

Richard Davies
Chairman of the Council

Council meeting: Wednesday, 26 February 2014

Notice is hereby given that an ordinary meeting of Warwick District Council will be held at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa on Wednesday, 26 February 2014 at 6.05pm.

Emergency Procedure

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman will announce the emergency procedure for the Town Hall.

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 on 22 January 2014 as set out on pages 1 to 7.
4. **Communications and Announcements**

5. **Public Interest Debate**
6. **Petitions**
7. **Notices of Motion**
8. **Public Submissions**
9. **Questions to Committee Chairmen**
10. **Questions to Portfolio Holders**
11. **Leader's and Portfolio Holders' Statements**
12. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**
13. **Setting of the Council Tax 2014/15**

To consider:-

- (a) the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 12 February 2014 (as set out in the attached minute **(Item 13, 14 & 15/ Minute 130 / Pages 1 to 6)**. "Budget 2014/15 and Council Tax – Revenue and Capital); and
- (b) the report of the Responsible Financial Officer **(to follow after confirmation of the Warwickshire Police figures)**

14. **Housing Rents and Housing Revenue Account Budget 2014/15**

To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 12 February 2014 **(Item 13, 14 & 15/ Minute 131/ Pages 6 to 8)**

15. **Heating, Lighting and Water Charges 2014/15 – Council Tenants**

To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 12 February 2014 **(Item 13, 14 & 15/ Minute 132/ Pages 8 to 10)**

16. **Report of the Executive**

To receive the report of the Executive meeting of 8 January 2014
(Item 16 / Pages 1 to 11)

17. **Gypsy & Travellers Preferred Options for Sites Consultation – Call in of Executive Decision**

To consider the decision of the Executive on 12 February 2014 regarding the Gypsy & Travellers Preferred Options for Sites Consultation if the decision is referred by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting earlier on 26 February 2014 to Council. If the matter is referred to Council a short summary, setting out the comments and options that can be taken, will be circulated ahead of Council.

Councillors are requested to bring your copy of the Executive agenda for 12 February 2014 to this meeting.

18. **Planning Committee membership**

To increase the size of the Planning Committee by one to make it politically proportionate to Council.

To appoint an Independent Group Councillor to the Planning Committee in line with the above increase in Committee membership.

19. **Public and Press**

To consider resolving under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the relevant paragraph(s), as set out in the item, of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

20. **Report of the Executive**

To receive the confidential report of the Executive meeting of 8 January 2014.
(Item 19/Page 1)
(Not for publication)

21. **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
18 February 2014

Please note that in the unlikely event that the Council is unable to complete the business set out on this agenda on the evening of 26 February 2014, the Chairman has agreed to a reserve night of Monday 3 March 2014 starting at 6.00pm.

Please note that the majority of the meetings are held on the first floor of the Town Hall. If you feel that this may restrict you attending this meeting, please telephone (01926) 412656 prior to the meeting, so that we can assist you and make any necessary arrangements to help you to attend the meeting.

**THE AGENDA IS AVAILABLE IN LARGE
PRINT ON REQUEST, PRIOR TO THE
MEETING.**

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 January 2014, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.05pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Davies (Chairman); Councillors Barrott, Mrs Blacklock, Boad, Mrs Bromley, Brookes, Mrs Bunker, Caborn, Coker, Copping, Cross, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Ms Dean, Dhillon, Doody, Mrs Gallagher, Gifford, Gill, Mrs Goode, Guest, Heath, Mrs Higgins, Illingworth, Kinson, Mrs Knight, MacKay, Mrs Mellor, Mobbs, Pittarello, Pratt, Rhead, Mrs Sawdon, Shilton, Mrs Syson, Vincett, Weber, Wilkinson, Williams and Wreford-Bush.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Edwards, Mrs Falp, Mrs Grainger, Hammon, Kirton, Ms Weed.

80. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute Number 92 - Kenilworth Public Service Centre – Call in of Executive Decision

Councillors; Mrs Bunker, Davies, Illingworth and Shilton all declared a personal interest because they were members of Kenilworth Town Council.

Councillor Mrs Blacklock informed Council that she had been member of the Steering Group for this development and the development was also in her Ward.

Councillor MacKay informed Council that he had been a member of the Steering Group for this development.

81. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 4 December 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82. **COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Brookes on becoming a father.

The Chairman informed the Council that the arrangements for the approval of the submission version of the Local Plan Planning Forum on 7 April 2014 had been moved to 28 April 2014 and Reserve Planning Committee on 9 April 2014 had been removed from the calendar of meetings. Following these changes there would now be Group meetings on Monday 7 April 2014 at 6.00pm and Council would meet on 9 April 2014 to determine the Submission Version of the Local Plan.

The Chairman informed Council that there would be no business under items; 5, Public Interest Debate; 7, Notices of Motion; 8, Public Submissions; and 9, Questions to Committee Chairmen.

83. **PETITIONS**

The Council received two petitions, from Save Warwick and Chris White MP. The petitions were presented to Council by Mr D Williams.

The petition from Chris White MP was an objection to the Local Plan and the signatories stated that *"We do not believe that the current proposed Local Plan is in the best interests of our community and we call on Warwick District Council to reconsider this Plan and work with Town and Parish Councils as well as local residents to develop an alternative."* This had received 2100 signatures.

The petition from Save Warwick also objected to the Local Plan and the signatories stated that *"We, the undersigned, wish to register our objection to the proposals in the Local Plan, especially for the 12,300 new houses in Warwick District and the road proposals that go with them. We request the Council takes note of the weight of public opinion expressed by this petition and all the objections from residents and that the Council withdraws its current plan that would be ruinous to our town and re-plans on the basis of a more/most expansion on the real needs of our community."* This had received 700 signatures.

Mr Williams addressed the Council outlining the petitions and the concerns that residents had about the Local Plan. He welcomed the dialogue that Councillor Mobbs had started and hoped that this would continue.

It was proposed by Councillor Davis, duly seconded and

RESOLVED that the petitions be noted and considered as part of the Council's determination of the draft submission version of the Local Plan.

84. **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

Councillor Mrs Blacklock asked the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Shilton:

"Is the Portfolio Holder aware of persisting problems with waste collections, in particular the Assisted Collections?"

The operatives are reluctant to carry out Assisted Collections and sometimes refuse to take on new Assisted Collections when they have been accepted by WDC as qualifying for this service; so would he agree with me that the underlying reason is that the rounds have been changed and elongated to include more properties in the same shifts, expecting the operatives to work faster, in order to make the economies deriving from the new contract which in retrospect seems to have been under-priced - making it very difficult for a decent standard of service to be achieved within the budget?"

Councillor Shilton, had circulated the following response to Council prior to the meeting:

"The process of communicating changes to the crews and ensuring assisted collections take place as scheduled has been improved recently, and should drastically reduce the number of missed collections. SITA are continually reviewing the workloads of the crews to ensure that they can complete the work each day, without any impact on service quality. Members can be assured that any service issues raised by residents are responded to very quickly by the Neighbourhood Service Team, and if you have any concerns please contact the Area Officer for your ward or report them via the team's email address contract.services@warwickdc.gov.uk

The Waste Contract was awarded on the basis of both price and quality. An extensive amount of information was provided to bidders to ensure they could appropriately resource the contract, and deliver the level of service required. SITA scored the highest on quality of all the tenders that were submitted."

Councillor Mrs Blacklock asked a supplementary question to Councillor Shilton, asking if he was aware that more complaints had been submitted this week from a property where the crew had been briefed by officers through direct intervention but again the collection had not occurred.

Councillor Shilton explained that he had not been aware of any complaints, but if Councillor Mrs Blacklock could pass him the contact details he would visit the site personally with the officers to ensure the problems were resolved. He reminded all Councillors that as a Council we collected from nearly 60,000 properties each week and issues were normally resolved within a matter of hours. If there were common problems he encouraged Councillors to pass issues to Shadow Portfolio Holders for them to raise with the Head of Service directly.

(Councillor Guest arrived during this item.)

85. **LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' STATEMENTS**

- (A) Councillor Mobbs, Leader of the Council, thanked Councillors for their support in appointing him as Leader. He hoped that they had seen his statements about his desire to work together in unity and take decisions based upon common sense and not political bias. Together these decisions would work to making the District a Great Place to Live Work and Visit which is what we all wanted. He looked to assure the Council that there were no underlying plans within any Executive decisions and that he wanted to look at issues together. As Leader he aimed to improve communication with everyone.

