

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 March 2008 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Coker (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Bunker, Michael Doody, Kinson, Pratt and White.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Boad (Chair of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee);
Councillor Caborn (Chairman of the Council);
Councillor Crowther (Labour Group Observer);
Councillor Ms De-Lara-Bond (Liberal Democrat Group Observer); and
Councillor Mrs Knight (Chair of Audit and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

1017. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

1018. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2008 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

1019. CORE STRATEGY

The Executive considered a report from Policy, Projects and Conservation which sought approval to undertake the public consultation on the Options stage of the Core Strategy.

Following the adoption of the Warwick District Local Plan, the Council had started preparation of its Core Strategy. The Core Strategy would form part of the Local Development Framework, the portfolio of planning documents which would, in time, replace the Local Plan as the main vehicle for the Council to articulate its planning policies.

The role of the Core Strategy was to set the strategic vision and objectives for Warwick District for the years ahead. All local authorities must prepare Core Strategies and within Warwickshire all Council's were using the period to 2026 (in accordance with the Phase 2 Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy) as the timeframe within which to work.

At the meeting of the Executive in October 2007, it was agreed to separate the "Issues & Options" stage into two, with the Council firstly consulting on the key issues facing the district, to be followed in the spring by a further consultation on the options available.

A report for public consultation had been prepared and was available on the Council's website. A short summary had also been included within section three of the "Options Paper" which was attached at appendix 1 to the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Environment and Economic Policy Committee made the following comments:

- (1) the needs of the community play an important part in planning for future development and that the public, other agencies and neighbouring authorities should be consulted accordingly;
- (2) particular attention should be given to sustainability, affordability, growth areas, the infrastructure, services such as transport, health and education, carbon footprints and the types of businesses which the Council would like to see attracted to the area in the future; and
- (3) that efforts should be made to preserve the identities of individual conurbations within the district over the long term.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report and suggested that it should be fully inclusive of the whole community. It should also be made clear that the 5 options were not prescriptive.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the public consultation be undertaken on the “options” that were available to the Core Strategy in accordance with the approach set out within the report; and
- (2) the Core Strategy “Options Paper” as set out in appendix 1 to the report, should form the basis for the public consultation.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan ref 61)

1020. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT SELF FINANCING BUSINESS PLAN

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Housing and Property Services to provide an update on the progress of the Self Financing project and the future options for financing the housing stock.

In July 2006 the Government announced the establishment of a project to explore the viability and implications of council housing being funded outside of the national Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system, i.e. for a council's HRA to become 'self financing'. Six local authorities, three with a retained stock and three with an arms length management organisation (ALMO) were invited to work with the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) on the project, which included Warwick District Council, and was known as the Modelling Group (MG).

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Since September 2006 the MG had worked collectively, with shared consultancy support, enabling the development of a common methodology and business plan format. Using a set of criteria defined by CLG this common approach was used to produce separate 30 year self financing business plans which assumed each council would leave the national HRA subsidy system.

The project had shown that self financing appeared to offer significant potential benefits. However, these benefits could only be realised by allowing some councils to leave the national HRA subsidy system. Ministers had become concerned that this could potentially disadvantage those councils remaining within the national system, creating a two-tier council housing sector of 'haves' and 'have-nots', the elimination of which had been a driving force behind the establishment of the current redistributive national subsidy system.

The government response remained positive and enabling legislation had been included in the Housing and Regeneration Bill that would provide for a Secretary of State to permit a council to leave the national subsidy system.

There were considerable benefits to remaining engaged with CLG. Contact through the MG offered the opportunity of advance information on the likely direction of future policy development and the potential to influence the national debate. It also ensured Warwick District Council would remain within the group of councils, who were likely to be amongst the first to be offered the opportunity to consider becoming self financing should it become an option. The Head of Housing and Property Services had therefore provisionally indicated our intention to remain a member of the MG provided that its future work could continue to be accommodated within existing resources.

To gain the maximum benefit from our continuing involvement it was proposed that a cross-party member working group be established to work with officers and the Housing Portfolio Holder to examine the potential impact of issues emerging from the review on the existing business plan. Assuming Warwick District Council stayed within the national HRA subsidy system. The group would also be able to assess whether becoming self financing would be a viable and sustainable option for Warwick District Council.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report and the progress of the work undertaken by officers as part of the Modelling Group, be noted;
- (2) the Government's establishment of a review of the national Housing Revenue Account (HRA), be noted;

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

- (3) the establishment of a member working group comprising of one member from each political group to work with the Housing Portfolio Holder and Head of Housing and Property Services, be approved; and
- (4) the working group's remit should be twofold,
 - (1) firstly to monitor the progress of the Government's HRA review and assess the potential impact of its emerging outcomes on Warwick District Council; and
 - (2) to assess whether the potential for a self financing HRA to ensure the long term sustainability of our housing stock and to contribute to meeting housing need within the district is sufficient to warrant full consideration of this option were it to be offered in the future.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward Plan ref 35)

1021. LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA CONSULTATION RESULTS AND ACTION PLAN

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Environmental Health which gave feedback to consultation on the draft Air Quality Action Plan. It also proposed the extension of the existing Warwick Air Quality Management Area.

The Environmental Protection Act 1995 Part IV required that local authorities monitor and assess air quality within their areas. Where pollution levels exceed, or are likely to exceed Air Quality Regulation standards then Air Quality management Areas (AQMA's) must be declared. Within Warwick District there were 3 AQMA's. There was a duty to devise an Air Quality Action Plan to improve air quality within those areas.

The Air Quality Action Plan had been consulted on and the detailed report gave the public response to the consultation. An Executive summary was provided and the full data was contained in the appendix attached to the report.

