WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	**Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 8 May 2013**	**Agenda Item No. 10**

Title	**End of Term report**
For further information about this report please contact	Lesley Dury 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Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?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	
Background Papers	Agendas/minutes of 2012/13 meetings

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
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
Not required as this reports gives a synopsis of work undertaken and contains no new material.	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	**Date**	**Name**
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	9 April 2013	Andrew Jones
Head of Service	10 April 2013	Graham Leach
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		
Monitoring Officer		
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)		
Consultation Undertaken		
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny – Councillor Bill Gifford		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below) This report is for recommendation to Council.		

1. SUMMARY

1.1 An end of term report to the Council on the work the Committee have undertaken during the year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It be recommended to Council that the list of matters considered by this Committee during the municipal year 2012/13, as detailed in appendix A to the report, be noted.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Under Article 6 of the Council's constitution Overview & Scrutiny Committees and Policy Committees are required to provide an end of term report to the Council on work they have undertaken during the year.

3.2 The matters considered during the year are attached at appendix A to the report. This will be updated to include matters considered at this meeting, before it is submitted to Council.

4. POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 Policy Framework

The recommendations of the report do not affect the Council's policy framework.

4.2 Fit for the Future

This report is made annually as a matter of good practice and Council policy.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

5.1 The recommendations of the report do not affect the Council's budgetary framework.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED

6.1 There are no alternative options as this report complies with the requirements of Article 6 of the Council's Constitution.

APPENDIX A

Items considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2012/2013

CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee started the year by debating the report as requested on Prayers at Full Council. The debate itself was an interesting start to our year. A more fruitful outcome was from the report "Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour" which suggested an integrated approach with partners such as the Ambulance Service to dealing with late night town anti-social behaviour. It is therefore gratifying to see that Street Pastors in place and working very effectively in Leamington Spa.

As a result of Overview and Scrutiny making contact with the County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee Sub-Group looking into new ways of working in the Safe Guarding Adults Service two WDC officers were able to feed in their concerns about the problems of tenants in social housing with mental health problems. This was a clear case of the need for joint working by WDC, WCC and the NHS. The whole aspect of public health, both physical health and mental is something that will become a far more important aspect of Overview and Scrutiny's work in the future.

The Task and Finish Group looking into a Volunteering Policy produced a Policy that was accepted by the Executive. This will hopefully mean that it is clearer to various departments, the public and members how volunteering will be dealt with by WDC. Whilst some felt that a policy might be an over-reaction that might even discourage volunteering, it does mean that there is now a consistent approach to volunteering and also that any necessary safeguards are in place. It may be sensible in a year to 18 months to have a brief report on how the Policy is working.

Two other Task and finish Groups started work this year. The first was set up to look in how well the Dog Control Orders were working and to come up with any suggestions on how they might be improved. The members of the Group have taken a wide range of evidence and are almost ready to present their report. The other Task and Finish Group on SEVs has a difficult job of providing a policy that will stand up to a legal challenge whether from licence holders and potential licence holders or from residents and other groups. It is acknowledged that having a watertight policy is more important than the speed in producing the policy.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has normally had a Portfolio Holder come to each meeting to explain their expectations from their service area and to answer questions from the Committee in particular the Committee has been interested to know about both the risks and the potential opportunities that the Portfolio Holders foresee in their Service Areas.

Recently the Committee has looked closely at the partnership with Waterloo Housing and also the welfare reforms. In particular the Committee has been interested to get an idea of what the effect might be on our tenants and indeed what provisions are being put in place by Housing to mitigate the effect on tenants.

The major challenge that faces Overview and Scrutiny in the coming years will be Health Scrutiny. Public Health is going to a major responsibility for the whole Council and Scrutiny will have a major role to play.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ITEMS

A synopsis of discussions and decisions made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

April 2012

Prayers at Full Council Meetings
The Committee considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, Andrew Jones, that advised Members on the legal position in respect of Warwick District Council's practice of holding prayers prior to Full Council meetings.

It was resolved that the report should be presented to Full Council and that prayers should be separate from Council meetings.