Councillor Mobbs went on to highlight from the briefing for members on Monday that he wanted to work with and listen to local people on issues and he wanted to help resolve some of the issues. To support this he explained that he had started to meet with his councillors individually as well as some councillors from other groups.

- (B) Councillor Shilton, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services announced that the Pump Room gardens restoration had received first round heritage approval of a £49,000 grant to make a second stage grant application. This would look at investing £1million to make it an all-year venue. The second round application would include drainage works, with Warwick District Council providing £100,000 match funding, the Royal Conservation Business Trust £50,000 and Friends of the Park £20,000. He took the opportunity to thank the Friends Group for its work. The award of the full grant would see the bandstand restored to original quality, the bridge being upgraded, improving bank side wildlife, improved drainage, realigned and laid paths to their historic positions. The deadline for submission was 31 August 2014 with awards being made in December 2014. If this was successful, work would start in March 2015 with work completed by summer 2017.
- (C) Councillor Vincett, Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property Services, informed Council that the number of social housing built across the District for 2013 was 80 across. In 2014, with builders on site in a number of locations, the expected completion rate was 250 homes. The partnership

with Waterloo Housing to-date had secured 55 new properties. It was anticipated this partnership would deliver a further 72 properties in 2014 with a further 379 in system to come forward.

- (D) Councillor Vincett, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property Services, reminded Councillors of the question from Councillor Pittarello about energy switching. He thanked Councillor Pittarello for this and for his input into the energy cooperative purchasing schemes. Officers were looking into this and it was looking promising. The aim was to make it easier, quicker and cheaper to help alleviate fuel poverty within the District. The Council also aimed to provide help and support to the elderly and disabled. The work was progressing with officers investigating the ichooser system. By using them the Council would receive a fee for each change which could then be used to fund other energy changes. He would be bringing a paper on this proposal to the Corporate Management Team and the Executive for them to consider.
- (E) Councillor Coker, Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, announced that work had now started on the Cubbington flood alleviation scheme. He thanked Councillors Hammon, Pratt and Doody who had taken this item forward and did a lot of the work over the years to ensure it would happen.
- (F) Councillor Coker, Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, announced that the Street Marshalls were now in place in the student area of Royal Leamington Spa. The aim of their work was to help keep the students safe and that the students got home safely or even help students recognise they had had enough to drink. This helped to make Royal Leamington Spa had a good night time economy and was a safe place to visit.
- (G) Councillor Coker, Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, congratulated the Licensing Committee decision on reviewing a premises and dealing with the issues where there were problems.
- (H) Councillor Coker, Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, reminded Councillors that previously there had been an informal arrangement with the Primary Care Trust providing £10,000 match funding for one off projects to improve health generally. However this had been increased to £30,000 from the Arden Clinical Commissioning Group. This would be for a project to support garden organics in tandem with the Trussell Trust and food banks to encourage people to grow their own food and in doing so to change their eating habits. In addition there would be work with Nuneaton and Bedworth Healthy Living at the Children Centres to help growing families change their eating habits particularly for under fives.
- (I) Councillor Cross, Portfolio Holder for Culture, informed Council that the pantomime had gone well with £183,000 taken which was on budget. Two performances were signed for those with hearing impairments, which had been well received and a repeat corporate booking had been received from a company which booked out the venue for a performance. In addition the new digital projector had been installed in the cinema and positive feedback had already been received.
- (J) Councillor Shilton, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, reminded the Council about the Guide Dog, Warwick, that the Council had sponsored

and had been puppy walked by a member of staff who had been based at Riverside House. Councillor Shilton had recently been informed that Warwick had passed his Guide Dog Training and he had now received a letter to say that Warwick had successfully been placed. Following this he had now received a letter of thanks from the person Warwick had been placed with and an award from Guide Dogs for the Blind for the work of this Council, which he presented to the Chairman.

(Councillor Heath arrived during this item.)

86. **QUESTIONS FOR THE LEADER**

Councillor Barrott asked the Leader that as the consideration of the implementation of the Living Wage had been deferred by Employment Committee, was the Leader still committed to the Living Wage and would a report come forward before April to enable this to happen?

In response, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mobbs explained that he was disappointed that the recent newspaper article had not highlighted the Living Wage was a joint initiative. He explained he was still committed to the Living Wage. At Employment Committee, a number of issues had come up that needed to be considered prior to a final decision. As Leader, he was committed to rewarding but at the same time needed to be mindful of looking at potential changes to Living Wage. With this in mind he hoped to implement this proposal from 1 October 2014 and reviewed every year thereafter. As Council we needed officers to investigate and bring things forward, but committed to speaking with officers to see if it could come forward quicker.

87. **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The report of the Executive meeting of 11 December 2013 was proposed by Councillor Mobbs, duly seconded and

RESOLVED that the report be approved.

88. **ASSET REVIEW – CALL IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION**

The Council considered a report from Civic and Committee Services. The report explained that on 11 December 2013, the Executive had made a decision on the asset review. This had duly been called in and referred to the Council for debate.

The matter had been called in by Councillors Boad, Copping, Gifford, Mrs Goode and Wreford-Bush because it related to the Royal Pump Rooms which was at the heart of the cultural heritage of Royal Leamington Spa. They considered that full and free public access must be a condition in any market testing of its commercial potential that was undertaken and not considered as an afterthought.

It was proposed by Councillor Boad and duly seconded that the decision should be referred back to the Executive referring them to the comments of both Scrutiny Committees and emphasising the need to maintain full and free public access as part of the commercial testing not afterwards.

On being put to the vote the proposal was lost.

It was proposed by Councillor Mobbs, duly seconded and

RESOLVED that the decision be referred back to the Executive with no further comments.

Prior to the vote Councillor Boad had requested a recorded vote, which was duly supported by two Councillors. The votes were recorded as follows:

For: Brookes, Mrs Bunker, Caborn, Coker, Cross, Davies, Doody, Mrs Gallagher, Guest, Mrs Higgins, Illingworth, Kinson, MacKay, Mobbs, Pratt, Rhead, Mrs Sawdon, Shilton, Vincett and Williams

Against: Barrott, Blacklock, Boad, Bromley, Copping, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Ms Dean, Gifford, Gill, Mrs Goode, Heath, Mrs Knight, Mrs Mellor, Pittarello, Mrs Syson, Weber, Ms Weed, Wilkinson and Wreford-Bush.

There were no abstentions from the vote.

89. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

It was proposed by Councillor Barrott, duly seconded and

RESOLVED that

- (1) Councillor Mrs Knight replaces Councillor Ms Weed as a member of the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) Councillor Ms Weed replaces Councillor Mrs Knight as a member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee; and
- (3) Councillor Mrs Knight be appointed as a substitute for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Ms Weed be appointed as substitute for the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee.

90. PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following two items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

91. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE

The confidential report of the Executive meeting of 11 December 2013 was proposed by Councillor Doody, duly seconded and

RESOLVED that the report be approved.

92. KENILWORTH PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE – CALL IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

On 11 December 2013, the Executive had taken a decision regarding Kenilworth Public Service Centre. This decision had been called in and considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee who had referred it to Council for debate.

The Decision of the Executive had been called in by Councillors, Barrott, Gill and Wilkinson because they believed the strong views of the two Scrutiny Committees had been ignored, there were potential risks and costs to the District Council because of the uncertainty of the funding.

It was proposed by Councillor Mobbs, duly seconded and

RESOLVED that the matter be referred back to the Executive with no further comments.

(Councillors Mrs Goode, Heath, Mrs Higgins and Pittarello left during this item.)

93. **COMMON SEAL**

It was

RESOLVED that the Common Seal of Warwick District Council be affixed to such deeds and documents as may be required for implementing decisions of the Council arrived at this day.

(The meeting ended at 8.47 pm)

CHAIRMAN
26 February 2014

EXECUTIVE

An excerpt of the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mobbs (Chairman); Councillors Caborn, Coker, Cross, Mrs Grainger, Hammon, Shilton and Vincett.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Barrott (Chair of Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Mrs Blacklock (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Boad (Liberal Democrat Group Observer), Councillor Wilkinson (Labour Group Observer) and Councillor Williams.

127. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to the items contained in Part 1 of the agenda.

128. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2014 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PART 1

(Items on which a decision by Council is required)

130. **BUDGET 2014/15 AND COUNCIL TAX – REVENUE AND CAPITAL**

The Executive considered a report from Finance which updated members on the overall financial position of the Council. It included the latest position in respect of the 2013/14 General Fund Revenue Budget and the future implications of the proposed changes within.

For 2014/15 onwards, the report considered both the General Fund Revenue budget and the Capital Programme. The information contained within the report supported the recommendations to Council in respect of setting next year's budgets and the Council's level of Council Tax for 2014/15. It also updated members on the latest projections and assumptions in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, identifying the on-going savings required by 2018/19 and gave an update on the Council's Reserves and General Fund.

The Council was required to set a budget and council tax each year taking into account many factors including determining an authorised borrowing limit in accordance with The Local Government Act 2004, Section 3, agreeing prudential indicators and the Chief Financial Officer was required to report on the robustness of the estimates made and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

The report advised that by considering the 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy at the same time as the latest and next year's Budget, the Council had a full understanding of their implications on the long term implications.

The report was divided into sections which dealt individually with the 2013/14 Revenue Budget, the 2014/15 Revenue Budget, Government Grants, the 2014/15 Council Tax, 2014/15 Budget Surplus, New Homes Bonus, the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Reserves and Balances, General Fund and Housing Capital Programmes and Prudential Indicators.

In addition, each section was supported by coordinating appendices numbered 1 to 12.

No specific alternatives to the recommendations had been made, however, the information given enabled Members to propose variations to the proposals.

Members had a duty to consider all possible options and the proposals in the report reflected the Portfolio Holder priorities and were reflected in the Fit For the Future programme.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Members noted that the recommendations had been incorrectly numbered in the report and accepted that the figure detailed in paragraph 3.5.4 of the report, should have read £49,836.88, as per the addendum circulated prior to the meeting.

Having read the report and having heard the representations from the Scrutiny Committees, the Executive decided to propose the recommendations as written.

RECOMMENDED to Council that

- (1) the 2013/14 latest General Fund Revenue Estimate of net expenditure, including the proposed adjustments in section 3.2, at £16.4m, after the projected £661,000 surplus has been appropriated, as summarised in Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed;
- (2) the £40,000 previously agreed be slipped to improve the open space in the vicinity of the old gasworks/fire station site in Warwick from 2013/14 to 2014/15 by way of the Earmarked Reserve;
- (3) the 2013/14 projected surplus of £661,000 is allocated to:-

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- Early Retirement Reserve £200,000
 - Equipment Renewal Reserve £200,000
 - Corporate Assets Reserve £261,000 (subject to recommendation 2.4)
- (4) a new Corporate Assets Reserve be established and the Sports & Culture Facility Reserve be closed and its balance of £300,000 be transferred to this new Reserve;
- (5) should there be further requests for funding for 2013/14 or 2014/15 which have not been accommodated within this report, either within other reports on this Agenda, or before the financial year end which are not significant in terms of the Council's overall Budget, the funding for these will need to be addressed as part of the Final Accounts report in June;
- (6) the changes to the latest 2014/15 General Fund revenue budgets (as previously agreed by the Executive on 11th December 2013) below and as discussed in paragraph 3.3 with net expenditure of £16.0m after the appropriations, be agreed, as summarised in Appendix 1 to the report, :-
- a) the creation of £200,000 Contingency Budget for 2014/15;
 - b) the two Senior Project Co-Ordinator Posts being extended to March 2016, subject to the agreement of the Employment Committee, and the additional non-recurrent costs £79,000 be built into the 2014/15 budget and £103,400 being factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015/16;
 - c) the extension to the 2 Organisational Development Posts for a further 2 years to 31 March 2016, subject to the agreement of the Employment committee, being financed from the earmarking of £19,000 salary underspend in 2013/14 and re-phasing of Service Transformation Reserve contributions;
 - d) £10,000 Health and Well Being Budget being built into the 2014/15 Budget on a recurrent basis;

Items 13, 14 & 15

- e) the new Private Sector Housing fees and charges, including Houses in Multiple Occupation, applicable from 1 April 2014, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, and associated income budget of £75,000;
 - f) £75,000 one-off budget being included for costs associated with complying with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS);
 - g) £50,000 one-off budget to support Employment Initiatives with consideration of this within a forthcoming report on the prosperity agenda;
 - h) £30,000 (part year) effect of the introduction of the National Living Wage from October 2014, with full £60,000 per year being factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy thereafter, subject to the agreement of the Employment Committee;
 - i) £15,000 one off funding to Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership;
 - j) £10,500 to increase Community Forum Grant funding (£1,500 per Forum) in view of potential requests for funding in respect of World War One commemorations;
- (7) the Council's share of the Collection Fund Surplus for 2013/14, £142,000, is utilised as part of General Fund 2014/15 financing;
- (8) the Grant Settlement for 2014/15 is noted and should there be a non-material change to the final grant settlement for 2014/15 when the announcement is made, this would be accommodated within the Contingency Budget in 2014/15;
- (9) the Council Tax of a Band D property for Warwick District Council for 2014/15 before the addition of parish/town council, Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner precepts is agreed by Council at £146.86, representing a zero increase on 2013/14;

- (10) the Council Tax charges for Warwick District Council for 2014/15 before the addition of parish/town council, Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner precepts, for each band is agreed by Council as follows:-

Band 2014/15	
A	£97.91
B	£114.22
C	£130.54
D	£146.86
E	£179.50
F	£212.13
G	£244.77
H	£293.72

- (11) the 2014/15 projected surplus of £238,500 is allocated to the Corporate Assets Reserve;
- (12) the Statement of New Homes Bonus Use, within Appendix 11 of the report, is agreed and the New Homes Bonus allocation due for 2014/15 of £1,221,765 (Provisional), is noted, of which £59,000 will be allocated to the W2 (Waterloo/Warwick District Council) Joint Venture and £24,000 to Coventry and Warwickshire City Deal, and the balance of £1,139,000 is appropriated as follows:
- Corporate Assets Reserve £539,000
 - Public Amenities Reserve £300,000
 - Planning Reserve £300,000
- (13) the changes to the financial projections be agreed, and the significant future forecast deficit, currently estimated to rise to over £1.04m by 2018/19 on net expenditure of £16m is noted, and that further on-going savings/ increased income of this amount must be secured in order for the authority to be able to set balanced budgets in the future without impacting on the range and quality of services provided;
- (14) the latest schedule in respect of the Equipment Renewal Reserve (£4.180 million required by 2026/27) is agreed and this Reserve, estimated to have an unallocated balance of £1.458m as at the 1st April 2014, will be exhausted during

2017/18 should all the indicated projected requests be fully funded;

- (15) a new Biodiversity Contributions Reserve be established with authority to spend from this reserve delegated to the Head of Neighbourhood Services in agreement with the Head of Finance;
- (16) the General Fund Capital Programme and the Housing Investment Programme, together with their financing, as set out in Section 3.9 of the report and Appendix 8 to the report, are agreed;
- (17) the Fen End highways improvements scheme, funded by way of Government Grant of £559,000 is included within the Capital Programme;
- (18) the loan to Warwick Town Council is extended so as to be repaid by 30 September 2014;
- (19) the Prudential indicators are agreed as shown within Appendix 10 to the report and the annual adoption of the Code of Practice, are approved and endorsed;
- (20) if there is any future mismatch between the proposed General Fund budgets and subsidiary strategies and action plans, officers would bring forward proposals for managing service provision within the agreed budgets;
- (21) the risks that may impact upon the Council's financial position and the mitigations and controls in place to manage these risks, are noted; and
- (22) the updated Financial Strategy as set out in Appendix 12 to the report, is agreed.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)
(Forward Plan reference 536)

131. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2014/15 AND HOUSING RENTS

The Executive considered a report from Finance which presented the latest Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets in respect of 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The report explained that the Council was required to set a budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) each year, requiring agreement on the level of rents and other charges that were levied. The Executive was therefore required to make recommendations to Council that took into account the base budgets for the HRA, strategic aspirations for the Housing Service and current Government guidance on rent restructuring.

