

	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee - 13 September 2011	Agenda Item No.	8
Title	Comments from the Executive		
For further information about this report please contact	Peter Dixon Committee Services Officer 01926 456114 committee@warwickdc.gov.uk		
Service Area	Members' Services		
Wards of the District directly affected	N/A		
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No		
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A		
Background Papers	Finance & Audit minutes 09/08/2011 & Executive minutes 10/08/2011		

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

Officer/Councillor Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports <i>must</i> be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Deputy Chief Executive	01.09.2011	Andrew Jones
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer	01.09.2011	Mike Snow
Legal		
Finance		Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holders		Councillors Caborn, Coker, Doody, Mrs Gallagher, Mrs Grainger, Hammon, Mobbs, Shilton and Vincett

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

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the Executive's response to comments which the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee gave on reports submitted to the Executive on 13 July 2011.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The responses made by the Executive be noted.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

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

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

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

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

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

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 As part of the new scrutiny process, the Committee no longer considers the whole of the Executive agenda.
- 7.2 Councillors are emailed at the time of the publication of the Executive and Scrutiny Committee agendas, asking them to contact Committee Services by 9.00am on the day of the Scrutiny Committee, to advise which Executive items they wish the Scrutiny Committee to pass comment on, and the reasons why.
- 7.3 As a result, at its meeting on 9 August 2011, the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the items detailed in appendix 1. The responses which Executive gave are also shown, except where the items considered were confidential, which are detailed separately in confidential appendix 2.

Responses from the meeting of the Executive held on 10 August 2011 on the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee's Comments

Item no.	4	Title	Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2011	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	It is part of the Committee's role is to monitor the budget.				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>Recommended to Executive that:</p> <p>(1) recommendation 2.6 be amended to read "unforeseeable demand", rather than "legitimate demand"; and</p> <p>(2) Executive set up a working party to look at reducing car parking fees, particularly on quiet days, in order to stimulate the Town Centre economy.</p> <p>In addition to concerns expressed over car parking charges, the Committee was unhappy about the costs of the Spa Centre & lack of progress in saving money. It requested a report from CMT to be submitted to the Committee's 11 October meeting, and agreed that both car parking & the Spa Centre should be added to the significant risk register.</p>				
Executive Response	<p>The recommendation to amend 2.6 was agreed, but the recommendation for an additional working party was not - Councillor Mobbs explained that the deficit in car parking income was being investigated by himself, the Portfolio Holder and Head of Service, to identify the reason for the deficit and to ensure that forecasting was accurate. Councillor Shilton added that last year all Town Councils had agreed that parking charges were fair. Further discussions with Town Councils and the Chambers of Trade were planned, and as part of this work the Service Area was considering the impact of major works in town centres on car parking income and general footfall. The outcome would be considered by the fees and charges working party ahead of recommendations to Council.</p> <p>A Monitoring Group had been established to follow the development of the Spa Centre. Part of its role was to develop the draft business plan and the addition of a further report on this could delay implementation. The draft business plan had been circulated to the monitoring group who had not offered comments at this stage and a revised deadline, 1 September, had been set for comments.</p> <p>The Chief Executive advised Executive that the risk was not the Spa Centre and Car Parking itself, but budget shortfall from a number of potential areas. If this area was to be included, it should be part of project with milestones for delivery. If the Spa Centre did not deliver, that was not an issue because any savings here had not been included as part of the £2.8 million which needed to be found.</p> <p>The Spa Centre was included in the risk register. The final business plan would be presented to Executive for approval in due course.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Knight agreed to circulate the draft plan to F&A and to pass on F&A's views to the Monitoring Group.</p> <p>Councillor Mobbs explained that it was his role to apply pressures to all budgets to enable the Council to maintain a balanced budget. Without the deficit in parking, the Council would have had a balanced budget again.</p>				

Item no.	6	Title	Future Funding for the Voluntary and Community Sector	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered					
Scrutiny Comment	The Committee noted that funding was not restricted to local charities & groups only, expressed some concern that there was no room for growth, but supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	The Portfolio Holder explained that under procurement regulations it was not possible to place "local criteria" on organisations tendering for services, but this aspect should be brought up by the ability to deliver services and the cost of delivering the service because of the cost implications of establishing a premises locally.				

Item no.	7a	Title	The Local Government Boundary Commission for England Electoral Review	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered					
Scrutiny Comment	The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	-				

The Committee also commented on confidential items 9, 10 and 11, detailed in confidential appendix 2.