The next step in the process was for the Action Plan to be amended to include specific measures which would bring about improvement of air quality. This was likely to require further air quality assessment and computer modelling work.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted and the finalised Action Plan be brought back for approval within 12 months;
- (2) the limits of the Warwick Town Centre Air Quality Management Area be extended to include Part of High Street up to the junction with Bowling Green Street; Bowling Green Street, Theatre Street, Saltisford up to the junction with Vittle Road, Northgate, The Butts, Smith Street and St Nicholas Church Street.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Kinson)
(Forward Plan ref 38)

1022. CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CONTRACT AWARD

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Revenues and Customer Services on the renewal of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) contracts for the Warwickshire Direct Partnership procured from a single preferred supplier (Northgate Information Systems) via an EU compliant framework agreement.

The current CRM contracts were due to end in March 2009; however, Northgate was proposing significant cost reductions in comparison with the current contracts if it received notice of a successful bid by April 2008.

The Council's Code of Contract Practice permits Senior Managers to dispense with usual contract procedure and not seek tenders:

"where there is some genuine and valid reason why competitive tenders should not be sought." (2.7(c) refers).

The genuine and valid reason for tenders not being sought was that the CRM contracts were due to be renewed with the existing supplier of the system through an EU compliant framework agreement, producing significant cost savings against the current contracts and operational benefits for all partners within the WDP.

Considerable levels of resource had been expended by partners since the original purchase of the CRM system in 2004 to embed the system and its associated software into the contact centres and one stop shops. This has resulted in improvements in customer satisfaction and customer access to services. Procuring the CRM system from the existing supplier through the framework agreement would allow the Warwickshire Direct Partnership (WDP) to continue using the current CRM system and avoid incurring the initial set up costs and disruption of implementing a new system.

Members had previously authorised the use of EU compliant framework agreements as a procurement mechanism.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Legal advice had been sought from the Procurement Solicitor at Warwickshire County Council. The advice stated that the Council had a strong case to justify approaching one supplier. This advice was attached at Appendix 2 to the report. The advice also had the support of Warwick District Council's Legal Services.

Warwick District Council's Legal Services had volunteered to lead on the procurement on behalf of the Partnership. This had been welcomed by all partners and a revised Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) had been drawn up by Warwick District Council. The revised MoA would be in place by April 2008 and incorporated, amongst other things, a clause indicating that Legal Services were representing the Partnership and that all partners indemnify each other against any liabilities, claims, expenses so that Warwick District Council does not incur any undue costs.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were unhappy with report and raised concerns, which they felt needed to be addressed before the Executive could make a decision. However, prior to the meeting of the Executive, Councillor Rhead had received a full report from Tony Isaacs, Programme Manager, which clarified all the concerns raised. Councillor Mrs Knight, Chair of Audit & Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was happy with the response.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the renewal the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) contracts due to expire in March 2009, on behalf of Warwickshire County Council and all Warwickshire District/Borough Councils with Northgate Information Systems without the invitation of formal tenders in accordance with Paragraph 2.7.3 of the Council's Code of Contract Practice, be approved;
- (2) the Memorandum of Agreement which would be in place to protect the position of Warwick District Council as the contracting party, be noted; and
- (3) the Council's financial projections be amended to reflect the contract saving from April 2009.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Pratt)
(Forward Plan ref 71)

1023. NEW CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Executive considered a report from the Strategic Director for Community Resources on the new code of corporate governance and the arrangements for the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) had just issued a new framework and guidance on delivering good governance in local government. It replaced the 2001 guidance and was built on the six core principles set out in the Good Governance Standard for Public Services that were themselves developed from earlier work by Cadbury and Nolan.

The new framework was more comprehensive than the 2001 approach. A new Proposed Code of Corporate Governance based on the new framework was set out in Appendix A to the report, and for ease of comparison the previous Code was set out at Appendix B to the report.

In addition to having a Code of Corporate Governance; the Accounts and Audit Regulations now required every authority to produce an Annual Governance Statement. It was a requirement for this statement to be published with the Accounts in place of the previous statement of internal control. The Councils Internal Audit Manager would still provide a written annual report to those charged with governance, timed to support the Annual Governance Statement.

The CIPFA financial advisory network had produced a rough guide for practitioners on producing the Annual Governance Statement. Its advice was that it was a key corporate document and the most senior officer and the most senior member (The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive) had joint responsibility as signatories for its accuracy and completeness. It advised that it should be owned by all senior officers and members of the authority and that it was essential that there was a buy in at the top level of the organisation and in particular advises that the work should not be delegated to a single officer.

There was no definitive way of producing the Annual Governance Statement. The rough guide states that at the centre of the review process should be a corporate group who would be given ultimate responsibility for drafting the statement, evaluating assurances and the supporting evidence. This group should review whether or not there was consistency with existing policies and the authorities' governance framework. Although the Annual Governance Statement should be reviewed alongside the review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control, it was suggested that Audit and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the latter and gave comments to Standards Committee to aid them in agreeing the Annual Governance Statement.

An officer working group was currently in place and working on the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement

Subject to any further comments by the Executive it was proposed that the following were used as a reference group to give feedback to the officer group on their evidence in support of the Annual Governance Statement.

- the Chairman of the Council
- the Vice Chairman of the Council
- the Leader of the Council
- the Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Currently Executive & Audit and Resources)
- the Chair of the Standards Committee

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The current draft of the emerging Constitution contained proposals for this function to be assigned to the Standards Committee. It would be recommended to members that this was a satisfactory means of meeting the requirements for a critical review of the Annual Governance Statement.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations subject to a few minor clarifications on wording which they felt should be delegated to the officer working party to correct. One member felt very strongly that the Procurement officer should be on the working party.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report, however, the dates mentioned in 2.10 of the report on page 88 were backwards and did not state which year. The Strategic Director for Community Resources clarified that they should be read in reverse order and they were for the year of 2008.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the new proposed Code of Corporate Governance as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved; and
- (2) the arrangements for the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement as set out in the report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)

1024. NEW EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME

The Executive considered a report from Community Resources on the adoption of a new Equality and Diversity Scheme. To enable the Council to merge the requirements of the Equality Standard and its statutory duty to produce Race, Disability and Gender Schemes into one comprehensive Scheme covering all equality areas.

