing.

The Council also envisaged that it would seek to relocate the athletics track at Edmondscote alongside the stadium, and widen its operation to the adjoining schools and create a more accessible athletics facility for the District. This, in turn, would have enabled part of the athletics track site to be developed for housing, but that in conjunction with other land to the east and to the west, it would create a new riverside park (the Commonwealth Park) connecting Warwick and Leamington with a contiguous green space along the rivers Leam and Avon.

To enable that to happen, the seven hectares reserved for a secondary school, part of which would have been used for the relocated athletics track, had to be freed from having to be used for that purpose. This depended upon an alternative site for the secondary school provision for the new development in the Europa Way corridor. This was secured when the planning application for a secondary school, primary school 150 houses and country park provision was granted planning permission and a S106 was signed. The secondary school was expected to be open for September 2023. The discussion had started on how the seven hectares could be used for a new primary school, new/additional SEN provision and the athletics track.

That discussion also raised the opportunity to acquire the site which had been identified for the primary school use, and to bring it together with the Farmhouse which the Council was to purchase (for circa £1m) by the time the report came to be considered, and land that the Council already owned

to the north, most of which would be used for the stadium. This land could have been used as the neighbourhood centre and for housing, but should have generated a margin on the purchase price to help fund the stadium scheme.

Alongside all of this were the ambitions of Myton School, and by linking that in to create a second access point to Myton School, as well as an enhancement to the sports provision at the school, some of which was run as part of a dual facility with Warwick District Council by Everyone Active. This opportunity would have helped to relieve some traffic from Myton Road as well as further improve the sports provision in the immediate vicinity.

The Council's and its partners' ambition was articulated in the masterplan illustrated at Appendix A to the report. Members were reminded that the spine road and cycleway serving the scheme was well advanced and would be largely completed by September 2020 with the new junction onto Gallows Hill expected to have completion by June 2021.

The site opposite the proposed stadium was being developed by Vistry who had a pre-agreement to deliver 40% of the 375 homes as affordable homes and so feel confident to progress construction. The Council had entered into an agreement for an adjoining portion of land with Vistry for 54 affordable homes to be developed at a high energy efficiency standard. Subject to planning permission, construction was expected in this site in the Autumn 2020.

In November 2019, the Executive gave approval for expenditure in order to progress to RIBA Stage 1 for the design of the Community Football Stadium. Members also agreed in principle to relocating the athletics track and ancillary facilities to a new site adjacent to the proposed new stadium.

The funding sought would have allowed for completion of RIBA Stage 1 and for the project to then progress to RIBA Stage 2 and thereby obtain a more detailed picture of the scheme along with an updated cost estimate.

The Design Team had been working with Officers and key stakeholders to develop initial designs and costings for the new stadium in line with the RIBA Stage 1 process. Now the Phase 1 desktop ground investigations had been completed as part of this work, the Phase 2 ground investigations were ongoing on site to enable completion of RIBA Stage 1.

RIBA Stage 2 involved the preparation of Concept Design including outline proposals for structural design, building services systems, outline specifications and preliminary cost information along with relevant project strategies in accordance with design programme. Any alterations to the brief needed to be agreed and the Final Project Brief issued prior to start of RIBA Stage 3 Developed Design. The following site investigations were required to complete RIBA Stage 2:

- Complete Phase 2 Ground Investigation;
- Drainage Strategy;
- Utilities Survey;

- Ecological Surveys; and
- Initial Archaeological and Heritage Surveys.

The funding would also have meant that the Council was able to manage and maintain the Grade 2 Heathcote Hill Farmhouse (sale due to complete mid July 2020) in a safe, secure and sympathetic manner until such a point that it became a focal point of the wider neighbourhood centre development.

The Council also required legal and property advice in respect of the wide range of developments proposed on and around the Community Stadium site, the fees for which were included in the request.

At this stage of proceedings, the estimated construction cost of the new stadium and with fees and on costs was £17,298,352. It was anticipated that the relocation of the athletics track from its current home to the site adjacent to the new stadium would cost in the region of £2.5 million. This would have allowed the current track site to be utilised for housing and a destination (Commonwealth Games Legacy) park which had an estimated cost in the region of £1 million which took the total cost to circa £21m. This, however, did not include the original land purchase cost of £3.3m, making the overall cost in excess of £24m.

Potentially, the various land opportunities could have generated up to £19.5m but these needed to have more work undertaken to assess their rigour. It was also the case that the opportunity for other funding contributions from S106, CIL, etc. needed to be explored and conclusions reached.

At the completion of RIBA Stage 2 and of the assessment of sources of finance, a further report needed to be considered by Executive and Council in order to decide whether or not to proceed with the project. The Council would have a clear idea at that point on the deliverability of the Stadium and associated elements or otherwise.

In terms of alternative options, it would have been possible to freeze the design process for the stadium until the financial impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the Council was known in more detail, and the priorities of the Council for major projects were more clearly known. However, to delay the project in this way would have led to increased costs for prolongation and for inflation. If the freeze was for more than a few weeks, the Design Team would have probably been re-deployed onto other projects, leading to a lack of continuity and additional re-start costs. In reality, the next report was the better time to decide to halt or progress the project, given that the capital receipts could have been used to fund this proposal.

Prior to the meeting, Members were informed that Agenda Item 9 – Community Stadium and Associated Developments – was, in fact, a Part 1 item because the additional funding would increase the Capital Budget by greater than the £300k (cumulative total) permitted by the Executive. As a result, this meant the recommendations needed to be considered by Council on 5 August 2020.

The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report at their joint meeting.

Councillor Matecki proposed the report as laid out.

Recommended to Council that a sum of up to £345,460 be allocated from the receipt of the sale of land fronting Gallows Hill for the financial year 2020/2021 in order to fund the design work on the Community Stadium to the end of RIBA Stage 2 and to manage and maintain Heathcote Hill Farmhouse and associated land for the remainder of the financial year.

Resolved that

- (1) the progress on delivering the overall proposals and the masterplan at Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) officers are asked to instruct the Design Team to complete the RIBA Stage 1 work and commence RIBA Stage 2;
- (3) work alongside the RIBA Stage 1 and 2 to assess the sources of finance to enable the scheme to be completed, be undertaken; and
- (4) a report on the work at the end of RIBA stage 2 and of the assessment of finance be presented to the Executive in early spring 2021 in order to determine financial feasibility of the Stadium project.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Matecki)
Forward Plan Reference 1,014

(The meeting ended at 6.50pm)