

Minutes of the **MEETING** of the Council of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough held on **Monday 24th April, 2006, at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House.

Present

Councillor J.R. Cook (Mayor) in the Chair

Councillor B.V. McCracken (Dep Mayor)

“ A.J.A. Andrew
“ T.G. Ansell
“ D.A. Anson
“ M. Arif
“ A. Aslam
“ C.M. Ault
“ J.M. Barton
“ L.A. Beeley
“ A.G. Bentley
“ Mrs. J. Beilby
“ M.A. Bird
“ P. Bott
“ M.R. Burley
“ B. Cassidy
“ K. Chambers
“ A.G. Clarke
“ R.J.H. Collins
“ S.P. Coughlan
“ C.U. Creaney
“ B.A. Douglas-Maul
“ A.E. Griffiths
“ A.D. Harris
“ L.A. Harrison
“ E.F. Hughes
“ A.D. Johnson
“ H. Khan
“ M. Longhi

Councillor S.W. Madeley

“ Ms. R.A. Martin
“ Mrs. C. Micklewright
“ M. Munir
“ J.G. O'Hare
“ T.S. Oliver
“ A.J. Paul
“ K. Phillips
“ D.J. Pitt
“ Mrs. E.E. Pitt
“ M.G. Pitt
“ I.C. Robertson
“ R.S. Robinson
“ J. Rochelle
“ C.E.M. Rose
“ B. Sanders
“ H.S. Sarohi
“ K. Sears
“ Mrs. D.A. Shires
“ I. Shires
“ C.D.D. Towe
“ W.T. Tweddle
“ A. Underhill
“ R.A. Walker
“ G. Wilkes
“ V.G. Woodruff
“ M. Yasin
“ Zahid Ali

87. **Prayers**

Prayers were offered by the Mayor's Chaplain.

88. **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Perry, Turner and Young.

89. **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2006 copies having been sent to each member of the Council be approved as a correct record and signed.

90. **Declarations of interest**

The following members declared an interest in the items indicated:-

Councillor Sears	Acorn Home Care (personal)
Councillor Oliver	Non-Executive Director of Walsall tPCT (personal)
Councillor Woodruff	Employee Walsall Hospitals Trust and Royal College of Nursing (personal)
Councillor Burley	Non-Executive Director of Walsall Hospital and NHS Trust (personal)
Councillor Underhill	Non-Executive Director of Walsall tPCT (personal)

91. **Mayor's announcements**

(a) **Former Councillor Mrs. D. O'Hare**

The Mayor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Dorothy O'Hare and paid tribute to her services to the Borough over a period of many years. Councillors Ansell, Madeley, Bird, Wilkes and Mrs. Pitt also paid tribute following which it was **moved** by the Mayor, duly seconded and:

Resolved

That this Council have heard with deep regret of the death of Mrs. D. O'Hare, a member of the former Walsall County Borough Council from 1967 to 1974 and a member of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council from 1979 to 2004 of which Council she was Mayor in 1992/93, and place on record their appreciation of her services to the Town over a period of many years and extend to her family their sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

Members and officers stood in silence as a mark of respect.

(b) Mr. J.W. Hadley

The Mayor referred to the recent death of Mr. J.W. Hadley. The Mayor paid tribute to Mr. Hadley former Chief Executive and Treasurer to Walsall Council for his many years of service. Councillors Ansell, Madeley and Bird also paid tribute, following which it was **moved** by the Mayor duly seconded and:-

Resolved

That this Council have heard with deep regret of the death of Mr. J.W. Hadley Treasurer to Walsall Council from 1973 to 1991, his final three years as Chief Executive and Treasurer and place on record their appreciation of his services to the town over a period of many years and extend to his family their sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

Members and officers stood in silence as a mark of respect.

92. Petitions

The following petitions were submitted:-

- (1) Councillor Arif – make Bath Road one-way from St. Michael Street to Little London Street;
- (2) Councillor Phillips – opposition to proposed drug clinic, sex clinic, drop-in centre;
- (3) Councillor Cassidy – provision of controlled crossing at Shannon Drive, Brownhills
- (4) Councillor Cook – anti-social behaviour in Castle Drive and Lucknow Road shopping areas;
- (5) Councillor Micklewright:
 - (a) New opening times at McDonalds in Rushall
 - (b) Cartridge Lane, Rushall – felling of protected trees.

