

 Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee - 1 July 2014		Agenda Item No. <h1 style="text-align: right;">5</h1>
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	Civic & Committee 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Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	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 10/06/2014 Executive minutes 11/06/2014	

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		Andrew Jones
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Legal		
Finance		Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holders		

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 given by the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee on reports submitted to the Executive on 11 June 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That 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 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 9.00 am 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 10 June 2014, the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the items detailed in the appendices. The responses which the Executive gave are also shown.

APPENDIX 1

Responses from the meeting of the Executive held on 11 June 2014 to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee's comments

Item no	3	Title	Final Accounts	Requested by	Chair
Scrutiny Comment		<p>The Committee supported the recommendations following a robust discussion and thanked the Head of Finance for attending and answering their questions. Members asked for clarity on the level of slippage each year and the Council's current deficit position.</p> <p>Members enquired about the pension deficit, the impact of the Council Tax freeze and were satisfied that any potential increase in interest rates had been factored into the forecasting.</p> <p>Finally, the Finance & Audit Committee highlighted the excellent Council Tax collection rate of 98.5%.</p>			
Executive Response		<p>The Chairman thanked Councillor Barrott and the Committee for their comments and responded that the Executive would look at the pension deficit. He drew attention to recommendation 2.1(e) which stated that the details of the use of the new Local Plan Delivery Reserve and the decision making arrangements would be detailed in the July Budget Review Executive report. The Chairman was pleased to note that this was the seventh year that Warwick District Council had achieved a surplus, for which he congratulated both officers and Councillors.</p>			

Item no	4	Title	HRA Rent Setting for Void Properties	Requested by	Chair
Scrutiny Comment		<p>The Committee supported the recommendations but had concerns that this could dis-incentivise people to downsize. Members noted the access to a Tenants Incentive Grant Scheme and welcomed the forthcoming review.</p> <p>Members noted the impact of the previous decision on the Business Plan and appreciated the loss of revenue if these recommendations were not agreed. However, some Members felt that a more flexible, case by case approach was needed.</p>			
Executive Response		<p>Councillor Vincett thanked the Committee for its comments, recognised Members concerns and accepted the comment about flexibility. He agreed to keep a watching brief and would identify any reticence to downsize if possible.</p>			

Item no	7a	Title	Rural / Urban Capital Improvement Scheme (RUCIS) Application	Requested by	Chair
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Committee supported the recommendations and advised that, following discussion with the report author, future reports would include details of the latest bank statement from clubs, to avoid confusing old accounts with available funds.</p> <p>Members were disappointed that Kenilworth Town Council felt unable to support the club financially and noted that Appendix 2 on page 7 should read a maximum contribution of £13,250 not -£31,450.</p>				
Executive Response	<p>The Executive thanked the Scrutiny Committee for identifying the correct figure.</p>				

Item no	7b	Title	Microsoft Support Contract	Requested by	Chair
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.</p>				
Executive Response	<p>-</p>				

The Committee also considered the following Executive agenda items which are detailed in a separate confidential appendix:

- Item 9 - Land off Wise Street, Royal Leamington Spa
- Urgent item - Exemption to the Code of Procurement Practice