Warwick District Council had a number of statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity relating to race, disability and gender and to remove discrimination.

The Council formally adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government in June 2003 as a means of delivering on its statutory duties and a fundamental requirement was to produce a Policy, Strategy and Action Plan. In addition the Council produced separate Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes.

The development of the new Equality and Diversity Scheme, Priorities and Action Plan enabled the Council to merge together the requirements of the Equality Standard and its statutory equality duties.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report, although 1.3 of the recommendations stated that the Culture and Social Policy Committee would be asked to monitor progress. It was suggested that timescales ought to be included as the scrutiny process would be changing. Councillor Mrs Bunker suggested that it would be best to look at timescales for the action plan once the Stage 3 target had been met, due in May 2008.

The Culture and Social Policy Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the new Equality and Diversity Scheme as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted;
- (2) the new Equality and Diversity Scheme be agreed for external consultation and a further report come back for approval should this identify any changes;
- (3) officers develop an action plan and the appropriate scrutiny Committee be asked to monitor progress on the Scheme via the Members Equality and Diversity Working Group; and
- (4) the Executive to receive an annual update report on the progress of the Scheme.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)
(Forward Plan ref 77)

1025. WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL HOME CHOICE REVIEW

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Housing Strategy on the the supplementary changes to the HomeChoice Allocation Scheme following the review carried out in August 2006 and the subsequent Allocation of Accommodation Choice Based Lettings Code of Guidance for Local Housing Authorities issued in January 2007.

The Council's Choice Based Letting Scheme HomeChoice became operational in November 2005, and it was agreed at the time of implementation to review the scheme after six months.

The report took forward the work previously carried out to review the scheme in August 2006 following the consultation with housing applicants and a range of social agencies within the District, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

In addition to the Allocation of Accommodation Choice Based Lettings Code of Guidance for Local Housing Authorities published in January 2007, a number of supplementary changes were necessary.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Scheme would now operate with four bands, as detailed within the report. This allowed the Council to meet the Government Legislation and Allocation of Accommodation Choice Based Lettings Code of Guidance for Local Housing Authorities to ensure that reasonable preference was given to those in most housing need.

Lettings would be monitored on a quarterly basis so that targets could be altered should there be any risk that the reasonable preference requirements would not be met.

The Policy would allow applicants to request a review of their allocated banding and it was proposed that the appeals be considered by the Housing Advice Liaison Officer and the Housing Advice Manager.

Further research and consultation with stakeholders would be undertaken to ensure that all employment groups who were essential to the economic well being of Warwick District Council were identified and prioritised within the Scheme as necessary.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendation in the report. It was suggested that it was an improvement to what was already in place but would need reviewing after 6 months to address issues such as, special cases, banding, and should explain the reasoning to why people had been turned down.

The Culture and Social Policy Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Warwick District Council's HomeChoice Allocation Scheme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be adopted by the Council and subject to ICT implementation, commence in May 2008;
- (2) the Head of Housing Strategy be granted delegated authority to alter the quotas between Band 1, 2 and 3 should there be a risk that the reasonable preference requirements would not be met; and
- (3) a further review again in 12 months and the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Doody, to bring forward any anomalies within that 12 month period if they arise.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward Plan ref 78)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

1026. PROPOSED MERGER OF THE STRATFORD ON AVON & WARWICK DISTRICT CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP

The Executive considered a report from the Community Safety Manager on the proposed merger of the Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships and outlining the timetable for the formal consideration of the application to merge.

Community Safety, a generic term for the statutory responsibilities placed upon this authority within the Crime and Disorder Act (1998). The duty to work in partnership with the Police, County Council, Police Authority, Fire & Rescue Service and Primary Care Trust.

Following a formal review of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, and the partnership provisions of that Act, the Home Office had recently published a document entitled "Delivering Safer Communities: A Guide to Effective Partnership Working". The document outlined what was expected of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership's (CDRP's) in terms of the requirements around National Standards for CDRP's and the new Strategic Assessments.

A decision on the merger would be known in May or June 2008 which would inform a report on a shared community safety service with Stratford-on-Avon District Council. The two districts have a strong history of community safety partnership working.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report and suggested that if the merger goes ahead in June 2008, a report to come back six months after implementation.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the timetable for the formal consideration of the proposal to merge the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships for Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick Districts, be noted;
- (2) a report on the structure and staffing levels of a shared community safety service with Stratford-on-Avon District Council be brought back to the Executive; and
- (3) if the merger proceeds, a review be undertaken and reported back six months after implementation.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Bunker)
(Forward Plan ref 84)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

1027. STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT – CRIME, DISORDER AND DRUGS MISUSE

The Executive considered a report from the Community Safety Manager on the Strategic Assessment for Crime, Disorder and Drugs misuse which set out the process for identifying the high risk issues in Warwick District and two clear priorities for Warwick District and South Warwickshire.

The summary version, set out at Appendix 1 of the report, outlined the process and model for identifying the high risks for crime, disorder and drugs misuse. The two priorities were high risk and alcohol misuse was a significant factor for both.

Anti-Social behaviour was the top concern for local residents and featured as a priority in all of the Safer Neighbourhood Areas. The number of incidents reported had increased in 2007/08 by 10%. By utilising an early intervention approach, the plan was to reduce anti-social behaviour and by doing so prevent escalation into both criminal damage and low level violence. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour was the Community Safety Corporate Priority.