- (6) Councillor Towe – merger of West Midlands Police forces
- (7) Councillor Robinson from residents of Harden Close – regeneration

93. Questions from members of the public

Youth wardens in schools

Carol Gregory, Head Teacher of Sneyd School, asked the following question of Councillor M.G. Pitt:-

“Councillor Melvin Pitt assured members at the last meeting, that youth wardens in schools were under no threat and never had been. I wrote the day after to ask for written clarification of this statement, but have received nothing.

I now learn that the scheme was indeed under threat and that the previous 12 wardens had been reduced to 5, working with different conditions of service. One school will no longer have any wardens and the others involved will now have only one instead of the two they used to have. The remaining warden will have to undertake work in the community as well as in the school. Could Councillor Pitt explain the present position?”

Councillor M.G. Pitt replied by thanking Ms. Gregory for the question and thus giving him the opportunity to clarify the position.

From the outset the Council provided funds for 5 youth wardens in schools. However because there was some underspend on the budget we were able to increase this temporarily to 9 wardens. The permanent funding is for 5 wardens and that is what will be in place from now.

The scheme is not under threat, and never has been. The budget for the youth wardens is continuing. I do acknowledge there was some confusion following a letter which was sent to heads earlier this year,. but as you are aware officers contacted you straight away to confirm the service would continue and the letter was retracted.

There were originally 6 schools benefiting from this programme. One of these no longer wants to take part and the other schools, perhaps with the exception of your own, are happy with the arrangements. The plan is that the 5 wardens will be allocated to the 5 schools.

Walsall Housing Regeneration Agency (WHRA) manages the youth warden scheme on our behalf and as such undertakes the recruitment, employment and working arrangements of these youth wardens. The youth wardens were employed on a 12 month contract which ended in March 2006. They were given the opportunity to reapply for their posts.

The youth wardens will provide a service which will cover both the school and its immediate vicinity. This is important because the problems the wardens are trying to deal with are not confined to the school perimeter. This role was always envisaged for the wardens and is now reflected in the new job description. There is no detriment to the employee.

Councillor Pitt concluded by saying that the manager of the wardens programme at WHRA would be very happy to come to your school and discuss any further points

Uncompleted business from meeting on 6 March 2006

94. Revised governance arrangements for Local Neighbourhood Partnerships

The report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Zahid, duly seconded and:-

Resolved

- (1) That Council agree to the alignment of Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to the governance structure of WBSP with effect from 1 May 2006.
- (2) That Council support the establishment of the nine LNPs as neighbourhood based strategic partnerships with revised terms of reference linked to the governance arrangements of the WBSP.
- (3) That Council note that Councillors involvement, ie all Councillors being full members of the nine LNPs, will continue.

95. Membership of Employment Appeals Committee B

Resolved

That the following change in membership for the remainder of the municipal year be noted:-

Councillor Underhill to replace Councillor Robinson.

96. Notice of motion – employment of known sex offenders

It was **moved** by Councillor Hughes, duly seconded and:-

Resolved unanimously

That in light of previous national revelations with regard to the employment of known sex offenders, this Council assures all partner organisations that it will continue to support them to ensure the continual safety of the children of Walsall and gives an additional assurance to all parents and children that it expects to be consulted if application is made for employment in a Walsall school by anyone who has committed offences against children.

97. Notice of motion – Police force reorganisation

It was **moved** by Councillor Martin and seconded by Councillor Rose:-

We believe that this Council should be committed to protecting our local police force. The policy of the Government to re-organise Police forces is a bad idea because it will result in:

- Less responsive – a regional force will make our emergency services less responsive to local needs.
- Rising crime – force restructuring will not tackle fundamental law and order issues such as rising crime, too few police officers and the amount of police time wasted on red tape.
- Less accountability – policing is essentially a locally derived service. Regions are far too big and unwieldy structures for the police forces as a whole.
- Rising cost – the police levy on Council tax bills in Walsall has already soared considerably since 1997, this expensive and time consuming restructuring could force up bills even further.