End of Term Report 2011/2012
The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services on the work the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had undertaken for the municipal year 2011/2012.

The Committee recommended to Council that the list of matters considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the municipal year 2011/12 be noted.

May 2012

Appointment of Chairman
Councillor Gifford was appointed Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

Tackling violent crime and anti-social behaviour in the night-time economy
The Community Safety/Sustainability Manager, gave a presentation to the Committee on the pilot taking place in Royal Leamington Spa Town Centre to overcome issues surrounding violent crime and anti-social behaviour in the district. Community Safety Partners, with the support of St John's Ambulance were piloting a new approach to tackle these issues and it was hoped that the initiative would also address health and wellbeing issues related to "risky behaviour" such as alcohol and drugs misuse.

It was resolved that the partnership approach to tackle violent crime and anti-social behaviour in the night-time economy be noted and that the commitment of key partners, local businesses, public health and in particular the volunteers of St John's Ambulance was recognised.

Progress report on securing support and advice when dealing with individuals involved with anti-social behaviour who have mental health issues
The Community Safety/Sustainability Manager, gave a report to the Committee on the progress that had been made in securing support and advice when dealing with individuals involved with anti-social behaviour who had mental health issues and the plans that were in place.

The Committee noted the progress made.

July 2012

Volunteering Task and Finish Group Final Report
The Committee considered a draft Volunteering Policy from the Volunteering Task & Finish Group.

The Committee noted the progress made.

August 2012

Housing Strategy
The Head of Housing and Property Services gave a verbal report to the Committee on the Housing Strategy, which was scheduled to go to Executive in January 2013. The document to be presented explained how housing needs could be met, improving existing housing stock and how the support services would be provided.

The Committee asked that the Strategy document be written in easily understood terms, and it would be acceptable to the whole of the District. The Chairman thanked the Head of Housing and Property Services for the presentation.

Economic Development – Job Skills & Economy
The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager and the Town Centre Business Development Manager gave a verbal report on the work being done in respect of economic development in Warwick District, prior to submission of the final report to Executive. It was explained that the report would cover the period 2012 to 2028.

The Chairman thanked both the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager and the Town Centre Business Development Manager for the presentation.

September 2012

Dog Control Orders
The Head of Environmental Services and the Divisional Environmental Health Officer gave a presentation on a discussion document to kick-start the process to set up a Task and Finish Group for Dog Control Orders.

The Committee decided to ask Councillors Mrs Blacklock and Mrs Falp to draw up a scoping document for approval at the Committee's meeting in the October.

Update on Tourism and Visitor Economy
The Economic and Regeneration Manager gave an update on the work done to-date on the Tourism and Visitor Economy. He explained about the work being done to set up the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) and outlined what work was being done to market the area abroad, the use of branding and the examination of DMOs currently in existence.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanked the Economic and Regeneration Manager for the update.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services
Councillor Coker, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, and the Head of Environmental Services, explained the work covered by the Environmental Services teams, the aims of the Service Area Plan and how these would be delivered.

The Committee thanked Councillor Coker and the Head of Environmental Services for their time and presentation.

October 2012

Dog Control Orders – Task & Finish Group
The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services to agree the scoping document for the Task and Finish Group for Dog Control Orders and to determine the membership of the Task and Finish Group.

The Committee approved the scoping document and authorised that volunteers were sought to join the Task and Finish Group as per the terms of the scoping document.

November 2012

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Community Protection
Councillor Coker, the Portfolio Holder for Community Protection, and the Head of Service, gave a presentation on Community Protection, the purpose of which was stated in the presentation to "Protect the Community and Individuals from Harm".

Following the presentation and the question and answer session, the Committee thanked both the Head of Community Protection and the Portfolio Holder.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services
Councillor Cross, the Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services, gave a presentation on the work done by Cultural Services to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. His presentation covered:

- the services provided such as gyms, swimming pools, the Town Hall, and the Royal Spa Centre;
- the service plan;
- projects completed in the last 12 months;
- current projects being undertaken and their progress; and
- what projects would be undertaken in the next 12 months.

