

 Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee - 17 April 2012		Agenda Item No. 7
Title	Comments from the Executive	
For further information about this report please contact	Graham Leach Committee Services Officer 01926 456114 committee@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Service Area	Members' Services	
Wards of the District directly affected	N/A	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers	Finance & Audit minutes 05/03/2012 and 13/03/2012 & Executive minutes 06/03/2012 and 14/03/2012	

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	25.01.2012	Andrew Jones
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Legal		
Finance	27.01.2012	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 6 and 14 March 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The responses made by the Executive be noted.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

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

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

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

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

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

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 As part of the new scrutiny process, the Committee no longer considers the whole of the Executive agenda.
- 7.2 Councillors are emailed at the time of the publication of the Executive and Scrutiny Committee agendas, asking them to contact Committee Services by 9.00am on the day of the Scrutiny Committee, to advise which Executive items they wish the Scrutiny Committee to pass comment on, and the reasons why.
- 7.3 As a result, at its meetings on 5 and 13 March 2012, the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the items detailed in appendix 1. The responses which Executive gave are also shown.

APPENDIX 1

Responses from the meeting of the Executive held on 6 March 2012 on the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee's Comments

Item no.	3	Title	Housing Revenue Account Draft Business Plan 2012-2062 and Self Financing	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee commented that there needs to be close scrutiny of £100,000 and how this is to be monitored should be explained to members as soon as practicable.</p> <p>It also felt that there should be check point/milestone reports made more often than annually to the Executive and exception reports should be made to the next meeting of the Executive. The frequency of the check point reports and the trigger points for exception reports should be detailed within the project plan as agreed with the Housing Portfolio Holder at the Scrutiny meeting.</p>				
Executive Response	<p>The Portfolio Holder confirmed that as stated at their meeting the previous evening, the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee were invited to scrutinise any aspect of the Business Plan as they felt necessary. He also highlighted that recommendation 2.5 addressed the frequency of reports and explained that the Project Plan, due to be published in June, would detail a full report schedule which members would then be welcome to scrutinise.</p>				

Responses from the meeting of the Executive held on 13 March 2012 on the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee's Comments

Item no.	4	Title	C&CS Review – Team Structure, ICT Strategy & Channel Strategy	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report, whilst expressing considerable concern over the potential for redundancies and the associated cost.</p> <p>The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee felt that any risk in the strategy should be highlighted. They requested that future reports highlight the needs of unemployed, vulnerable and student residents (which could well be in the majority) and how their requirements would be met by the Council. There was also a call for staff to be particularly well trained on how to deal with frightened and worried customers. Also arising from the Committee's deliberations was the need for a full investigation into the use and cost of mobile phones.</p>				

Executive Response	The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Grainger, assured Members that comprehensive training would be delivered to staff and Members and was confident that the majority of the work would be completed in two years. In addition, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Doody, agreed that the Council's Benefits and Fraud Manager, Andrea Wyatt, be congratulated for her efforts.
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Item no.	5	Title	Tourism & Visitor Economy	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee were pleased to see input from Warwick Castle. Members emphasised the importance of business engagement and supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	The Executive agreed that business engagement was paramount and thanked the Committee for its support.				

Item no.	6	Title	Court Street Creative Arches	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	The Executive thanked the Committee for its support.				

Item no.	9B	Title	Request for transfer of funds from Planning Appeals Reserve	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations, but suggested that recommendation 2.1 should be more robust in terms of commitment to the use of Framework Agreements in the future. The Committee also felt there was a need for a diplomatic letter to Town and Parish Councils setting out this Council's position as detailed in recommendation 2.4.</p> <p>The Finance & Audit Committee recommended that the Executive write to Town and Parish Councils, diplomatically setting out the Council's position</p>				

	as detailed in recommendation 2.4.
Executive Response	The Executive agreed with the proposal put forward by Finance and Audit and requested that the Deputy Chief Executive write to the Parish and Town Councils. Members were also mindful that recommendation 2.1 should be made stronger and Mike Snow and Andrew Jones agreed to re-word this recommendation.

Item no.	11	Title	South West Warwick (Chase Meadow) Community Centre Development	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	<p>The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report, subject to at least one member of Warwick District Council being included on the board of directors. It was suggested that consideration should be given to installing drains as part of the building works, which would save a great deal of expense at a later date if it was then decided that showers should be installed.</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) agreed to clarify what Design Development Risk is.</p> <p>The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee recommended to Executive that at least one member of Warwick District Council be included on the board of directors.</p>				
Executive Response	<p>Councillor Doody agreed that this was a sensible idea and proposed that Councillor Rhead represent the Council on the Board of Directors.</p> <p>Officers advised that they would be looking into the issues raised regarding drainage and would be encouraging CMCCCL to reinvestigate the possibility of installing the necessary pipe work in case shower facilities were to be introduced at a later date.</p>				

Item no.	12	Title	Kenilworth Public Service Centre	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	The Executive thanked the Committee for its support.				

Item no.	14	Title	Code of Procurement: Exception Request	Requested by	Chair
Reason considered	Financial implications to the Council				
Scrutiny Comment	The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.				
Executive Response	The Executive thanked the Committee for its support.				