The report recommended that housing dwelling rents for 2014/15 be increased by an average of 3.7% which would allow the provision of new homes and remain affordable within the Housing Business Plan without compromising service quality.

A further recommendation was that void homes be moved to capped formula social rent when re-let. Not moving vacant homes to social formula rent would significantly reduce Business Plan resources, by approximately £160m over 50 years. Capped Formula rent was on average 7.3% (£6.43) higher than the proposed 2014/15 rents. Further details were included in Appendix 1 to the report.

Garage rent increases were not governed by the guidance for rent restructuring, therefore any increase could be considered. The recommendation was that garage rents for 2014/15 should be increased by 3.7%.

Finally, the 2014/15 Supporting People charges for Housing tenants receiving housing related support was recommended to be increased by 1%, the 2014/15 weekly Lifeline charges for clients was recommended to be increased by 25p and the latest 2013/14 and 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets, required approval, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

There were a number of alternative options detailed in section 6 of the report including alternative housing rent increases, not increasing the rents when a property became void and alternative garage rent increases, Lifeline and Supporting People charges. Each alternative was followed by an explanation as to the consequences it would have and why it had been discounted.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations, except to put forward an alternative to recommendation 2.2 as detailed below, which the Committee suggested as an incentive to encourage tenants to downsize.

Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee recommended an alternative to recommendation 2.2 to read 'that if an existing District Council tenant transfers to a void property, the tenant should still be eligible for their current level of rent and not the capped formula ('target') social rent.'

In response, the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Vincett felt that this could result in a two tier rent system and the Council may have to advertise properties at two different rent levels.

Councillor Vincett advised Members that Housing and Property Services were in the process of revisiting their policies, including their Tenants Incentive Grant Scheme and assured Members that their suggestions and concerns would be taken on board during the review. He stated that he would report back to the Executive in May 2014 and update them on the revised policies. Whilst he understood The Finance and Audit Committees concerns, he did not feel that the recommendation would incentivise tenants any more than the existing Tenant Incentive Grant scheme and the monetary assistance already available.

Councillor Vincett, therefore, proposed that the recommendation be rejected because it could potentially complicate the administration process and increase the risk of the incorrect rent being charged or housing benefit being applied.

Having read the report and having heard the representations from the Scrutiny Committees, the Executive decided to propose the recommendations as written.

RECOMMENDED to Council that

- (1) housing dwelling rents for 2014/15 be increased by an average of 3.7%;
- (2) void homes are moved to capped formula ('target') social rent when re-let;
- (3) garage rents for 2014/15 be increased by 3.7%;
- (4) 2014/15 Supporting People charges for Housing tenants receiving housing related support be increased by 1%;
- (5) 2014/15 weekly Lifeline charges for clients be increased by 25p; and
- (6) the latest 2013/14 and 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, be agreed.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mobbs and Vincett)
(Forward Plan reference 537)

132. **HEATING, LIGHTING AND WATER CHARGES 2014/15 – COUNCIL TENANTS**

The Executive considered a report from Finance which set out the proposed recharges to council housing tenants for 2014/15, for the provision of communal heating, lighting and water supply.

The report advised that recharges were levied to recover costs of electricity, gas and water supply usage to individual properties within one of the sheltered and the five very sheltered housing schemes, which were provided as part of communal heating and water supplies. The costs of maintaining communal laundry facilities were also recharged at those sites benefitting from these facilities under the heading of miscellaneous charges.

The charges necessary to fully recover costs were calculated annually from average consumption over the past three years, updated for current costs and adjusted for one third of any over-recover or under-recovery in previous years.

In February 2013 the increase required to meet projected Heating & Lighting costs was felt unaffordable for tenants, so Members agreed to implement a lower increase and aim to fully recover costs within 5 year. Due to environmental measures taken, credits received and lower than expected price rises the proposed charges for three sites were able to meet costs with a decrease or modest increase in charges.

The report recommended that the heating, lighting, water and miscellaneous charges for the rent year commencing 6 April 2014, attached as appendices 1 and 2 to the report, be agreed.

One alternative option, if Members felt that any proposed charges were thought to be unaffordable for tenants, charges could be set at any level between no increase and the proposed charges.

For those Heating/Lighting charges which had been set below the level necessary to recover the full cost, a higher charge could be set to better reflect the costs, however, this could make the increase unaffordable for tenants.

The final alternative was that charges could be set above the real costs of recovery. This would mean tenants of these schemes would have no choice but to pay above the real cost of these utilities, as the communal nature of these services meant they could not choose their own energy suppliers. However, officers were mindful that this would not be fair to the tenants.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.


Having read the report and having heard the representations from the Scrutiny Committees, the Executive decided to propose the recommendations as written.

RECOMMENDED that the revised recharges for Council tenants relating to heating, lighting, water and miscellaneous charges for the rent year

Items 13, 14 & 15

commencing 6 April 2014, as set out in Appendix 1 & Appendix 2 to the report, be agreed.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mobbs and Vincett)
(Forward Plan reference 538)

 Council 26th February 2014		Agenda Item No. 13(b)
Title	The Setting of the Council Tax for the Area of Warwick District Council 2014/15	
For further information about this report please contact	Jenny Clayton jenny.clayton@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456013	
Wards of the District directly affected	All	
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	Full Council 20 th February 2013 (re.2013/14) minute no.76	
Background Papers	Executive Budget Report 12th February 2014	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes 536
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	N/A

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive		
Head of Service		Mike Snow
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer		Andrew Jones
Finance		Report from Finance
Portfolio Holder(s)		
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Insert details of any consultation undertaken or proposed to be undertaken with regard to this report.		
As detailed in the February Budget Report.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets the Council Tax for the area of Warwick District, incorporating its own Budget which is borne by Council Tax, along with the precepts from the other authorities within the area.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 **Warwick District Council Budget**

That the following, as set out in the budget reports (Executive recommendations 12th February 2014) and Estimates Book (distributed in hard copy, or forwarded electronically dependent upon individual member preference), be approved:-

- (a) the revenue estimates for 2014/15
- (b) the capital programme for 2014/15

2.2 **Warwick District Tax Base**

The Council notes the following amounts for the year 2014/15 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-

- (a) 49,836.88 being the amount calculated, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 as amended, as its council tax base for the year.
- (b) Part of the Council's Area

Joint Parish	Tax Base 2014/15 £
Baddesley Clinton	79.92
Baginton	298.37
Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton	800.34
Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall	327.19
Bishops Tachbrook	968.68
Bubbenhall	312.75
Budbrooke	740.64
Burton Green	426.43
Bushwood Not got a Parish Council	11.61
Cubbington	1,458.02
Eathorpe, Hunningham, Offchurch, Wappenbury	324.10
Hatton	933.86
Kenilworth	9,479.38
Lapworth	928.42
Royal Leamington Spa	15,487.83
Leek Wootton	530.28
Norton Lindsey	219.66
Old Milverton & Blackdown	274.83
Radford Semele	766.62
Rowington	507.10
Shrewley	412.01
Stoneleigh & Ashow	512.60
Warwick	11,006.92
Weston-under-Wetherley	183.45
Whitnash	2,845.87

being the amounts calculated, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations as amended, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area.

2.3 **Calculation of Warwick District Council Council Tax, including parish/town council precepts**

That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended:-

(a) £92,665,091.00

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2)(a) to (f) of the Act (*Gross Expenditure including parish/town council precepts*).

(b) £84,138,400.00

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act (*Gross Income*)

(c) £8,526,691.00

being the amount by which the aggregate at 2.3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2.3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax Requirement for the year.

(d) £171.09

being the amount at 2.3(c) above divided by the amount at 2.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (*Average Warwick District Council Tax, including parish/town precepts*).