Following the presentation and the question and answer session, the Committee thanked both the Head of Cultural Services and the Portfolio Holder.

Volunteering Task & Finish Group Final Report
In May 2011, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group to develop a Volunteering Policy for the Council, working to an approved scope. The report brought forward the draft Volunteering Policy from this Group.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the report was excellent and accepted its recommendations.

Dog Control Orders – Task & Finish Group
The Committee agreed that the membership of the Task and Finish Group for Dog Control Orders would be Councillors Mrs Blacklock, Mrs Bromley, Mrs Falp, Weber and Williams.

December 2012

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services
The Committee received a report from the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Shilton and the Head of Neighbourhood Services, outlining completed and proposed works in the Service Area to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Following the presentation, the Committee thanked both the Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Portfolio Holder.

Car Parking Provision
The Head of Neighbourhood Services addressed the Committee following the news that the County Council were proposing to engage with a third party to deliver their on-street parking function.

He outlined the options available to the District Council including bidding for all the on-street works available, to bid for the work as currently delivered or the Council could choose to not bid and focus solely on managing its off-street car parks. The fourth outcome was off-street car parks could also be managed by a new bidder.

Following the question and answer session, the Committee thanked the Head of Neighbourhood Services.

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Corporate & Community Services
The Committee received a report from the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Community Services, Councillor Mrs Grainger, and the Head of Corporate and Community Services, outlining completed and proposed works in their Service Area to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Following the presentation, the Committee thanked both the Head of Corporate and Community Services, and the Portfolio Holder.

Learning from the Procurement of Voluntary Sector Services Parts A and B

The Committee received a report from Corporate and Community Services on a review of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) services procured for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 May 2015. The report contained a number of recommendations for improving the process in subsequent rounds, and provided an update on the services being delivered

It was resolved that the comments made by the cross-party Elected Member Grant Review Panel on the process of tendering for voluntary sector services be noted; the recommendations made by the cross-part Elected Member Grant Review Panel to improve future processes of tendering for voluntary sector services, be noted; and both the progress of voluntary sector groups during the first six months of the new service level agreements, and issues for further consideration as detailed in Part B of the report, be noted.

Homechoice Allocations Review
The Committee received a verbal report from Housing and Property Services regarding the review into HomeChoice Allocations scheme. Documents were distributed at the meeting which outlined the current scheme versus the future proposal and a timetable of the allocations review.

The Committee supported the recommendations and noted the potential for separate criteria being applied to older residents of the District because their needs often differed to younger people.

January 2013

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Development Services
The Committee received a presentation from the Portfolio Holder for Development Services and the Head of Development Services, Tracy Darke on the Development Services section. The presentation covered the following headings:

- Financial position
- Service Area priorities
- Actions done to-date
- Key risks
- What was planned for 2013/14

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanked the Head of Development Services and the Portfolio Holder for the presentation.

Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEVs) Task & Finish Group
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee gave the Task and Finish Group approval for the Task and Finish Group to proceed with its work subject to the scoping document being amended with the comments that had been given to Councillor Brookes.

February 2013

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property Services
The Committee received a presentation from the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property Services and the Head of Housing and Property Services on the Housing and Property Services section.

Scrutiny of Partnerships
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report from Housing and Property Services that highlighted two of the Council's key partnership arrangements. Members were invited to discuss, investigate and assess the success or otherwise of the respective partnership over the preceding 12 months.

Members recommended that it was vital that closer examination was required to encourage the partners to build affordable and social housing in the best way and that quick build or other methods of building should be pursued to increase the speed of providing this housing.

SEVs Task & Finish Group – Update Report
Councillor Brookes gave an update of progress made by the Task and Finish Group set up to review SEVs within the District and whether the Council's policy was fit for purpose.

March 2013

Update from the Portfolio Holder for Finance

The Portfolio Holder for Finance gave a short presentation on the work handled by Finance and his role as its Portfolio Holder. He explained the responsibilities, purpose, service priorities from 2012/13, on-going priorities, what had been achieved during 2012/13 and service priorities for 2013/14. He then explained his role and tasks he undertook.