This Council therefore registers its opposition to the reorganisation of the West Midlands force.

Amendment moved by Councillor Coughlan and seconded by Councillor Robinson:-

We believe that this Council should be committed to protecting and supporting the development of our local police force.

Council therefore welcomes the introduction of the Government's policy on neighbourhood policing, we believe this will lead to greatly enhanced public safety and community engagement and the stance taken by the West Midlands Police Authority on the reorganisation of police forces.

We recognise the concerns of the democratically elected West Midlands Police Authority – including Conservative members of this authority – and their willingness to negotiate on issues, not least those meeting setting up costs.

Taking on board the comments made by the Conservative Party chairperson, of the West Midlands Police Authority who states “a superforce would mean safer and better policed communities”

This Council calls on officers to monitor the response to the Police Authority from the Home Office and report to the next appropriate Council meeting.

At this point in the meeting, the Chief Executive requested that the Mayor adjourn the meeting in order to enable the Monitoring Officer to prepare advice on the amendment.

The time being 7.05 p.m. the Mayor adjourned the meeting.

The meeting recommenced at 7.20 p.m.

The Monitoring Officer informed the meeting that the amendment was in his opinion a direct negative and therefore under Council procedure rule 15.6, he ruled the amendment out of order.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried and it was:-

Resolved

We believe that this Council should be committed to protecting our local police force. The policy of the Government to re-organise Police forces is a bad idea because it will result in:

- Less responsive – a regional force will make our emergency services less responsive to local needs.
- Rising crime – force restructuring will not tackle fundamental law and order issues such as rising crime, too few police officers and the amount of police time wasted on red tape.
- Less accountability – policing is essentially a locally derived service. Regions are far too big and unwieldy structures for the police forces as a whole.
- Rising cost – the police levy on Council tax bills in Walsall has already soared considerably since 1997, this expensive and time consuming restructuring could force up bills even further.

This Council therefore registers its opposition to the reorganisation of the West Midlands force.

98. **Notice of motion – recycling of household waste**

It was **moved** by Councillor Longhi and seconded by Councillor Walker:-

That Council accepts its responsibility to protect the environment particularly through the recycling of household waste and recognises the need to further increase recycling within the Borough through further work in our neighbourhoods in order to reduce the volume of household waste which is landfilled.

This Council, therefore, resolves to provide leadership in this area by promoting recycling to all members of the community, including schools, community groups and business; and for Councillors, as community leaders, to set a positive example by personally utilising effectively their own green boxes, Council recycling sites and promoting the recycling message within their own communities.

Amendment moved by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Longhi:-

Council accepts its responsibility to protect the environment particularly through the recycling of household waste and recognises the need to further increase recycling within the Borough through further work in our neighbourhoods in order to reduce the volume of household waste which is landfilled.

Council accepts that the current provision to our communities could be better in making recycling easier and fairer. Council will seek to introduce brown bins to every household within Walsall that requires one. We will encourage and extend the range of items for dry recycling to include plastic bottles and plastic containers. We will review the current green box facility to be sure it is truly fit for purpose and if required provide lids to fit the boxes. We may have to accept that the green boxes are not sufficient to meet the needs required. We will investigate the provision of weekly collections in dry recycling and this will include looking at how we make it more convenient for people in flats to participate in the recycling agenda. Our neighbours in Lichfield for example collect weekly and their percentage of recycling has increased.

Council resolves to provide positive leadership in this area by promoting recycling to all members of the community including schools, community groups and business; and for Councillors as community leaders to set a positive example by personally utilising effectively whatever provision comes out of our investigation. Councillors will promote our recycling sites but recognise more doorstep recycling should be encouraged to keep vehicles off the road; Councillors should promote the recycling message within their own communities.

Councillor Bird questioned whether this amendment fell within the scope of Council procedure rule 13.4(h) in that the result of the motion would be to incur expenditure which would have the effect of varying the Council's cash limits within 3 months of Council tax being set.

The Monitoring Officer thanked Councillor Bird and said that he had already considered this issue and was satisfied that the amendment did not breach this rule.