(e) £1,207,647.00

being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (*Total parish/town council precepts*)

(f) £146.86

being the amount at 2.3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2.3(e) above by the amount at 2.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates (*Warwick District Council Tax excluding parish/town council precepts*)

(g) Part of the Council's Area

PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	Band D
	£
Baddesley Clinton	181.90
Baginton	176.71
Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton	197.05
Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall	174.06
Bishops Tachbrook	175.67
Bubbenhall	183.51
Budbrooke	177.04
Burton Green	217.21
Bushwood	146.86
Cubbington	176.50
Eathorpe, Hunningham, Offchurch, Wappenbury	172.32
Hatton	158.21
Kenilworth	165.36
Lapworth	164.85
Royal Leamington Spa	165.63
Leek Wootton	161.24
Norton Lindsey	169.62
Old Milverton & Blackdown	219.63
Radford Semele	171.29
Rowington	187.15
Shrewley	163.41
Stoneleigh & Ashow	177.65
Warwick	174.68
Weston-under-Wetherley	185.28
Whitnash	182.91

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2.3(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above (3.e) divided in each case by the amount at 2.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate (*Warwick District Council plus parish/town councils, Council Tax for each parish/town council at Band D*).

- (h) The amounts shown in Appendices 1 and 1a, attached, being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2.3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands (*Warwick District Council plus parish/town council Council Tax for each parish/town council for each Band*).

2.4 **Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner Precepts**

That it be noted that for the year 2014/15 Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the

Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Ban	Warwickshire County Council	Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner
	£	£
A	785.46	123.0408
B	916.37	143.5476
C	1,047.28	164.0544
D	1,178.19	184.5612
E	1,440.01	225.5747
F	1,701.83	266.5883
G	1,963.65	307.6019
H	2,356.38	369.1223

2.5 **Total Council Tax for the District for each Band in each Parish/Town Council**

That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.3(g) and 2.4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 2 as the amounts of council tax for the year 2014/15 for each of the categories of dwellings shown.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 The Executive papers for 12th February 2014, which all members will have received, contain all the background information on the budget at Item 5, "Budget 2014/15 and Council Tax – Revenue and Capital". The recommendations in this report amalgamate the Warwick District Council element of the Council Tax, with Council Tax levels agreed by Warwickshire County Council, Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner, and the town/parish councils for 2014/15. With all these constituent parts, the Council should now be in a position to set the overall levels of Council Tax for the District.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

4.1 **Policy Framework** – The Budgets within the District Council's Element of the Council Tax are in line with the Corporate Strategy and the Fit for the Future Programme.

4.2 **Fit for the Future** – These budgets also underpin delivery of the Council's Fit for the Future Programme.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

5.1 The whole of the Council's budget is concerned with the financing of its priorities. The formal setting of the tax is the arithmetic and technical process of aggregating the council tax levels set for each band by the County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner with those required by this Council, including parish/town councils. The Chief Financial Officer reports directly to Council in order that the council tax can be set in accordance with section 30 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 The Council does have discretion over its own element of the Council Tax, further information is contained in section 7 of the report in the 12th February Executive papers. However, it has to accept the precepts and associated council tax levels set by Warwickshire County Council, Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the town/parish councils.

7. **BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 Report to Executive 12th February 2014 – Budget 2014/15 and Council Tax and Capital
Report to Executive 11th December 2013 – General Fund Base Budget Report 2014-15 (Executive Item 5)
WCC and WPCC precepts
Parish and town council precepts

Budget and Council Tax 2014/15

Calculation of Warwick District Council Element including Special Expenses

WDC @ D	146.86	roundings 6	2 7	8	9	11	13	15	18
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H	BAND H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Baddesley Clinton	121.27	141.47	161.69	181.90	222.33	262.74	303.17	363.80	
Baginton	117.81	137.44	157.07	176.71	215.98	255.25	294.52	353.42	
Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton	131.37	153.26	175.15	197.05	240.84	284.63	328.42	394.10	
Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall	116.04	135.38	154.72	174.06	212.74	251.42	290.10	348.12	
Bishops Tachbrook	117.12	136.63	156.15	175.67	214.71	253.74	292.79	351.34	
Bubbenhall	122.34	142.73	163.12	183.51	224.29	265.07	305.85	367.02	
Budbrooke	118.03	137.69	157.37	177.04	216.39	255.72	295.07	354.08	
Burton Green	144.81	168.94	193.07	217.21	265.48	313.75	362.02	434.42	
Bushwood	97.91	114.22	130.54	146.86	179.50	212.13	244.77	293.72	
Cubbington	117.67	137.27	156.89	176.50	215.73	254.94	294.17	353.00	
Eathorpe, Hunningham, Offchurch, Wappenbury	114.88	134.02	153.17	172.32	210.62	248.91	287.20	344.64	
Hatton	105.48	123.05	140.63	158.21	193.37	228.52	263.69	316.42	
Kenilworth	110.24	128.61	146.98	165.36	202.11	238.85	275.60	330.72	
Lapworth	109.90	128.21	146.53	164.85	201.49	238.12	274.75	329.70	
Royal Leamington Spa	110.42	128.82	147.22	165.63	202.44	239.24	276.05	331.26	
Leek Wootton	107.50	125.40	143.32	161.24	197.08	232.90	268.74	322.48	
Norton Lindsey	113.08	131.92	150.77	169.62	207.32	245.01	282.70	339.24	
Old Milverton & Blackdown	146.42	170.82	195.22	219.63	268.44	317.24	366.05	439.26	
Radford Semele	114.20	133.22	152.26	171.29	209.36	247.42	285.49	342.58	
Rowington	124.77	145.56	166.35	187.15	228.74	270.33	311.92	374.30	
Shrewley	108.94	127.09	145.25	163.41	199.73	236.04	272.35	326.82	
Stoneleigh & Ashow	118.44	138.17	157.91	177.65	217.13	256.60	296.09	355.30	
Warwick	116.46	135.86	155.27	174.68	213.50	252.31	291.14	349.36	
Weston-under-Wetherley	123.52	144.10	164.69	185.28	226.46	267.63	308.80	370.56	
Whitnash	121.94	142.26	162.58	182.91	223.56	264.20	304.85	365.82	
Proportion of Band D	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	

Budget and Council Tax 2014/15
District and Parish/Town Council by Band

	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Warwick District Council	97.91	114.22	130.54	146.86	179.50	212.13	244.77	293.72
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL								
Baddesley Clinton	23.36	27.25	31.15	35.04	42.83	50.61	58.40	70.08
Baginton	19.90	23.22	26.53	29.85	36.48	43.12	49.75	59.70
Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton	33.46	39.04	44.61	50.19	61.34	72.50	83.65	100.38
Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall	18.13	21.16	24.18	27.20	33.24	39.29	45.33	54.40
Bishops Tachbrook	19.21	22.41	25.61	28.81	35.21	41.61	48.02	57.62
Bubbenhall	24.43	28.51	32.58	36.65	44.79	52.94	61.08	73.30
Budbrooke	20.12	23.47	26.83	30.18	36.89	43.59	50.30	60.36
Burton Green	46.90	54.72	62.53	70.35	85.98	101.62	117.25	140.70
Bushwood								
Cubbington	19.76	23.05	26.35	29.64	36.23	42.81	49.40	59.28
Eathorpe, Hunningham, Offchurch, Wappenbury	16.97	19.80	22.63	25.46	31.12	36.78	42.43	50.92
Hatton	7.57	8.83	10.09	11.35	13.87	16.39	18.92	22.70
Kenilworth	12.33	14.39	16.44	18.50	22.61	26.72	30.83	37.00
Lapworth	11.99	13.99	15.99	17.99	21.99	25.99	29.98	35.98
Royal Leamington Spa	12.51	14.60	16.68	18.77	22.94	27.11	31.28	37.54
Leek Wootton	9.59	11.18	12.78	14.38	17.58	20.77	23.97	28.76
Norton Lindsey	15.17	17.70	20.23	22.76	27.82	32.88	37.93	45.52
Old Milverton & Blackdown	48.51	56.60	64.68	72.77	88.94	105.11	121.28	145.54
Radford Semele	16.29	19.00	21.72	24.43	29.86	35.29	40.72	48.86
Rowington	26.86	31.34	35.81	40.29	49.24	58.20	67.15	80.58
Shrewley	11.03	12.87	14.71	16.55	20.23	23.91	27.58	33.10
Stoneleigh & Ashow	20.53	23.95	27.37	30.79	37.63	44.47	51.32	61.58
Warwick	18.55	21.64	24.73	27.82	34.00	40.18	46.37	55.64
Weston-under-Wetherley	25.61	29.88	34.15	38.42	46.96	55.50	64.03	76.84
Whitnash	24.03	28.04	32.04	36.05	44.06	52.07	60.08	72.10
Proportion of Band D	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9