The summary document and the full report was produced independently from the Strategic Assessment produced by Stratford-on-Avon District and was considered at the South Warwickshire Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership on 15 January 2008.

By identifying a small number of priorities it was hoped that the partnership could be more focussed with limited resources.

The two priorities were also the top two priorities emerging from the five district/borough strategic assessments and had been confirmed as the top two Local Area Agreement (LAA) priorities.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report and asked if the scheme was worthwhile and was it wasting money if the County Council were already doing it? They also suggested that it be reviewed again in 6 months. The Community Safety Manager had responded: The Crime & Disorder Act, for the first time, defined how it should work in two tier authority areas. The process was to produce strategic assessments at district level (a statutory duty) then the County Council must produce a community safety agreement then partnership plans were to be produced at district level. Councillor Boad, Chair of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee was satisfied with this response.

RESOLVED that Anti-Social Behaviour (to include criminal damage) and Serious Violent Crime be approved as the two crime and disorder priorities to be tackled during 2008/09.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Bunker)
(Forward Plan ref 85)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

1028. GRAFFITI POLICY

The Executive considered a report from the Community Safety Manager on the adoption of a graffiti policy for Warwick District Council.

Warwick District Council had a statutory duty to remove graffiti from its own property along with a number of other statutory undertakers but with no agreed approach. Requests to remove graffiti from property owned by any of the statutory undertakers could only be made once a partnership agreement was in place. At present, requests for information received via the Council's website and Customer Service Centre were passed around a number of business units.

The draft Policy had taken into account elements of the approach taken by a number of similar authorities as set out in the Appendices 1-3 of the report.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report and suggested that recommendation 3 should include the word 'robustly' between work and with, to emphasise.

RESOLVED that the Graffiti Policy for Warwick District Council be adopted in order to define;

- (1) the response of this authority in removing graffiti from its own property;
- (2) how this authority will work robustly with other public utility providers; and
- (3) how the authority provides a coordinated response to requests from residents and businesses to prevent and remove graffiti.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Kinson)

1029. PORTFOLIO HOLDER STATEMENTS 2008/09

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance on the proposed Portfolio Holder Statements detailing portfolio responsibilities, objectives, priorities and indicators and 12 month actions.

Portfolio Holder Statements provide a useful bridge between the long term aims of the Corporate Strategy and the need for focussed activity over the coming 12 months.

Each Objective of the Corporate Strategy fell within the remit of a different Portfolio Holder. Service areas, their services and activities and their performance information were divided up under each portfolio for ease of monitoring management and reporting. The Portfolio Holder statements for 2008/09 reflected the changes to areas of responsibility which had been agreed, although in some areas (particularly the transfer of Bereavement Services from Culture to Environment) there would be a period of transition.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

In previous years Portfolio Holder Statements had been more complex documents included within Part 1 of the Best Value Performance Plan. The removal of the statutory requirements to produce this document had allowed a review of the format of the Portfolio Holder Statements. The shorter, clearer and more accessible statements attached in the appendices of the report were the result of this review.

The March edition of the District Focus Magazine included information describing the development of the Corporate Strategy and the Portfolio Holder Statements and directed readers to the Councils website to find further information.

During the meeting, Councillors Mrs Bunker, Doody and Pratt raised concerns on the following responsibilities which were missing from their portfolios:
Portfolio Holder for Community, Councillor Mrs Bunker – Community Safety
Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Doody – Oakley Wood
Portfolio Holder for Customer and Business Improvement, Councillor Pratt - IT, Print & Design, Policy & Performance and Communications

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were happy with the proposals for the Corporate & Strategic Leadership Portfolio.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report, although concerns were raised that Oakley Wood was not mentioned and should be included within one of the Portfolios for the coming year. This was mentioned during the meeting and would be included under the Housing portfolio.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the 2008/09 Portfolio Holder Statements detailed within appendices A – G of the report, subject to those amendments outlined at the meeting, be approved;
- (2) these statements be used by portfolio holders to support focussed performance monitoring and management during 2008/09; and
- (3) the Portfolio Holder Statements be published on the Council website.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)

1030. IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSALS FOR THE CORPORATE STRATEGY 2007-2011

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance that sought approval for implementation proposals for the 2007-2011 Corporate Strategy, including the resource strategies (Asset Management Plan, ICT Strategy and People Strategy).

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

At its meeting on 6 March 2008 the Council agreed the 2007/2011 Corporate Strategy and agreed that a further report on proposals for the mechanisms for implementing the Corporate Strategy should be considered by the Executive in March 2008.

Since then, work had been completed to establish proposals for ensuring that resources could be allocated to the Corporate Strategy through the resource strategies and to develop an outline framework for ensuring effective governance arrangements for the delivery of Corporate Strategy through a focused approach based on Programme Management.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report but made the following suggestion that on page 216 at bullet point 3 of paragraph 2.3.6 it be amended to add in “and effectively and appraising at least annually” or having a separate bullet point for the appraisal aspect. They also welcomed the results reported on page 236 of the agenda at paragraph 6.2.4 that the Council had been rated by the Carbon Trust and had earned the highest mark they had given to any organisation and congratulated those who were responsible for that result.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the proposals to organise the implementation of the corporate strategy through Programme Management, be approved; and
- (2) the three resources strategies (Asset Management Plan, People Strategy and ICT Strategy) as set out in appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)
(Forward Plan ref 88)

1031. RELOCATION OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE TO SHIRE HALL, WARWICK

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Revenues and Customer Services to review the Memorandum of Understanding proposed for the project relocating the Customer Service Centre from Riverside House, Leamington Spa to Shire Hall, Warwick.