Welfare Reforms

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a briefing paper from Finance which explained the changes to the housing benefit schemes and what was being done to protect those groups of people particularly affected by the changes. Particular emphasis was given to the "under-occupancy charge" (commonly referred to in the national Press as "the bedroom tax").

The Committee thanked the officer for producing the briefing paper at short notice.

Update on Tourism and Visitor Economy

The Committee received a presentation from the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager and two guests, Mr Harrison-Jones from Warwick Castle and Mr Tjolle from Shakespeare's England on progress made on the tourism and visitor economy.

The Committee congratulated the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager, Mr Tjolle and Mr Harrison-Jones and expressed the hope to be part of a successful DMO.

Events Experiment Update

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report and presentation from Cultural Services and Development Services giving an update on the Events Experiment.

After numerous staff and structural changes over the past decade the management of Events at Warwick District Council had become fragmented and inconsistent. A new approach was proposed as an experiment in June 2012 which had been jointly overseen by Cultural Services and Development Services. This new trial approach had allowed learning and improvements to take place from which a revised permanent approach could be developed.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanked the two officers for the presentation.

Staff Volunteering Task & Finish Group

The Committee considered a Scope document for Staff Volunteering. The Committee felt that the document did not explain what would be examined and that this should be written into the document, then circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny members prior to consideration at the meeting to ensure that all Members were happy with the document. The Scope document would be re-considered at the April meeting along with membership of the Task and Finish Group.

Dog Control Orders Task & Finish Group – Update Report
Councillor Mrs Blacklock, the Chairman of the Dog Control Orders Task and Finish Group informed the Committee that a draft report had been written but needed to be checked by all members of the Task and Finish Group and their input fed into the document. She anticipated that the draft report would be brought to Committee by May at the latest.

Sexual Entertainment Venues Task & Finish Group – Update Report
Councillor Brookes gave an update of progress made by the Task and Finish Group set up to review SEVs within the District and whether the Council's policy was fit for purpose.

Health Scrutiny
The Committee considered how it would implement Health Scrutiny at the Council. A report that had gone to the Executive in December 2012 had recommended that Health Scrutiny be dealt with as a sub-committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members had concerns on the way this would be implemented and it was agreed that further consideration was required and recommendations would be brought to the Committee in April 2013.

April 2013

Report from the Leader of the Council
The Leader of the Council gave a talk to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on how he saw the future of the Council.

Task and Finish Group – Staff Volunteering
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the Scoping document for the Task and Finish Group and authorised a request for volunteers to join the Group.

ROUTINE ITEMS

- Comments from the Executive
- Forward Plan
- Review of the Work Programme

EXECUTIVE ITEMS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

A synopsis of discussions and comments and recommendations to Executive made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a synopsis of the Executive's response to these comments and recommendations.

April 2012

Fit for the Future Change Programme Update
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendations in the report, but had concerns on achievability and concerns about how Overview and Scrutiny could effectively scrutinise. The Committee had concerns that if the savings were not achieved, it might lead to cuts in services.

The Executive advised that the proposals would ensure that the departments and Portfolio Holders were fully integrated in the process, which could then be scrutinised

properly. Working as "One Council" would mean that it was possible to achieve the ambitions proposed and therefore services would not need to be cut.

Draft Green Space Strategy
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendations but wanted to ensure that the whole issue of the Green Space Strategy tied in with the Local Plan.

The Executive agreed that the strategy was inextricably linked to the Local Plan and clarified that the timescales involved were achievable.

Joint working with Bowls England
The Overview & Scrutiny Committee was very keen on this as it had the potential to bring great economic benefit to the community. The Committee felt that consultation with both local residents and the Royal Leamington Spa Bowls Club was vitally important.

At the meeting of the Executive, it was stated that continuing discussions with all groups were vital to ensure that all parties were happy with the decisions being made.

