

FINANCE & AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS TO THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM No.	TITLE	REQUESTED BY	COMMENTS TO THE EXECUTIVE	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE
4	Council Tax Discounts – Second Homes and Long Term Empty Properties	Chair	Supported recommendations, although a number of Members were unhappy that additional revenue raised by the proposed change would not be ring-fenced for use within Warwick District.	Thanked the Committee for its comments and explained that WCC had been written to on this matter, but that no response had been received.
5	Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2010	Chair	Dissatisfied that the slippage issue had not improved over time & continued to be a problem. Some concern was also raised over costs relating to cremations, and the lack of take up of travel tokens. The Committee noted that a task and finish group report on travel tokens would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee & supported the amended recommendations.	Thanked the Committee for its comments and explained that improved financial monitoring procedures were being introduced to improve the situation in this area of concern.
7	Warwick District Council Play Areas	Chair	Supported recommendations, although some members expressed surprise at the estimated cost of replacing equipment, citing examples of where good play areas had been installed without great expense, e.g. in some villages.	Comments were appreciated.
10	Audit Commission Inspection of Benefits	Chair	Supported recommendations but felt that the Audit Commission's statement "ensuring there is effective challenge by Councillors through scrutiny of the service" (at paragraph 7.7 of the report, fourth bullet point under recommendation 3) was not terribly clear.	Thanked for comments.

11	Audit Commission Report on Housing Services	Chair	Members were encouraged by improvements made to the housing stock, but had some concern over how performance was measured, and felt that ensuring jobs were carried out properly in the first instance should take precedence over meeting targets for carrying out work within a set number of days. The Committee felt that contractors should be required to take responsibility to ensure that jobs were completed properly, stressing that both contracts and contract management were very important. Also contractors should not be signed off and paid until certificates authenticating the work done were supplied. Members supported the amended recommendations.	Thanked for comments.
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