The amendment, being accepted by Councillor Longhi, the mover of the motion, was put forward as the substantive motion and on being put to the vote was declared carried unanimously and it was:-

Resolved

That Council accepts its responsibility to protect the environment particularly through the recycling of household waste and recognises the need to further increase recycling within the Borough through further work in our neighbourhoods in order to reduce the volume of household waste which is landfilled.

Council accepts that the current provision to our communities could be better in making recycling easier and fairer. Council will seek to introduce brown bins to every household within Walsall that requires one. We will encourage and extend the range of items for dry recycling to include plastic bottles and plastic containers. We will review the current green box facility to be sure it is truly fit for purpose and if required provide lids to fit the boxes. We may have to accept that the green boxes are not sufficient to meet the needs required. We will investigate the provision of weekly collections in dry recycling and this will include looking at how we make it more convenient for people in flats to participate in the recycling agenda. Our neighbours in Lichfield for example collect weekly and their percentage of recycling has increased.

Council resolves to provide positive leadership in this area by promoting recycling to all members of the community including schools, community groups and business; and for Councillors as community leaders to set a positive example by personally utilising effectively whatever provision comes out of our investigation. Councillors will promote our recycling sites but recognise more doorstep recycling should be encouraged to keep vehicles off the road; Councillors should promote the recycling message within their own communities.

New business

99. Annual report statement on Walsall

The Mayor informed the meeting that in view of the amount of business on the summons this evening he would call Councillor Ansell to make the statement and then invite Councillors Oliver and I. Shires to speak and he would not be calling for further speakers.

Councillor Ansell said that the statement on the Council's achievements over the last year was that one that he was proud to make to the Council tonight.

This past year has seen work undertaken by staff, members and our partners giving great benefits.

This is a year when we have seen the official launch of the URC designed to bring in much needed investment into Walsall. This is also a year which has seen the WBSP launch work for our vision in 2021 aimed at exciting the people of Walsall that this is a place worth putting down roots and bringing up families. A place for the future.

This Council achieved 3 stars and is improving well under the harder CPA test to continue to improve to be on track for 2008. We are no longer in the shadow of our past.

The Council this year has launched its transformational programme and the Council took the decision not to proceed with a strategic partnership with Fujitsu. This was a bold decision but shows the Council has confidence that it can continue the transformational programme and continue to deliver quality cost effective services to the people of Walsall.

He continued that he would like to say something about the regional and city agenda. In the last year the Black Country Study has been published paving the way for changing this sub-region for the next 30 years. The City Region agenda has also been developed in conjunction with other local authorities and unlike in the past when Walsall stayed at the outskirts, the Council has been at the heart of the decisions and following the local elections, the Council will be holding information and training events to raise awareness of the new City Region agenda across this Council.

He said that he intended to talk about the achievements made across all Council services which have positively impacted on the lives of citizens and show that young people remain at the centre of our future. There are huge economic challenges facing Walsall.

A key priority for this Council is to work in partnership to achieve the regeneration of the Borough.

The revitalisation of our town and district centres is crucial to this agenda. With the Walsall Regeneration Company, we are continuing to drive the delivery of a number of exciting projects in Walsall Town Centre such as the new Business and Learning Campus, the St. Matthews quarter and Walsall Waterfront, as well as continuing to invest in the creation of new, safer, cleaner and improved public spaces – all of which is helping to transform the centre of our borough. This is to attract investment for the whole of the borough and contribute towards people wanting to live in Walsall borough.

We now have plans to deliver exciting new futures for our district and neighbourhood centres. With partners such as Walsall Housing Group we will deliver projects to unlock the investment that will restore the pride in these key centres. We will continue to focus on improving our gateways and key corridors so they give a positive impression of the borough. We will deliver a small regeneration project in Bentley protecting that area from decline.

As a Council we have demonstrated our commitment to working in a business friendly way, working with existing and new businesses. We are investing in the creation of a new Town Centre Manager role to work with local businesses to improve and promote Walsall giving confidence to businesses.

The new Local Area Agreement will provide great opportunities for our Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to win additional finance concentrating on improved environment and reductions in crime and disorder.

We know one of Walsall's strengths is its location and we will continue to invest in our transport network so that we can capitalise on our strengths and we are delighted that new bus stops in Pleck, Bentley, Darlaston, St. Matthews, Aldridge, Bloxwich and Blakenall areas will be improved. This is a direct response to citizens feedback and hopefully bus stops with information will encourage greater use of public transport.

