



## CABINET

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004

**AGENDA  
ITEM:**

### Walsall Council Core Values

**Ward(s):** ALL

**Forward Plan:** No

**Portfolio:** Councillor Zahid Ali - Community Engagement and Organisational Development

**Service Area:** All Council service areas

**Summary of report:**

Following extensive consultation with members of staff and councillors, core values have been identified to support the council's vision of building a better borough. The five values of **respect, integrity, equality, listening and excellence** have been chosen as a means of signalling to everyone, including staff, partners and citizens, the beliefs, behaviours and principles that are required of the council in order to deliver its vision and the best possible quality of life for local people.

The council agreed in October 2003 a clear vision to build a better borough. Members of staff at all levels and councillors have contributed to discussions concerning the core values of the council – values that will guide the way the council delivers its vision. It was clear that staff as individuals, have personal values, which influence their beliefs, behaviours, decisions and actions and it was accepted that any significant or progressive organisation has to have too a set of shared and agreed values that signals to stakeholders what it stands for and how it will behave. Cabinet is invited to endorse these five values for excellence.

**Background Papers:**

None

### Recommendation

The cabinet is requested to endorse the values for the council and submit them to the next full council meeting for formal adoption by all members of the council.

**Signed:**

**Signed:**

**Executive Director:** Jamie Morris

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Zahid Ali

**Date:**

**Date:**

## **Resource and legal considerations**

The values will help guide decisions and the use of resources more effectively and help staff and members determine the 'right' course of action. There are no legal considerations as such

## **Citizen Impact**

During the development of this strategy potential benefits were identified for both citizens in the borough and the performance of the Council. Benefits for citizens will be:

- More opportunity to interact with the council where and when people want and offering choice in the locations they visit or contact the council.
- Better processes to ensure that there is seamless service delivery between our front line staff and back office services.
- Continuous improvement in our services to ensure we meet the needs of our community.
- A consistent approach to service delivery supported by the necessary technical infrastructure.
- Professionally trained staff within our First Stop Shop, contact centre and Local Access points able to handle a wide range of enquiries in an efficient and professional manner to improve the citizen experience.
- Consistent service standards.

## **Environmental impact**

The five values impact all of the ten priorities in the council's vision for the borough. In terms of the environment, they will help ensure the authority demonstrates respect and integrity in its work to achieve a clean and green borough, and by listening to local people, it will develop and improve environmental services equally for all members of the community and in ways that have most meaning for them.

## **Managing performance and risk**

The values are being incorporated into the service planning process and individual performance management and so will be a key part of the council's performance management framework.

## **Ensuring equality**

The values very clearly support equality by emphasising specifically its central importance to the council's policies, statements and actions, and the way we allocate and deliver resources and services regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle or disability.

## **Consultation**

The proposed values have been developed from a series of consultations and workshops undertaken with staff at all levels of the organisation and with members. These were:

- The 'Vision Zone' consultation of staff in September 2003
- The vision process itself in October 2003, because citizens and partners, in influencing the vision will influence the values that support the vision
- The work in teams undertaken as part of the *News & Views* staff briefing process throughout the council during June and July 2004
- The work on values undertaken by directorates during 2004
- A workshop with general and service managers in July 2004
- A workshop with senior managers and the executive management team, together with discussions with cabinet members, also in July 2004.

## **Vision 2008**

Consultative work on the council's vision also influenced the construction of the five core values and all of them directly support and influence the implementation of the ten vision priorities.

## **Contact Officer:**

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# Walsall Council's Core Values

Following wide ranging consultation of councillors and staff, it is proposed that the council adopts five values, which will be linked to the vision and priorities for the borough and will help drive council strategies, service plans and individual performance and development plans.

**In a sentence - We will *respect* our staff and citizens, act with *integrity*, value *equality* and diversity, *listen* to what people say and strive for and deliver *excellence*.**

The five values for excellence are:

## **1. Respect**

We will respect equally every individual - our citizens, stakeholders and staff – and their differences and diversity.

We will have mutual respect for the professionalism of individuals, teams and partners – communication will be valued and criticism will be constructive

In respecting everyone, we will behave with civility, courtesy, decency, dignity, understanding, consideration and tolerance.

## **2. Integrity**

We will be honest, open and consistent in all our dealings with our stakeholders, so that we may earn and maintain their trust

We will keep our promises, be accountable and take responsibility for our actions

We will demonstrate decisive, responsive, impartial and fair leadership

## **3. Equality**

We will, through our policies, statements and actions, include, promote and celebrate the great diversity of individuals and cultures across the borough

We will gear our resources to ensure that our citizens and staff will see and feel real fairness and equality for all.

We will make council services accessible, and tailored to the needs of all, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle or disability.

## **4. Listening**

We will listen to and consult residents, community organisations, voluntary groups and staff – caring about and acting upon their views and concerns.

We will learn from any comments or complaints that local people may have and ensure they are responded to effectively

We will consult citizens on major changes and involve them in the things that matter in their community, working with them to deliver the vision at local levels.

## **5. Excellence**

We will strive to become an excellent council - forward-facing, outward-looking and constantly seeking to develop and improve our services in ways most meaningful to citizens

We will learn, develop and work effectively and efficiently, acting as one council to deliver our one vision for the benefit of all Walsall citizens

We will empower, trust and value all staff by providing the support, training, communication and opportunities to develop the ownership, responsibility and confidence to make decisions, solve problems and fulfil our potential to achieve continuous improvement for the benefit of local people.

### **Putting them into practice**

In order for the values to be embedded into the day to day practices of each service area, various communication methods are being used, e.g. the news and views staff briefing system, "Team Spirit"- the employee newsletter, team meetings and team away days. One of the reasons for these sessions is to ensure that all staff both understand and buy into the corporate values, whilst at the same time have an opportunity to add flesh / context for their respective service.

The values will also be reflected in recruitment and retention processes and training programmes, including in particular our induction programme for new employees. We will also ensure that the values are reflected in our human resource policies, practices and procedures and through all organisational development activities across the organisation.

The council's performance management system provides for all employees to discuss their performance targets and development needs with their manager on a regular basis. We need to ensure that the council's five values are central to this process as well, so that all staff fully understand the beliefs, behaviours and principles that are required of the council in order to deliver its vision for Walsall.