At the Executive meeting on 10 December 2007, it was agreed in principle to the business case for the relocation of the Customer Service Centre to Shire Hall, Warwick. Prior to that being agreed, the Executive had asked for an Exit Strategy to satisfy that the project would not require an increase in budget.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The exit strategy was designed as a fall back position in case either party was unhappy and wanted to leave the joint CSC at Shire Hall. It was emphasised that no problems were envisaged at present.

The full business case was attached at appendix 2 to the report and officers confirmed that all costs associated with moving and re-establishing at Shire Hall, Warwick could be met within current allocated budgets.

The Exit Strategy had been developed in conjunction with the Council's Legal Services team and the Legal Department of Warwickshire County Council.

Should the exit strategy need to come into operation, it was envisaged that the Customer Service Centre (CSC) would come back to Riverside House. There would not be an issue with regard to the computer systems necessary to provide the service as the Council had a separate agreement.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that the Memorandum of Understanding (Exit Strategy) as set out at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Pratt)

1032. ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER

The Executive considered a report from the Strategic Director for Community Resources on a report from the Council's External Auditors who attended the Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting.

The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter was a letter to all members of the Council which needed to be given due consideration by appropriate committees.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were very pleased with the report especially that level 3 had been achieved at all levels for use of resources. The Committee also thanked David Rigg and his team from the Audit Commission for their work on this matter and supported the recommendations in the report.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be agreed and congratulations passed to all involved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)

1033. 2007/08 THREE QUARTER PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The Executive considered a report from Policy & Performance in relation to performance for the period of October to December 2007.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The regular and systematic reporting of performance results against target, trended over time and compared with other authorities was a fundamental element of the Councils integrated performance management framework. The performance management framework in turn was a key tool in ensuring the Council stayed focussed on what matters to ensure it delivered its services efficiently and effectively.

As in previous years, reports relating to each Portfolio had been prepared and arranged to enable the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold portfolio holders to account for the performance of services within their portfolio area.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report but were not happy that the additional information was not available within the report and that providing a link to such information was unacceptable.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the performance in relation to each of the six portfolios for the period October 2007 to December 2007 be noted; and
- (2) the mitigation and corrective actions where results had fallen beyond 10% of target, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)

1034. GENERAL REPORT

(A) RURAL INITIATIVES GRANTS

The Executive considered a report from Finance on the applications for Rural Initiatives Grants in the light of the criteria and budgetary implications.

Applications had been received from Barford Village Community Shop, Hatton Village Hall, Wasperton Village Hall and Norton Lindsey Parish Council.

The majority of Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. However, some members of the Committee were unhappy that £11,000 should be used from next year's budget because this was not good practice.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendation in the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that

- (1) the requests for grants under the Council's Rural Initiatives Scheme be approved; and
- (2) the bringing forward £11,000 to 2007/08 from the 2008/09 Rural Initiatives Grants budget in order to provide adequate funds for the grants in this report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Bunker)

(B) HISTORIC BUILDINGS GRANTS

The Executive considered a report from the Principal Architect Planner which sought approval of the recommendations of the Environment & Economic Policy Committee (EEPC) Working Party for the allocation of Historic Buildings Grants.

The District had for many years supported schemes of grants for preserving and enhancing the historic environment within Warwick District as described in the appendix to the report of EEPC report of 6 February 2008.

The annual allocation for 2008/9 for distribution under the various Historic Buildings Grants was £100,000. The EEPC report set out the considerations of the Grants Working Party and how the proposed allocations of funds had been arrived at.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the allocation of the Historic Buildings Grants funding for 2008/09 as set out in within the appendix to the report from the Historic Buildings Grants Working Party, be approved; and
- (2) the Historic Buildings Grants Working Party be re-established at the beginning of 2009 to review the Historic Buildings Grants at the conclusion of the financial year.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan Ref 63)

(C) RECOVERY OF HRA GARAGE AND PROPERTY RENT ARREARS

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Housing and Property Services proposing a revision to existing rent arrears recovery procedures.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The proposal was to provide for a Notice to Deliver up Possession to be served on any garage(s) rented by a tenant whose main rent account falls into arrears. Regardless of whether the garage rent account was in arrears or not. It also proposed a change in the garage letting policy to prevent a tenant who had lost a garage through arrears recovery action from being offered another garage until their property rent account had been maintained in credit for a period of 3 months.

If there were to be any doubt as to whether an arrears balance quoted on a Notice of Intention of Seeking Possession or subsequent Court application contained any amount that didn't relate to rent charges on the property, e.g. garage rent charges, the application would be held to be invalid by the Courts. Not only would recovery action have to commence again at the Notice stage but costs would be awarded against the Council for the failed application.

Due to the separation of the accounts, any arrears recovery action taken on either a tenant's main rent account or their garage sub-account would be independent of the other. Which meant a tenant could be in arrears on their main account, with recovery action having been commenced, but continuing to maintain payments on their garage account so that no action was commenced in relation to the garage.

It was therefore proposed to serve a Notice to Deliver up Possession on any garage(s) at the same time of the initial letter (marking the start of arrears recovery action against the property tenancy) is sent to a tenant. This would provide an additional incentive to the tenant to either clear their arrears in full or, in appropriate circumstances, e.g. significant change in income, demonstrate that they are able to maintain a suitable repayment agreement, if they wish to continue to rent a garage.

A revision to the garage letting policy was also proposed. This would exclude tenants from being offered a garage until their rent account had been maintained in credit for a minimum period of 3 months, if they had previously had a garage sub-account terminated due to rent arrears recovery action, either on that account itself or as a result of the actions proposed above.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the change to current arrears recovery procedures to provide for the service of a Notice to Deliver up Possession on any garage(s) rented by a tenant whose main rent account falls into arrears, regardless of the balance on their garage sub-account, be approved; and

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

- (2) the change to the garage lettings policy to exclude a tenant who has had a previous garage tenancy terminated due to rent arrears recovery action, from being offered another garage until their main rent account has been maintained in credit for a minimum 3 month period, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)
(Forward Plan Ref 91)

(D) AMENITY STANDARDS FOR HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO'S)

The Executive considered a report from Housing Strategy on the proposed amendment of the Council's amenity standards for HMO's in accordance with amendment Regulations.