The Dogs Exclusion Order 2011

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider what constitutes demarcation and try to set some sort of standard, when the Task and Finish Group look at Dog Control Orders in the Autumn. The Executive supported the suggestion.

May 2012

Oakley Wood Improvement Report
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following suggestions:

1. The pricing structure should move towards the National Average
2. A concession given to residents should remain
3. The Executive should consider providing "Jump Seats" for larger funerals to prevent large numbers of people being forced to stand
4. The Executive should find out why there is a delay with receiving legal advice over the Lodge (item 6.3 in the report)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported improvements and investment at Oakley Wood Crematorium and positively supported the idea that it was a service that should be provided by the Council.

The Executive did not feel that it was the right direction to move towards the National Average but would bear it in mind in this competitive market place.

They agreed that the jump seats were a good idea.

They assured O & S that legal negotiations were still taking place with the resident at the Lodge and they would keep them updated.

Overall, they thanked O & S for their comments and stated that the pricing policy would remain and be reviewed as parts of the fees and charges process.

Feasibility Study of Leamington Assets – Part A & B
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the reports were good and supported all of the recommendations in the reports but there needs to be considerable due diligence before decisions are made. The Committee made the following comments:

1. The Committee supported the Partnership approach but had concerns. It was pleased that due diligence would be undertaken
2. In respect of Part B of the report, the Committee wanted the Executive to fully ensure it understood the implications, and would fully support due diligence
3. The new Head Office should be purchased, not leased
4. The Committee supported urban and economic regeneration with the relocation of the Head Office
5. A previous feasibility study had been undertaken concerning the Town Hall. (Councillors Mrs Falp, Mrs Blacklock and Gifford had been involved.) This should be used to avoid duplication of effort
6. The Town Hall should become a model on how to produce a "Green" Grade II Listed Building

The new Head Office should also be "Green"

The Executive assured Overview and Scrutiny that due diligence would be undertaken and they agreed with comments made by Overview and Scrutiny regarding a "Green" Head Office.

Retail Development in Leamington Town Centre – Update Report
The comments made by Overview and Scrutiny still remain part of a confidential set of minutes dated 29 May 2013.

June 2012

Concessions and Income Generation
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee wanted to know what the Executive was agreeing to – are they agreeing to concessions for people aged 60 plus, or people of pensionable age?

The Committee also hoped that the Income Maximising Working Group was going to continue and would meet soon to monitor progress, but if not, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee might want to have a report back.

At the Executive meeting on 20 June 2012, it was reiterated that the policy would apply to individuals aged 60 plus and assured members that the Income Maximisation Working Group met regularly.

Retention of Additional Right to Buy Receipts
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Rural/Urban Improvement Application
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had concerns that this scheme was not being accessed by urban areas and smaller parish councils and wondered if the scheme could be publicised to reach these areas.

At the Executive meeting, the Portfolio Holder for Finance reiterated that the policy would apply to individuals aged 60 plus and assured members that the Income Maximisation Working Group met regularly.

July 2012

Scheme of Delegation
The Overview & Scrutiny Committee had no objection to the proposal for amendment to the scheme of delegation.

The Executive agreed the recommendations in the report.

Service Area Plan Performance
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to invite all Potfolio Holders to its meetings over the coming seven months to outline the service.

The Executive agreed that the Leader, Deputy Leader and Scrutiny Committee Chairs would meet to agree a structured reporting process for Portfolio Holders attending Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to discuss risks and Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss performance.

Purchase of Property in Kenilworth
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Executive that the house (or any others purchased within this block) remained within the general fund but should be used as emergency temporary accommodation by the Housing authority for the period it would otherwise lay dormant.

The Executive agreed to add the recommendation made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to recommendation 2.2 in the report.

August 2012

Markets Policy
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that an appeal process handled by the Regulatory Committee should be written into the policy document.

The Committee felt that in the majority of instances, any problems with the licence application would be sorted at the application stage, so very few cases would reach appeal stage. Committee members felt that appeals should dealt with quickly. Therefore the Committee recommended that appeals be dealt with by a Panel convened of members of the existing Regulatory Committee.