Council Tax Calculations 2014/15 Warwick District Council
Including Warwickshire County Council And Warwickshire Police and Crime Commisioner

PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Baddesley Clinton	1,029.77	1,201.39	1,373.02	1,544.65	1,887.91	2,231.16	2,574.42	3,089.30
Baginton	1,026.31	1,197.36	1,368.40	1,539.46	1,881.56	2,223.67	2,565.77	3,078.92
Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton	1,039.87	1,213.18	1,386.48	1,559.80	1,906.42	2,253.05	2,599.67	3,119.60
Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall	1,024.54	1,195.30	1,366.05	1,536.81	1,878.32	2,219.84	2,561.35	3,073.62
Bishops Tachbrook	1,025.62	1,196.55	1,367.48	1,538.42	1,880.29	2,222.16	2,564.04	3,076.84
Bubbenhall	1,030.84	1,202.65	1,374.45	1,546.26	1,889.87	2,233.49	2,577.10	3,092.52
Budbrooke	1,026.53	1,197.61	1,368.70	1,539.79	1,881.97	2,224.14	2,566.32	3,079.58
Burton Green	1,053.31	1,228.86	1,404.40	1,579.96	1,931.06	2,282.17	2,633.27	3,159.92
Bushwood	1,006.41	1,174.14	1,341.87	1,509.61	1,845.08	2,180.55	2,516.02	3,019.22
Cubbington	1,026.17	1,197.19	1,368.22	1,539.25	1,881.31	2,223.36	2,565.42	3,078.50
Eathorpe, Hunningham, Offchurch, Wappenbury	1,023.38	1,193.94	1,364.50	1,535.07	1,876.20	2,217.33	2,558.45	3,070.14
Hatton	1,013.98	1,182.97	1,351.96	1,520.96	1,858.95	2,196.94	2,534.94	3,041.92
Kenilworth	1,018.74	1,188.53	1,358.31	1,528.11	1,867.69	2,207.27	2,546.85	3,056.22
Lapworth	1,018.40	1,188.13	1,357.86	1,527.60	1,867.07	2,206.54	2,546.00	3,055.20
Leamington Spa	1,018.92	1,188.74	1,358.55	1,528.38	1,868.02	2,207.66	2,547.30	3,056.76
Leek Wootton	1,016.00	1,185.32	1,354.65	1,523.99	1,862.66	2,201.32	2,539.99	3,047.98
Norton Lindsey	1,021.58	1,191.84	1,362.10	1,532.37	1,872.90	2,213.43	2,553.95	3,064.74
Old Milverton & Blackdown	1,054.92	1,230.74	1,406.55	1,582.38	1,934.02	2,285.66	2,637.30	3,164.76
Radford Semele	1,022.70	1,193.14	1,363.59	1,534.04	1,874.94	2,215.84	2,556.74	3,068.08
Rowington	1,033.27	1,205.48	1,377.68	1,549.90	1,894.32	2,238.75	2,583.17	3,099.80
Shrewley	1,017.44	1,187.01	1,356.58	1,526.16	1,865.31	2,204.46	2,543.60	3,052.32
Stoneleigh & Ashow	1,026.94	1,198.09	1,369.24	1,540.40	1,882.71	2,225.02	2,567.34	3,080.80
Warwick	1,024.96	1,195.78	1,366.60	1,537.43	1,879.08	2,220.73	2,562.39	3,074.86
Weston-under-Wetherley	1,032.02	1,204.02	1,376.02	1,548.03	1,892.04	2,236.05	2,580.05	3,096.06
Whitnash	1,030.44	1,202.18	1,373.91	1,545.66	1,889.14	2,232.62	2,576.10	3,091.32
Proportion of Band D	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 January 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mobbs (Chairman); Councillors Caborn, Coker, Cross, Mrs Grainger, Hammon, Shilton and Vincett.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Barrott (Chair of Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Mrs Blacklock (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Mrs Bromley (addressing Members as Ward Councillor) and Councillor Wilkinson (Labour Group Observer).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Boad, Liberal Democrat Group Observer.

115. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute Number 121 – Agenda Item 7A – Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Application

Councillor Coker declared an interest during the course of the meeting because he knew the applicant from Leamington Football Club and he took no part in the discussions.

116. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mobbs, made a statement to the Executive advising them that:

“In June 2012 the Council agreed to participate in the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel. This Council ideally sought two seats on the Panel one for the Leader and one for the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety. The final discussions on this were delegated to officers in consultation with senior Councillors, subject to the outcome being reported back to the Executive.

No record can be found informing the Executive that the Council only achieved a place on the Panel and this role was taken by the Leader of the Council.

In my role as Leader of the Council, I have now appointed Councillor Coker, Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, to the Police and Crime Panel for Warwickshire. Group Leaders are aware of this and I have been provided assurance that no conflict of interest arises from this and that other Authorities have also appointed their relevant Portfolio Holder to the Police and Crime Panel.

I would ask that this is recorded in the minutes and I will write to all Councillors to make them aware of this appointment.”

It was therefore, noted that Councillor Coker would be appointed to the Police and Crime Panel.

117. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PART 1

(Items on which a decision by Council is required)

None.

PART 2

(Items on which a decision by Council is not required)

118. COVENTRY AND WARWICKSHIRE CITY DEAL – UPDATE REPORT

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) which updated members on the final wording of the Coventry & Warwickshire City Deal. This had been agreed by Government on 12 December 2013 and a revision to the potential level of the local authority funding contribution to the Clearing House, including the potential amount of the previously agreed contribution from this Council.

Members were reminded that the Government 'sign off' of the CW City Deal proposals had not been secured when this subject was last considered by Executive in November 2013. However, the lengthy and complicated negotiations were brought to completion by early December allowing the Deputy Prime Minister to announce that the CW City Deal had been signed and agreed on 12 December 2013.

The CW City Deal agreement document, and accompanying Implementation Plans, was set out in full at appendix one to the report and had already been signed by the Deputy Prime Minister.

The report also advised that, as part of the CW City Deal, the Council would receive a capital funding allocation of £559,000 from the Department of Communities and Local Government to finance highway infrastructure improvements at the former Honiley airfield site at Fen End. These improvements would allow the development of a research and development campus for the automotive/autosports sector adjacent to a fully equipped test track facility.

Details of the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) being named as the Senior Responsible Officer for the Fen End Implementation Plan and for the joint work between central and local government, were included in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of the report.

Paragraph 3.7 outlined the factors that had impacted on the finances of the project, following recent revisions of the financial contribution required from the local authority sector. The Council's share of these costs was estimated at £24,000 which would be funded from the 2014/15 New Homes Bonus allocation.

No alternative options had been considered because the Council had already confirmed that it would meet any future funding contribution from New Homes Bonus income.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee was keen to see that consideration was given to what would happen if funding did not materialise, noted that the Council's only commitment at this stage from the New Homes Bonus was for 2014/15 and supported the recommendations in the report.

No alternative option had been considered as the Council has already confirmed that it would meet any future funding contribution from NHB income.

Councillor Caborn supported the recommendations and welcomed the news regarding funding.

In addition, the Leader, Councillor Mobbs endorsed the report, highlighted the funding detailed in recommendation 2.2 and signposted Members to paragraph 3.2 of the report which advised of the CW City Deal agreement document.

Having read the report and having heard the representations from the Scrutiny Committees, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations as written.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the final Coventry & Warwickshire (CW) City Deal, and agreed Implementation Plans, be noted, as set out at appendix one to the report;
- (2) this Council will receive a capital funding allocation of £559,000 to finance highway improvements at the Fen End employment site;
- (3) the revisions to the potential local authority funding contributions to the City Deal Clearing House are noted, as set out at appendix two to the report;
- (4) the potential revised funding contribution payable by this Council, is estimated to £24,000 for the first year and should be paid from the Council's New Homes Bonus (NHB) for 2014/15.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)
(Forward Plan reference number 571)

119. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN DESIGNATIONS

The Executive considered a report from Development Services which summarised the key issues relating to the formal designation of six new neighbourhood plans.

The report outlined the neighbourhood plan areas relating to the parishes of Barford, Budbrooke, Burton Green, Lapworth, Leek Wootton and Guys Cliffe and Stoneleigh and Ashow.