Section 65 Housing Act 2004 stated that to be suitable for licensing, HMO's must meet 'prescribed' standards as to number, type and quality, for bathrooms, toilets, wash basins, showers, food storage, food preparation and cooking facilities.

Section 65 also allowed local authorities to set their own standards which exceed any national standards.

A national standard was introduced in Schedule 3 of SI 2006 No.373. which came into force on 6 April 2006 in line with the introduction of HMO Licensing, but was subsequently amended by Regulation 12 of SI 2007 No.1903, which came into force on 1 October 2007. Some of the larger local authorities and landlord organisations were lobbying for these amendment Regulations. Many authorities were reviewing their standards in the light of these Regulations.

In summary, the amendment Regulations require the local Authority to have regard to the age and character of the HMO, the size and layout of each flat and its existing provision for washing and bathing facilities, an adequate number of bathrooms, toilets and wash hand basins for the number of persons sharing those facilities, and where reasonably practicable, there must be a wash hand basin in each unit of accommodation, unless a sink had been provided.

In response to Regulation 12, the Council had conducted a consultation exercise with some of its larger landlords, letting agents, Warwick University, Coventry City Council and all of the Warwickshire District Council's. There had been no adverse comment to the proposals. Landlords and their agents had generally been positive in response.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that the revised amenity standards for HMO's in the Warwick District Council area, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)

(E) RISK REGISTER

The Executive considered a report from the Strategic Director for Community Resources to review the Corporate Risk register items which had a medium risk rating and above.

The register was reviewed in full on a quarterly basis and the latest version was appended to the report.

The corporate risk register considered all risks to the Councils operations, key priorities, and major projects. Individual services also had their own risk register which helped inform the process.

The Audit and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggested some refinements to the register and it now showed, in bold, items that had changed from the last report, as well as a timescale for the further actions required to bring the risk back to an acceptable level.

The Executive had asked how the risks scored could be reduced; the actions required were designed to reduce the risk scores, and items with a strikethrough show where risk had been reduced below a medium level of risk.

Spencer Yard had not been included within the Risk Register at this time.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee felt that the EDRMS item should be reviewed because the only effect of loss of reputation was incorrect and there were other effects stated in the confidential report to the Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. They also felt that the Planning Committee item needed to be revisited because the risk should be lower than this and not dependent on individual members. The proposed action in that instance if it was a risk was not the most appropriate route to take. Therefore Councillor MacKay, as Chairman of the Planning Committee, was asked to progress the matter with the Head of Planning.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendation in the report and asked that because of the issues with the Libraries service, would it hinder the Pump Rooms One-Stop Shop project? The Chief Executive would be able to update after a meeting with Warwickshire County Council on 28 March 2008.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that the Corporate Risk Register for those items scoring 12 and above which was attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Doody)

(F) CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance on the outstanding actions from the Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP) and to agree that it would be replaced by the new approach to Programme and Project Management.

The current CIP was drafted in 2005 (following the completion of the 2003-2005 CIP) and contained approximately 75 tasks of which 24 were outstanding or partially completed. This equated to a completion rate of 68%. It was worth noting that five of the 24 outstanding tasks were related to procurement, where the officer responsible had been absent from work for some time.

The original purpose of the CIP was to provide a structure for Warwick District Council officers to manage and monitor internal improvement projects. The actions were collated from a range of sources including; the feedback from the Investors In People assessments, Audit, Comprehensive Performance Assessment and EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) assessments. The Corporate Improvement Plan had been monitored on a quarterly basis by Corporate Management Team, alongside an annual report to the Executive.

The table shown in Appendix 1 to the report was an adapted version of the Corporate Improvement Plan, showing only the incomplete or partially completed actions.

The proposals set out in the report on implementing the Corporate Strategy provided a new framework for managing corporate improvement activities. Specifically the proposals to be based around a stronger focus on programme and project management.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the status of the outstanding actions in the Corporate Improvement Plan as shown in Appendix 1 to the report be noted and the proposed way forward for each of these be approved; and

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

- (2) the Corporate Improvement Plan be replaced by the proposed new approach for Programme and Project Management, set out in the report on Implementation Proposals for the Corporate Strategy.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)
(Forward Plan Ref 75)

(G) REVISIONS TO PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Executive considered a report from Policy and Performance on the proposed Portfolio Performance Indicators for 2008/09.

The changed statutory requirements regarding National Best Value Performance Indicators and their replacement with a new set of National Indicators had given the opportunity to review which performance indicators would be most useful for the Council to measure, manage and report.

The development and approval of the new Corporate Strategy had also resulted in changed or new performance measures becoming Key Performance Indicators for the Council.

The approval of the annual budget at Council in February 2008, confirmed which service improvements would be funded and therefore the levels of performance the Council would be aiming to achieve over the coming 12 months.

In view of the above circumstances a thorough review of the Performance Indicators and targets which would be included in the Councils Corporate Performance Management Framework had been undertaken. The appendices attached to the report detailed the outcome of that exercise.

Due to a delay in central government issuing the final definitions, a number of national indicators remained without targets being set. These would be developed when the details became clearer over the coming few weeks. The responsible service areas had also been allocated following the restructuring in most instances, however a small number of indicators also remained without a home at present. This would be resolved over the coming weeks before 1 April 2008.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee were content with the suggested targets for the Corporate & Strategic Leadership Portfolio, however this was hard to judge because the performance for a significant number of the targets were to be confirmed.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that

- (1) the indicators listed in Appendix 1 to the report be discontinued from corporate reporting cycles; and
- (2) the indicators and targets allocated by portfolio as listed in Appendix 2 to the report for the year 2008/09, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kinson, Pratt and White)

(H) PLANNING BRIEF FOR THE STATION AREA

The Executive considered a report from Planning updating the Executive on the preparation of the planning brief for the station area.