The Executive decided not to accept all of the recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny because it was agreed to introduce a paragraph on appeals but leave the appeals process to be decided at officer and Portfolio Holder level. This policy was not a 'licence' and did not fall into the Regulatory Committee's remit and other Council appeals processes did not follow this route either.

September 2012

New agreement with WCC regarding the operation of Barrack Street car park
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the report but some had suggested that security doors could be installed on the appropriate level of the car park to prevent access to the office block, and thus the car park could still be used and generate income. It was explained by Bill Hunt at the meeting that this idea had been discussed in meetings between WDC and WCC, but for various reasons WCC had been unwilling to accept the idea.

Executive Members were keen to see the car park continue to be made available for public use at weekends, whilst recognising that there were a number of reasons why the County Council had not supported the suggestion to undertake work to allow limited access to the stairwells. Councillor Shilton agreed to maintain a dialogue with the County Council in the hope that they could be persuaded to change their minds.

Tourism Strategy Update
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was in agreement with the recommendations. It felt the DMO was the right solution, it felt that the views of the local Tourism Industry were of vital importance, that it must benefit all areas of the District but had concerns about the timings and would like faster progress.

At the meeting of the Executive on 12 September 2012, the Portfolio Holder for Development Services, Councillor Hammon, agreed with the Scrutiny Committee's views and stated that the vacuum left by Shakespeare Country needed to be filled as soon as possible. He accepted Members' frustrations with delays and said that work would commence as soon as it had been approved by Executive with the aim of getting the DMO in place by April 2013. Councillor Mobbs pointed out that, as a result of delays, plans for the DMO now tied in with the Local Plan.

Integrated Waste, Grounds Maintenance and Building Cleaning Contracts Re-Let
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had slight concerns about the cheapest bid on Lot 4 – Building Cleaning, and asked that the Executive be assured that the much cheaper price could still deliver the service required.

At the Executive meeting, the Head of Neighbourhood Services, stated with confidence that the contractor could deliver because its work was already known to the Council.

October 2012

Fees and Charges 2013/14
The Committee reinforced its previous comments in respect of point 13.1.2 of the report and recommended that residents should receive a concession on the crematorium fees and charges.

The Leader proposed that the reductions in fees be considered as part of the budget setting process and asked that the Section 151 Officer brought forward details in his December report of the impact on the Council's finances should a £25 concession be granted to local residents for Cremations and removal of the surcharge for former residents in respect of cemeteries. This was accepted by the Executive.

Use of G4 Powers for Chase Meadow Community Centre Funding
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made no comments on this report.

Outcome of Warwick District Council's Peer Challenge
The Committee was concerned that the proposals in the Action Plan were insufficiently robust to tackle silo working.

The Committee wanted to see how the Council could develop community forums and clarify their role. It felt that the report did not fully reflect the range of issues relating to community forums and that the Action Plan should include a review of their role, including an assessment of the outcome of the WCC review of their effectiveness.

The Committee recommended that the Executive include any necessary proposals to address the highlighted concerns in respect of the capacity to deliver the FFF

programme within the Action Plan. If it was not an issue, then there should be a statement saying this.

At the Executive meeting, the Leader thanked the Committee for its comments and explained that there were no capacity issues at present but if councillors became aware of any issues they should report these to senior management.

With regard to the community forums it was noted that Warwickshire County Council was currently reviewing community forums and therefore it was probably not the best time to consider the Council's position on these but councillors should share good practice to ensure that the forums in the district could be as effective as possible.

Review of Planning Committee – Issues Paper
In respect of point 3.6 of the report, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked the Executive to satisfy itself that the arrangements to engage with external stakeholders were sufficiently to robust to inform the review.

The Committee requested that the Executive should satisfy itself that the Planning Committee was sufficiently involved in the Peer Review.

Appendix 1 – Attitudes and Behaviours, point 3
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the wording in this point changed to:
"What is the cause of the divergence of views between officers and members?"

The Leader accepted the meaning and intention of the recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee but proposed that this was not included at this stage and instead this response be considered by officers as part of the review.