The report recommended approval of the neighbourhood plan area as submitted by Lapworth Parish Council because the location was unaffected by Community Governance Review considerations.

The report recommended refusal to designate the submitted neighbourhood plan areas for Barford and Budbrooke on the basis of current parish boundaries. Instead, it supported the establishment of new neighbourhood plan area boundaries for these areas on the basis of Community Governance Review recommendations to formulate coterminous electoral boundaries.

The report also recommended awaiting the outcome of the final round of consultation on community governance reforms (due to complete in March 2014) prior to determining the final designated neighbourhood plan areas for Burton Green, Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe and Stoneleigh and Ashow.

An alternative option was to only approve area designations in locations unaffected by the Community Governance Review. This would enable only one neighbourhood plan designation to be determined for Lapworth Parish.

Another alternative was for all the submitted area designations to be approved as originally proposed. This option could require some of the qualifying bodies (parish councils) to re-consult on new neighbourhood plan areas, particularly where a parish no longer had authority to develop a neighbourhood plan covering areas excluded from a newly established parish. This could cause confusion and delay to neighbourhood plans already well progressed. There could also be substantial opposition to re-consulting on neighbourhood plan boundaries by qualifying bodies (parish councils) and they would need to lead on any new application process.

There were a number of appendices attached to the report including the proposed area designations for Barford Parish and Budbrooke Parish, potential changes to the parish boundary for Leek Wootton and a map from the University of Warwick's representation.

An addendum was circulated by Councillor Caborn, prior to the Scrutiny meetings and Executive which proposed amendments to the recommendations. These amendments proposed waiting for the outcome of the next round of consultation on the Community Governance Review before agreeing any area designations for Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe, the Stoneleigh / Ashow, the Barford, Budbrooke and also the Burton Green. Final parish boundaries were planned to be prepared in March 2014 by the Regulatory Committee Working Group.

Councillor Caborn endorsed the report and the amended recommendations and stated that all parties were keen to work together and hoped that the amendments would provide clarity for all parties.

Having read the report the Executive decided to agree the recommendations as per the addendum.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Executive takes regard of the representations submitted and designates the Neighbourhood Plan Areas as submitted by:

- Lapworth Parish Council

This will enable the Parish Council to begin the process of formally preparing its neighbourhood plan;

- (2) the Executive awaits the outcome of the next and final round of consultation on the Community Governance Review as directed by Regulatory Committee before agreeing any area designations for Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe neighbourhood plan area, the Stoneleigh / Ashow neighbourhood plan area, the Barford neighbourhood plan area, Budbrooke neighbourhood plan area and also the Burton Green neighbourhood plan area. Final parish boundary proposals are to be prepared in March 2014 by the Regulatory Committee Working Group;
- (3) the funding available from the Department for Communities and Local Government for the financial year 2013/14, is noted, as set out in the Budgetary Framework section of this report; and
- (4) the Executive Committee schedule decision-making on the final areas to be designated for Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe neighbourhood plan area, the Stoneleigh / Ashow neighbourhood plan area, the Barford Neighbourhood Plan area, Budbrooke neighbourhood plan area and also the Burton Green neighbourhood plan area for either March or April 2014 Executive meetings.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)
(Forward Plan reference number 544, 543)

120. **SUPPORT FOR AN INDOOR BOWLS FACILITY**

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive which sought approval, in principle, to offer the Avon Valley Indoor Bowls Club (AVIBC) a long lease (term 99 years) on land at Harbury Lane and to support their desire to raise funds for a new indoor bowls facility/changing rooms relocating from the Jaguar Land Rover site at Gaydon.

The Council had been approached by AVIBC, currently based at the Jaguar Land Rover site at Gaydon, for assistance to relocate its facility into the District. The need had arisen because the Club had been given advance notice by its present landlord that it would not be able to remain on the present site when the lease ended in 2020. The AVIBC's business case was set out at appendix 1 to the report.

AVIBC had not yet sought funds to assist in developing the new facility but was seeking to identify a site which it could lease on a long term basis at a peppercorn rent in order to develop a viable funding approach.

A number of Council owned recreational sites had been assessed and both AVIBC and officers concluded that the Harbury Lane site, detailed on map 1to

the report, offered both opportunity to AVIBC and to the Council directly and indirectly.

Officers felt that the proposal would add to the range of sporting facilities in the District and make a contribution to both the local economy and to the health and well-being of the community especially the more elderly.

The proposal would also provide a significant 7 day a week, though not 24 hours a day, on-site presence which would help deter illegal site encampments and, if combined with AVIBC taking on the running costs and responsibilities for the changing rooms, would offer a financial relief to the Council and so the wider community.

Other than some officer time having been expended so far, there had been no actual cost to the Council in dealing with this proposal. The raising of funds for the facility and the construction of the facility would be the responsibility of AVIBC rather than with the Council and there would be a cost in terms of legal fees relating to the lease and officer time.

The Council could decide not to offer support for a long lease to be granted to AVIBC, however, this could represent a missed opportunity, as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

The approach of offering support in principle to the granting of a long lease at a peppercorn rent at this stage offered the least cost and least risk approach to the Council in securing additional investment in local sporting facilities.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee expressed some unease over offering a lease at a peppercorn rent but nevertheless supported the recommendations in the report, noting that the value for money element would be assessed in accordance with paragraph 5.3.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee were delighted with the report which received strong support from Members and recommended that the Executive approve the proposals. Councillor Mrs Blacklock stated that the Committee were very excited by the proposal and thanked the Chief Executive for attending their meeting and answering questions from members.

Councillor Caborn supported the report and felt that the move would consolidate the District's representation as a Bowls centre for England.

The Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services, Councillor Cross, congratulated the team involved and endorsed the recommendations as written. He felt this was an exciting opportunity and hoped that new members would become involved at the Club's training sessions in February and March.

In response, the Executive fully supported the recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny and having read the report, they decided to agree the recommendations as written.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the offer of a long term lease (99 years) on part of the Harbury Lane sports fields to AVIBC at a

peppercorn rent, be agreed in principle and otherwise on terms to be agreed between the parties subject to:

- a) AVIBC taking on the running costs and ongoing responsibilities for the existing changing rooms on site;
 - b) The proposal not contravening the restrictive covenant relating to this area of land; and
 - c) The proposal being acceptable planning wise; and
- (2) a further report be brought to the Executive once funding has been raised concerning matters of detail relating to the lease, the location of the proposed facility and the partnership agreement.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Cross)

121. RURAL/URBAN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT APPLICATION

The Executive considered a report from Finance which detailed two Rural / Urban Capital Improvement applications for Leek Wootton and Guys Cliffe Parish Council and Leamington Football Club.

The Council operated a scheme to award Capital Improvement Grants to organisations in rural and urban areas. The grants recommended were in accordance with the Council's agreed scheme and would provide funding to help the projects progress.

Leek Wootton and Guys Cliffe Parish Council submitted an application for Warwick District Council to be a Third Party Funder for their £40,000 grant application to BIFFA. The RUCIS application was for 11% of the total project costs up to a maximum of £4,400.

The project was to replace outdated play equipment in the village playground and to provide a modern and interesting play facility for the whole community.

Leek Wootton and Guys Cliffe Parish Council stated they would provide £1,049 (2% of the total project costs) towards the project from their own cash reserves. Leek Wootton and Guys Cliffe Parish Council had previously had successful RUCIS applications in October 2005 and October 2008.

The second application was from Leamington Football Club, which submitted an application to install crush barriers, turnstiles, medical unit, catering unit, replacement toilets and new disabled toilets to meet mandatory Step 2 League Ground Grading Requirements and Health & Safety requirements. The RUCIS application was for 48% of the total project costs up to a maximum of £30,000.

Leamington Football Club had made an application to the FA Football Foundation for 50% of the total project costs and a copy of the application had been provided.

Leamington Football Club had also made an application to Leamington Town Council for 2% of the total project costs, however, Leamington Football Club actually fell within the remit of Whitnash Town Council. Officers had been verbally advised by Leamington Football Club that Leamington Town Council had previously supported / contributed to the club and were open to considering an approach for a contribution to this project. Whitnash Town Council had therefore not been approached on this occasion. Leamington Football Club had not previously applied for a RUCIS grant.