At the meeting of the Executive in February 2008, the appointment of GVA Grimley to prepare a planning brief for the station area was approved. This followed from the closure of the Ford Foundry plant in July 2007 and the Council's commitment to work with partners to ensure that a proper planning framework was prepared for this site. A successful bid to Advantage West Midlands for £100,000 to fund this work and appointed GVA Grimley following a competitive tendering process.

GVA Grimley had now commenced work. It was currently gathering technical information and engaging with a range of local stakeholders (including all landowners of the site and a range of local groups including Royal Leamington Spa Town Council, the Leamington Society and CLARA) to prepare some draft proposals for the area.

Warwick District Council had agreed a timetable with GVA Grimley for them to complete the brief, and there were a number of important milestones within it.

There would be two occasions when the Council would formally need to approve documents. These were:

- (i) approval of the draft brief prior to public consultation; and
- (ii) approval of the final brief as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The Development Portfolio Holder was keen that a key planning brief such as this should properly be considered by Executive. It was therefore suggested that in order for this to be done, it may be necessary to hold special meetings of the Executive to consider the reports. These would be arranged once the calendar of Executive meetings for 2008/09 was known.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that the report and that an additional meeting of the Executive might be required, be noted

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan Ref 86)

(I) REGIONAL CONFORMITY PROTOCOL

The Executive considered a report from Planning on the Regional Conformity Protocol.

Since September 2005, a Conformity Protocol had been in place between the West Midlands Regional Assembly and the Strategic and Local Planning Authority's in the region. The protocol had enjoyed almost Universal sign up from 38 Authorities in the region. Warwick District Council formally agreed to support the Protocol at its meeting in February 2005.

The purpose of the conformity Protocol was to govern arrangements between the assembly and the authorities regarding the assembly's strategic role in providing an opinion of general conformity in relation to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. The requirement arises when a Local Development Document was submitted for Public Examination.

The Protocol also governs arrangements regarding those planning applications for which the assembly must be notified of as statutory consultee.

In 2005, these two strategy functions were new areas of work to deal with, at that time, the Protocol was very much based on what was thought to be the best way of dealing with this arrangements. The principles behind the protocol were that it should operate in an "open, inclusive and transparent" manner, the simple in approach yet effective, and also recognise the capacity limitations of the assembly's secretariat, the regional planning partnership and the local planning authorities in the region.

Whilst the Regional Assembly considered the protocol had worked well, it had became clear to it that in practice there were a number of areas where it could potentially be improved. On that basis, the Regional Assembly had now approved a revised protocol, and it was asking all local planning authorities in the West Midlands to adopt the Protocol within their organisations.

In January 2008, having itself approved the revised conformity protocol, the West Midlands Regional Assembly wrote to all Local Planning Authorities in the Region to request that we seek member approval for these new arrangements.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that the Protocol attached at appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)

(J) PROGRESSING THE WARWICK RENAISSANCE PROJECT

The Executive considered a report from Customer Information and Advice which suggested a new bid be submitted to AWM for funds to develop an improved Tourist Information Centre (TIC)/Visitor Information Centre in Warwick, in partnership with the Town Council and South Warwickshire Tourism.

Members were aware that Warwick District Council successfully bid, with the full support of Warwick Town Council and Warwickshire County Council, for £450,000 from Advantage West Midlands (AWM) in May 2005. The funding was to provide for the development of a new TIC/Visitor Information Centre for Warwick, based on the Museum in the Market Square and to replace the out of date visitor information panels and refresh the pedestrian signage.

After considerable negotiations with Warwickshire County Council at officer and member level, it became clear that the increased revenue costs that arose from using the Market Hall Museum made the business plan unviable. Reluctantly the grant, which AWM were unable to amend, had to be declined.

The problems in terms of the visitors welcome in Warwick still remained and needed to be addressed. This was recognised by AWM and whilst the budget that afforded the last grant was no longer available, they had indicated that they would be sympathetic to a new bid at around the same level of funding support, which addressed the wider issues of developing the Warwick offer to visitors.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that a new bid for funding is submitted to AWM in partnership with Warwick Town Council and South Warwickshire Tourism be approved, to include the development of an improved TIC/Visitor Information Centre in Warwick based on modifications and/or an extension to the Court House.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

1035. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY AND POLICY COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Audit & Resources and Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committees held on 4 December 2007 and 6 February 2008, the Environment & Economic and Culture & Social Policy Committees held on 5 December 2007 and 7 February 2008 and the joint Policy Committee meeting held on 6 February 2008, all be noted.

1036. 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 three items 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.

Item Nos.	Para. Nos.	Reason
1037, 1038, 1039, & 1040	1	Information relating to an individual
1037, 1038, 1039, & 1040	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
1037, 1038, 1039, 1040 & 1041	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

1037. DRAINAGE AINTREE DRIVE, LEAMINGTON SPA

The Executive considered a report from Environmental Health on the drainage issues at Aintree Drive, Leamington Spa.

Following extensive pollution of the Flood Alleviation Pond at Midland Oak, a misconnection between the private foul sewer serving part of Aintree Drive and the public storm sewer was identified by Severn Trent Water - the public storm sewer discharging into the Midland Oak pond.

The information was passed to Warwick District Council, Environmental Health, as the responsibility to require such misconnections to be remedied lay with the District Council.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Chief Executive, after consultation with the Chair of Executive, agreed that the Council would undertake the works involved to remedy the situation at its expense. It would be emphasised to the householders that this action would not place any future liability on the Council - the private sewer remaining the responsibility of the householders with respect to any future obstructions or maintenance.