Play Area Improvement Programme
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

November 2012

City Deal
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendation in the report, but suggested a slight amendment to its wording as follows:

"That the Executive note the background information on City Deals set out at Appendix A to this report and delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive and the other Group Leaders to negotiate and agree *an initial expression of interest* on behalf of the authority for a City Deal proposal for Coventry, Warwickshire and Hinckley/Bosworth area."

(This simply moves where the words "an initial expression of interest" appears in the sentence.)

The Committee suggested that the Executive might consider the Sheffield City Regional City Deal. The Committee also wished to emphasise that this was more than simply a planning issue. Whilst the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are happy for this to move forward, as it is being led by Coventry, the Executive should ensure that it is not at our expense.

The Executive accepted the proposed recommendation re wording and thanked the Committee for their comments.

2012/13 Portfolio Holder Statements & Fit for the Future Progress Report
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made no comments on the report.

Visitor Services Review
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendations in the report.

Website CMS Replacement
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted recommendations 2.2 and the second 2.2 (should be 2.3)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the wording on recommendation 2.1 should be changed as follows:

"That Executive approves the development of the business case comparing Option A (Appendix A) to Option B, the new option as set out in the email sent to councillors on 9 November 2012."

The Executive accepted the amendment to recommendation 2.1.

The Community Right to Bid

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that recommendations 2.2 and 2.3 were changed so that the Heads of Service stipulated to be given delegated authority must consult with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Shadows:

2.2 That Executive delegates authority to the Head of Development Services *in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and Shadows* to:- .....

2.3 That Executive delegates authority to the Head of Neighbourhood Services *in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and Shadows* to:- .....

At the Executive meeting, it was advised that it would not be accepted because paragraph 3.7 detailed the relevant parties to be liaised with and sticking to current form and practice was the best option, to avoid complicating the delegation further.

December 2012

Proposed Regeneration LLP
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Tenancy Strategy
The Overview & Scrutiny Committee accepted the strategy but highlighted that the Council would still have the ability to decide the length of tenancies for our own housing stock. Members asked the Executive to be mindful that the Council would need to bring a policy forward for our tenants at a later date.

At the meeting of the Executive, the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property Services, assured Members that due regard would be given to the strategy when compiling the policy.

Health Scrutiny
The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report and was mindful that this would be a large undertaking for the Council.

The Executive agreed with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments.

Fetherston Court Development Options
The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report and was hopeful that the building could be used for short term, emergency housing during the decant period.

At the Executive meeting, it was agreed that the Portfolio Holder would investigate if the site could be used for short term emergency lets.

Tree Maintenance Service
The Overview & Scrutiny Committee expressed concerns that the County Council may not be able to deliver the same level of quality of service. However, members received assurances from Neighbourhood Services that this would be the best outcome for the maintenance and care of the Council's own trees. They agreed that the reasons for the move of the service were compelling & understood that financial pressures meant the present situation could not continue but felt strongly that the SLA would need to be very carefully monitored.

The Executive thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its comments and many shared the same concerns regarding quality of service, however, assurance was given that this was the best option available.

January 2013

Provision of WDC Legal Services
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the arrangement for legal services with WCC had worked well when advice was required by our Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committees. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggested that it would be useful if half-yearly meetings between the Chairman of our Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committees could be arranged with Ian Marriott, if the Chairmen felt it helpful.

The Executive thanked the Committee for its comments and agreed the recommendations as set out in the report.

Annual Monitoring Report and Local Development Scheme
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was concerned that the timetable set for the Local Plan (Appendices 2 & 3) would not override the Town Centres' Action Plans. It was noted that the start of the Leamington Spa Action Plan had been delayed to get the Local Plan in force.

The Committee also wanted clarification on whether the Kenilworth Action Plan was going to the Executive in May 2013, ahead of the Leamington Spa and Warwick Actions Plans, which were going to Executive in 2017.

At the meeting of the Executive, the Chief Executive advised Members that the Kenilworth Town Council consultation results regarding the Local Plan would be fed through and ultimately reside in their Town Action Plan but advised that the LDS and the Local Plan were not the same thing.