This year the Audit Commission have formally recognised that progress in children's services had been "remarkable".

For our most vulnerable children we have provided more and earlier support to families so that less children have to come into care. Of these that have to because of serious family difficulties, more are able to have their needs met locally. Our adoption service is excellent. Our looked after children are also achieving more, over 100 had their success celebrated at an awards ceremony earlier this year. The teams working with our looked after children have had their innovative and successful work nationally recognised during the year. We have also opened a brand new children's home which the inspectors have described as wonderful.

Our youth service has radically improved the quality of its work over the last year. A re-assessment by the Government Office for the West Midlands found that "excellent progress has been made in a remarkably short time".

The year started with praise from the then School Standards Minister, Stephen Twigg, following Walsall LEA's Ofsted report. He said: "The Ofsted report is a tribute to everyone in the education sector in Walsall and rewards the hard work and determination that has gone into achieving the transformation of education services".

In 2005, our GCSE pupils made outstanding improvements, with the numbers gaining five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C rising by 7%. Two thirds of schools also showed a clear improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving two or more A level passes.

We are not complacent. We still have much to achieve if our children are to compete on the world stage.

Walsall is the only authority in the country to have been awarded a "good" rating for all its pupil referral units under the new Ofsted inspection framework.

We are delighted that 2005 was the year when the first of Walsall's children's centres became a reality and not just an idea on paper, with three centres fully recognised by the DfES – those at Birchills SureStart, Blakenall SureStart and Bentley West Primary School. This administration is investing in all parts of the borough delivering on our promise that everyone counts.

Major successes are down to the hard work of the pupils and teachers. I congratulate them for these achievements. Recognition should also be given to school governors and to parents who continue to support their schools in raising standards.

Walsall's finances are now secure and our financial stability is embedded. Our medium term financial strategy is nationally recognised as good practice by the Audit Commission. Our highly successful treasury management function continues to have the lowest average rate of interest paid on debt in the West Midlands.

This year we have been celebrating achievement of the West Midlands LGA Primary and Full Charter for Member Development recognising our excellent work on training and personal development for Councillors. Internally, we also saw the introduction of long service awards for staff who have worked loyally for us for 20 years. We also launched the disability supernumerary scheme demonstrating our commitment to equality of opportunity for all. We have also successfully implemented a programme for the overseas recruitment of social workers and a comprehensive training programme in the adults and children social care services reducing the reliance on agency staff.

Substantial and ongoing progress was made in resolving Trades Union issues bringing our employee relations to a more modern footing.

The award of a second star for our adult social care services which reflects the energy and enthusiasm of staff to deliver high quality services to vulnerable people of the borough.

We have sustained progress particularly in services for older people and fewer people are choosing residential care and more are being supported in the community. This is what they want. We have opened our first interim care unit at Rushall Mews to avoid unnecessary hospital admission and help older people leave hospital more quickly and we have developed our telecare system to support more people in their own homes.

We have continued to deliver excellent services to people with learning disabilities. More people are being enabled to live in their own homes, and we have replaced another of our old large homes with supported housing options. We have increased respite care provision for carers of people with learning disabilities. People with learning disabilities and their carers know this is a Council that listens to their aspirations and responds.

As a result of the increased investment the Council has made into disability services, a new specialist younger adults and disability service has been established resulting in improved access to services. For example, the waiting list of occupational therapy assessments has more than halved, and we have reduced waiting times. The new integrated equipment store, set up with health, has resulted in speedier delivery of items of equipment to support people in their own homes.

Our homeless and housing advice services achieved regional champion status, 1 of only 14 nationally and we continue to reduce the number of homeless people in bed and breakfast.

We have worked in partnership with housing associations to secure £7.7 million of social housing grant from the housing corporation to provide 220 new homes throughout the borough.

Responding to people's needs is at the heart of what we do and this year has seen the successful launch of Walsall's shopmobility scheme. I am not the one saying it is successful, the people who are using this service who tell me how delighted they are.