There was £59,000 available to be allocated for Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme Grants from the Rural Cost Centre budget in 2013/14. If the application from Leek Wootton and Guys Cliffe Parish Council for 11% of the total project costs up to a maximum of £4,400 was approved, £54,600 would remain in the Rural cost centre budget.

There was £13,195 available to be allocated for Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme Grants from the Urban Cost Centre budget for 2013/14. If the application from Leamington Football Club for 48% of the total project cost up to a maximum of £30,000 was approved, there would be a zero balance left in the Urban Cost Centre budget and £16,805 would need to be deducted from the Slippage cost centre budget, leaving a remaining balance of £17,049.

The alternative options were to not approve the grant funding, or to vary the amount awarded.

Having read the report the Executive decided to agree the recommendations as written.

RESOLVED that

- (1) a Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant from the Rural cost centre budget, be approved for Leek Wootton and Guys Cliffe Parish Council of 11% third party funding payment to release a £40,000 BIFFA capital grant award, up to a maximum of £4,400 subject to receipt of the following:

Written confirmation from BIFFA (or an alternative grant provider that requires a third party payment) to approve a capital grant of £40,000 once the third party payment has been made

- (2) a Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant split between the Urban cost centre budget and the Slippage cost centre budget, be approved for Leamington Football Club of 48% of the total project costs to install crush barriers, turnstiles, medical unit, catering unit, replacement toilets and new disabled toilets, up to a maximum of £30,000 subject to receipt of the following:

- a) written confirmation of planning permission to carry out the work;

- b) written confirmation of FA Football Foundation approval (or if the application is declined, another capital grant provider) to fund £31,000 of the project cost to ensure that the RUCIS grant remains as 48% of the total project cost;
- c) written confirmation of Leamington Town Council approval (or if the application is declined, another capital grant provider) to fund £1,300 of the project cost to ensure that the RUCIS grant remains as 48% of the total project cost;
- d) written confirmation that the Shareholders, within the January 2014 AGM, have agreed that any surplus funds / "profits" at the end of each financial year are re-invested in the club and that share dividends will not be paid; therefore evidencing that the club is a "not-for-profit organisation"; and
- e) written confirmation that an addendum has been included in the club's Articles of Association that also states that any surplus funds / "profits" at the end of each financial year are re-invested in the club and that share dividends will not be paid; therefore evidencing that the club is a "not-for-profit organisation"

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)

122. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK REGISTER

The Executive considered a report from Finance which set out the latest version of the Council's Significant Business Risk Register for review by the Executive.

The Significant Business Risk Register (SBRR) recorded all significant risks to the Council's operations, key priorities, and major projects and individual services had their own service risk registers. The SBRR was reviewed quarterly by the Council's Senior Management Team and then, in keeping with Members' overall responsibilities for managing risk, by the Executive.

Several improvements to the SBRR had been made in recent months and changes from one review period to the next were now identified to provide a record of movements.

The report requested that the Significant Business Risk Register attached at appendix 1 to the report be reviewed and consider if any further actions needed to be taken to manage the risks facing the organisation.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee asked a number of questions of the Council Leader and was reassured that he was not content to see risks remain in the red. Members noted that discussions were taking place with Warwickshire County Council to address infrastructure planning, which the

Leader agreed should be highlighted in the register. The Committee suggested that the covering report needed to highlight new triggers and include more information regarding mitigations put in place to reverse negative trends. The Committee also felt that annual credit checks should remain in place as a matter of course because problems with a major contractor would be a business risk as opposed to a service risk.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee was reassured by the Leader's intention to work closely with senior managers to strengthen the Executive process and to manage the risk register, thanked the Leader for responding to Members' questions and supported the recommendations in the report.

The Leader, Councillor Mobbs, assured Members that there would be a quarterly review of the register and agreed to the narrative regarding movement and other changes discussed at Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee. He reminded Members of the Executive's responsibility for managing the register effectively and thanked the Scrutiny Committee for its comments.

Having read the report and having heard the representations from the Scrutiny Committee, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations as written.

RESOLVED that the Significant Business Risk Register attached at Appendix 1, is noted and no further actions should be taken to manage the risks facing the organisation.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs)
(Forward Plan reference number 535)

123. PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute No.	Para Nos.	Reason
124, 125 & 126	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

124. POTENTIAL COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF LAND IN ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA

The recommendations of the report were agreed.

The full minute for this item will be set out in the confidential minutes of the meeting.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Hammon & Mobbs)
(Forward Plan reference number 563)

125. **FETHERSTON COURT DEVELOPMENT SCHEME LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE**

The recommendations of the report were agreed.

The full minute for this item will be set out in the confidential minutes of the meeting.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Vincett)
(Forward Plan reference number 572)

126. **MINUTES**

The confidential minutes of the meetings held on 11 December 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(The meeting ended at 6.28 pm)

Addendum for Council 26 February 2014

Item 10 - Questions to Portfolio Holders

Councillor Williams to the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property Services, Councillor Vincett that:

- (1) "Could the Portfolio Holder comment on the impact the Government's welfare reforms are having on the payment of rent by WDC tenants?"
- (2) "With regard to the affect of Right to Buy on the HRA Business Plan, can the Portfolio Holder confirm that our tenants are not discouraged from buying their council houses?"

Item 14 – Housing Rents and Revenue Account Budget 2014/15

Further information from Councillor Vincett, as Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property Services.

Housing Rent Setting

Will this policy result in tenants who are downsizing being disadvantaged?

This paper examines the potential implications for WDC tenants of the change in policy to increase rents to target rent when a property is relet.

Since April 2013, 43 WDC tenants have transferred to another WDC property via HomeChoice. Of the tenants who have transferred, less than half moved to a smaller property (18). The rest moved to a property with the same number, or additional bedrooms.

If we use the 18 tenants who have downsized this year as a sample, none of those tenants would have been worse off under the proposed rental policy.

What would the rental difference have been?

If the proposed policy had been implemented last year, of the 18 tenants who downsized, there would have been an average reduction in rent charged of £5.44 per week less than the previous property. In addition, 11 of these tenants were eligible for the Tenants Incentive Grant Scheme (TIGS). This resulted in the tenant receiving a one off payment of £5,000.

11 out of the 18 (60%) tenants who downsized would still have had reduction in their weekly rent charge. The remaining 7 (40%) would have witnessed an increase in the weekly rent charge of an average of £5.99 per week, ranging from £0.14 per week up to £14.29 per week.

Why are the 7 tenants whose rent increased not disadvantaged?

5 of those tenants whose rents would have increased under the proposed policy were eligible for the Tenants Incentive Grant Scheme (TIGS). This resulted in the tenant receiving a payment of £5,000, which would have covered the additional rent costs for at least 7 years. The remaining 2 were in receipt of full housing benefit and therefore were not directly affected by the rent charge.

What else?

For tenant's downsizing, there are also other financial benefits, for example a reduction in energy costs as well as council tax costs. Of the 18 tenants who downsized since April 2013, they still would have been on average £6.53 per week better off through a reduced rent and council tax charge by downsizing; this is in addition to any savings that would inevitably be made in heating and lighting a smaller property. Furthermore, any tenant's affected by the under occupation charge would no longer be subject to this charge and feel the benefits from this.

How are tenants coping with the under occupation charge?

The under occupation charge was implemented on 1st April 2013 and 610 WDC tenants are affected by this charge. 75% of tenants who are affected are maintaining satisfactory payments. We are continually working with residents affected by the welfare reforms to offer them support and guidance to support them to maintain their rent payments and rent collection performance is especially strong compared to the national picture – overall WDC are seeing arrears reduce and income collection increase.

The future...

There is ever increasing demand for social housing with 400 applicants in band 1 and 2 as at 17th February 2014. Almost three quarters (276) of band 1 and 2 applicants require and 1 or 2 bedroom property. The Council has to weigh the management of the rent increases with the opportunity to create capacity to develop new homes in the district to meet the significant demand.

The Council's existing tenants are faced with challenges imposed through the welfare reforms. Through the effective and proactive support provided by the Housing & property Service we are working to ensure that tenants are supported to be able to maintain their rent payments.

Furthermore the Council has the TIGS scheme which is, subject to conditions, open to all tenants who wish to downsize which provides considerable financial support. This scheme will be reviewed to ensure that it is as effective as possible and is able to benefit as many customers who require it as possible.