February 2013

HRA Rent Setting
The Overview and Scrutiny felt that the Executive might like to consider increasing garage rents at a higher level so as to encourage development of garage sites.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property believed that the proposed increase for garage rents was appropriate because there were clearly people who required garages but an increase might deter those who did not from keeping them. Additionally, not all garage sites were appropriate and it would be difficult to have differential rates.

Approval of Heating, Lighting and Water Charges 2013/14 – Council Tenants
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the full energy costs should be passed on as they had been in the past.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property Services felt that, bearing in mind the vulnerability of the people in question and the current financial climate, it was right to make concessions this year.

March 2013

Discretionary Housing Payment Policy
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the full energy costs should be passed on as they had been in the past.

At the meeting of the Executive, The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property Services felt that, bearing in mind the vulnerability of the people in question and the current financial climate, it was right to make concessions this year.

Potential Strategic Land Acquisition in Leamington Spa
This item was discussed in camera and details were recorded in a confidential minute.

April 2013

Review of Planning Committee – Outcomes of consultation

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Executive that:

(i) in respect of recommendation 2.4 in the report, an appropriate budget was set to ensure quality training which should lead to quality decisions. Also substitute members of the Planning Committee must also receive the training;

(ii) on recommendation 2.8, the Vice Chairman of Planning Committee should not be paid a special responsibility allowance, and if such an allowance was granted, the Committee was wholly opposed to this being back-dated;

(iii) in respect of recommendation 2.9, it should be emphasised that Ward Councillors would still have the power to call in an Enforcement item, and that Ward Councillors must be informed of these in good time to allow this to happen; and

(iv) the report should make it clear that the independence of the Planning Committee must be preserved.

In response, Members discussed the importance of relevant and cost effective training and were agreed that Ward Councillors should remain involved in all planning and enforcement issues that affected their Ward.

Some concern was raised regarding the cost of specialist training for Planning Committee and the Chief Executive assured members that this would always aim to be provided en mass to all interested Councillors but highlighted the importance of attendance. He also felt that an independent budget provision could be considered.

Overall, Members did not agree with recommendation (iv) from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and felt that the Committee was run with formality and respect. It was recognised that a certain level of commitment was needed to be an effective member of the committee and even more so for the Vice Chairman.

The Portfolio Holder for Development Services, Councillor Hammon, hoped that the recommendations would help to modernise the Planning Committee process.

Having read the report and considered the comments made by the scrutiny committee, the Executive agreed the recommendations as written with an amendment to recommendation 2.4 to read "training for all members of the Planning Committee and notes that persistent non-attendance will result in a Member being barred from sitting on that Committee".

Months previously, it had been agreed by Councillors that the Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee should be given an allowance but it had not been implemented whilst the Planning Review was on-going. It was agreed that the latter part of recommendation 2.8 should be removed because it was agreed that the Special Responsibility Allowance should not be backdated but introduced from the start of the forthcoming municipal year, in May 2013.

<u>The Way Forward for the Local Plan</u>
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendations in the report. The Committee emphasised strongly that the co-operation between the District Council and Coventry City Council must be as open and transparent as possible to help ensure a good solid Local Plan. It was important that the position regarding the shared Head of Planning between the two Authorities was understood by Members and the public. The Committee also stressed that all relevant parties should be consulted, and these would include the LEP and City Deal.

The Executive agreed that the process should be as open and transparent as possible and felt that work done so far had been.

<u>Rural / Urban Capital Improvement Application</u>
The Committee recommended to the Executive that the Portfolio Holder for Finance worked with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to obtain a cross-party view to produce the scheme.

The Executive withdrew the item from the agenda.

<u>Shades Judicial Review</u>
This item was discussed in camera and details were recorded in a confidential minute.

<u>May 2013</u>
The Executive will not meet in May during the municipal year 2012/2013.

<u>ITEMS CONSIDERED BY JOINT MEETINGS OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u>

- Local Plan Preferred Option (Executive item, 21 May 2012)