We have done much to celebrate the richness and diversity of our borough, The Civic Awards go from strength to strength recognising the contributions of local residents to the life of the borough. Working with the multi-faith forum, the Council actively supports the kicking racism out of football campaign and Star events have been supported by this Council as we continue to deliver the message in Walsall that all people are respected.

I now want to turn to our achievements in neighbourhoods.

We have seen in our neighbourhoods clean up campaigns, environmental improvements, new security measures like alleygates.

Let me list some achievements.

- A planned programme of repairs in public buildings giving a better environment for our customers and our employees.
- We are reducing the historic backlog of repairs within schools.
- The Council has increased the amount of household waste which goes to recycling to over 24% resulting in less waste being sent to landfill.
- This Council introduced recycling of plastics at the household waste and recycling centres and the provision of mini recycling centres to flats. We have also introduced recycling within the Council buildings, starting with the Civic Centre complex.
- We have improved the performance of our street cleansing service and introduced a gold standard to increase frequency of cleansing within district centres.
- We have promoted Walsall in Bloom including “colouring” the borough with the introduction of over 100 floral baskets on Wolverhampton Road and within the town and district centres.
- We recently received the highest planning development grant in the region and 8th nationally as a direct result of our improved performance.
- Walsall Council is now in the top quartile for its speed of planning decision making – meeting all Government targets.
- We are making services more accessible. We have met all E-government requirements for delivering the planning service electronically – only 28% of Councils achieved this and it will result in a further reward of grant next year.
- The Council has eventually received approval for the implementation of the town centre transportation package, so essential to reduce congestion and improve access to the town centre.
- We have started ground water monitoring works on land adjacent to Streetly Cemetery enabling the construction of the much needed extension to the existing burial ground to accommodate future demand.
- We have exceeded our target production of school travel plans, having had 18 completed by this year’s deadline. This now means that 33 schools in the borough have plans to reduce traffic congestion, increase cycling and walking and encourage schools to promote traffic and car safety.

I had a list of achievements four times as long as the list which I have just read and I apologise if any service has not been mentioned. Such is the volume of achievements this Council made the last year. I ask the Council to join with me in thanking staff of this Council for their commitment and hard work, the partners who continue to have confidence in us and the people of Walsall for their contribution in building pride in Walsall.

At this point in the meeting, it was **moved** by Councillor Bird and duly seconded:-

That procedure rule 9.8 be suspended in order to complete the business up to and including summons item 16.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried and it was:-

Resolved

That procedure rule 9.8 be suspended in order to complete the business up to and including summons item 16.

Councillors Oliver and I. Shires responded to the statement.

At this point in the meeting, the Mayor requested Councillor Ansell to respond.

As a number of members objected to the Leader being able to respond, the Leader said that he was quite happy not to take the opportunity afforded him by the Mayor to respond to the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer referred to paragraph 17 of the Council procedure rules, more particularly paragraph 17.1 which referred to the form of debate being agreed with the Mayor. He went on to say that the form of the debate was agreed with the Mayor during preparations for this meeting and that the leader of the two opposition parties had been written to prior to the meeting advising them of the proposed procedure.

100. Review of the Council's Constitution

The report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Ansell and duly seconded:-

- (1) That the changes to the Constitution set out in the report and appendices now submitted be approved;
- (2) That the Monitoring Officer be delegated authority to determine the commencement date for each of the changes approved in (1) above and to make changes of a typographical or administrative nature not identified in (1) above.

Amendment moved by Councillor Oliver and duly seconded:-

That the following be added to the recommendation contained in the report:-

- (3) Instruct officers to present options for further amendments to the Constitution at the Annual Council meeting as follows, in order to enable great transparency and accountability:

4.1 Council procedure rules – to require Cabinet portfolio holders to present reports for debate at Council at agreed intervals during the municipal year.

4.2 Budget and policy framework rules – that decisions relating to major strategic policy and direction, as taken under appropriate delegation, be reported for debate at Council at the earliest opportunity.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost.

The original motion was put to the vote and declared carried and it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the changes to the Constitution set out in the report and appendices now submitted be approved;
- (2) That the Monitoring Officer be delegated authority to determine the commencement date for each of the changes approved in (1) above and to make changes of a typographical or administrative nature not identified in (1) above.