It was also agreed by the Chief Executive that, in view of the consequences of the misconnection, the process to remedy the situation be commenced as soon as practical with retrospective reporting to Executive.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the action of the Chief Executive, in agreeing to remedy the misconnected sewer as soon as possible, as detailed in the report, be approved; and
- (2) the virement of funds for this work from the Director of Customer Information and Advice's Consultants Fees budget to Environmental Health, be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Kinson)

1038. EXTENSION TO GOLF PROFESSIONALS CONTRACT – NEWBOLD COMYN GOLF COURSE

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services to recommend the extension of the Golf Professionals Contract at Newbold Comyn Golf Course by 12 months until 31 March 2010.

The current Golf Professional was appointed by the Executive on the recommendation of the previous Golf Working Party to provide golf professional services, run and staff the golf shop, manage and advertise the course and provide lessons until the 31 March 2008. A further report to the Executive on 10 September 2007 agreed to extend the contract until 31 March 2009.

The current Golf Working Party recommended that the additional extension to allow them sufficient time to consider detailed proposals for the future. The additional time would also allow the Working Party to report back in early 2009.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report and suggested that by 2010, we confirm the 5 year contract.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

RESOLVED that the contract of the existing Golf Professional at Newbold Comyn Golf Course, be extended by one year until 31 March 2010 on the existing terms.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor White)

1039. RESTRUCTURE OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

The Executive considered a report from the Head of Engineering on the recruitment of staff to the current Engineering establishment.

Following acceptance by the Council of the Building on Excellence proposals, Engineering Services became a separate Service area from its original links with Planning. The change commenced on the 1 January 2008 and required the service area to not only discharge its current municipal engineering functions, but also those new responsibilities in respect of car park maintenance, facilities management and all aspects of the civil contingencies agenda, including emergency planning and business continuity management.

Engineering services has further been successful in winning a four year framework maintenance contract, through the European Procurement Directive procedures, to work on behalf of the Environment Agency in the discharge of their maintenance management responsibilities for Rivers, which were previously known as critical watercourses within the District.

The proposed restructure had also come about as part of Government policy on locality working. This requirement was now a common theme in a series of White Papers and legislative proposals where there was a clear steer to ensuring greater public involvement in the shaping of local services and championing neighbourhood working across the public sector. For Engineering Services to respond to this challenge there was a need to realign officer responsibilities into an area based concept, covering the following 5 area groupings; Kenilworth, Warwick, Leamington North, Leamington South & Whitnash and the Rural Area.

The above areas further align with the existing County Council areas for the delivery of highway maintenance services.

To reflect the new responsibilities of Engineering Services and to embrace the concept of locality area working and the possible delivery of the four year term contract with the Environment Agency, it would be necessary to restructure the existing establishment of the Engineering group and to increase the Service Area staff compliment by two new staff.

The Employment Committee had previously approved the structure, but the Executive was asked to consider whether the proposed mechanisms for funding the additional staff costs were acceptable and would place no further burden on the Councils expenditure.

Congratulations were passed to the Head of Engineering and his team for winning the contract for the management of Rivers.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the recruitment of the new posts to assist in the delivery of the municipal engineering functions of the Service following the successful award of the Term Contract to the Council by the Environment Agency, be approved; and
- (2) the reporting organisational structure of Engineering Services shown in Appendix 2 to the report, together with the proposed changes to the staff posts shown in Appendix 3, tables 1 and 2 to the report, all be approved.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)

1040. ADMINISTRATION REVIEW REDUNDANCY

The Executive considered a report from Customer Information and Advice for the agreement for the redundancy of the Chief Administration Officer in Environmental Health to be met from the early retirement reserve.

The Administration review undertaken in 2005/06 identified the post of Chief Administration Officer as being deleted from March 2008.

The Employment Committee at its meeting of 11 March had agreed the redundancy of the post holder subject to Executive agreement for the funding.

Thanks were given to the post holder for all their hard work over the years and for always being extremely helpful and obliging.

The Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. However, concerns were raised that there was no succession planning or HR Strategy in place and that proper exit interviews should be carried out.

RESOLVED that the funding of the early retirement, from the early retirement reserve, of the Chief Administration Officer, in Environmental Health on grounds of redundancy, with effect from 30 June 2008, be approved.

1041. SPENCER YARD PHASE II PROJECT

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive on the progress relating to the future of the Spencer Yard Phase 2 Scheme.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Additional points were raised by the Strategic Director (Environment) and were responded to verbally by the Chief Executive at the meeting.

Following what was agreed at the February meeting of the Executive, officers were at present focussing on:

1. The submission of the bid by 20 March 2008;
2. Resolving the VAT issue, to which a meeting had been held with a Tax Counsel that had led to two viable options being identified and action being taken to follow up;
3. Developing a Work Plan for the Project (first draft attached at Appendix 1 to the report);
4. Developing a Project Team for the various stages of the Scheme (first draft attached at Appendix 2 to the report);
5. In the light of the above reviewing the Risk Register (As set out at Appendix 3 to the report); and
6. Exchanging conditional contracts with the owner of the Church.

The Audit & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the content of the report, whilst recognising that the Council was in a difficult position and the best approach was to proceed carefully and cautiously and expressing disappointment that Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs would not pass judgement on the VAT issue.

The Environment and Economic Policy Committee noted the content of a report and a verbal update given to the meeting by the Chief Executive, updating Members on progress relating to the future of the Spencer Yard Phase II Scheme.

The Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report and suggested that if there was any member amongst the Councillors who was knowledgeable in this area, then they should be involved with the project and included on the management board as set out on page 474 of the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) a working party be created, comprising of 3 members and the portfolio holder.

(The meeting ended at 8.00pm)