101. Proper Officer for Registration Service

The report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Ansell, duly seconded and:-

Resolved

That the Head of Public Protection be appointed Walsall's Proper Officer for the Registration Service in accordance with the Registration Service Act 1953 with effect from 24th April 2006.

102. Risk management

The report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Longhi, duly seconded and:-

Resolved

- (1) That the report and appendix which set out the range of activities that have embedded risk management in all Council activities be noted;
- (2) That it be noted that Audit Committee has formally acknowledged its responsibility to ensure that; risk is identified and managed effectively; risk management activity takes place strategically and operationally in all directorates; and is embedded throughout the organisation in mainstream activity;
- (3) That it be noted that Cabinet has formally acknowledged collective and individual responsibility for actively considering risk management issues in the decision making process and ensuring that there is an agreed member reporting arrangement;
- (4) That the work undertaken by the Audit Commission in ensuring that risk is being actively managed within the organisation be acknowledged.

103. Notice of motion – NHS funding

It was **moved** by Councillor Longhi and duly seconded:-

That this Council notes the following with regard to the dire national funding situation in the NHS and expresses its concerns in relation to the impacts on the citizens of Walsall:

- the NHS overspend widely reported to be in excess of £1bn
- the huge increase in NHS spending since 1997 from £33bn to £97bn for 2007 has been spent on increased unit costs (wages) rather than increased output
- that the remediation programme is already forcing 1000's of job losses
- that an aspect of the proposed recovery programme involves the placing of a levy of 3% on PCTs new year budget and that this will impact Walsall PCT by a reduction of £9.6m in its budget for next year

- that the PCT revised Local Delivery Plan shows that the reduction in its new year budget means that there will be no investment into a number of areas including:
 - Community Matrons
 - Mental Health Services
 - Primary Care
 - Falls and Health inequalities

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to:

- write to the Secretary of State requesting Walsall PCT not be penalised for its good financial management by having to support poor management elsewhere and to emphasise that the Secretary of State's proposed 'solution' is going to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in our community (elderly/mentally ill etc) making a mockery of Our Health, Our Care, Our Say White Paper she published in January
- carry out an assessment of the Council's ability to deliver improved health in the community through the LSP in light of the PCT's reduced spending capabilities
- instigate a review of health related LAA stretch targets and re-negotiate said targets should the original targets be impossible to achieve

This Council also requests the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel to scrutinise the Council's and its partners' ability to deliver improved community health outcomes in light of the measures put in place by the Secretary of State that seem to reward failure and penalise good management.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was declared carried and it was:-

Resolved

That this Council notes the following with regard to the dire national funding situation in the NHS and expresses its concerns in relation to the impacts on the citizens of Walsall:

- the NHS overspend widely reported to be in excess of £1bn
- the huge increase in NHS spending since 1997 from £33bn to £97bn for 2007 has been spent on increased unit costs (wages) rather than increased output
- that the remediation programme is already forcing 1000's of job losses

- that an aspect of the proposed recovery programme involves the placing of a levy of 3% on PCTs new year budget and that this will impact Walsall PCT by a reduction of £9.6m in its budget for next year
- that the PCT revised Local Delivery Plan shows that the reduction in its new year budget means that there will be no investment into a number of areas including:
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 - Falls and Health inequalities

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to:

- write to the Secretary of State requesting Walsall PCT not be penalised for its good financial management by having to support poor management elsewhere and to emphasise that the Secretary of State's proposed 'solution' is going to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in our community (elderly/mentally ill etc) making a mockery of Our Health, Our Care, Our Say White Paper she published in January
- carry out an assessment of the Council's ability to deliver improved health in the community through the LSP in light of the PCTs reduced spending capabilities
- instigate a review of health related LAA stretch targets and re-negotiate said targets should the original targets be impossible to achieve

This Council also requests the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel to scrutinise the Council's and its partners' ability to deliver improved community health outcomes in light of the measures put in place by the Secretary of State that seem to reward failure and penalise good management.

The meeting terminated at 10.10 p.m.

(Note: The following items of business remained to be dealt with:-

- (1) Notice of motion – anti social behaviour
- (2) Notice of motion – sustainable communities)