



# Walsall Council

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Walsall to be held on **MONDAY 13TH day of JANUARY, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Dated this 3rd day of January, 2014.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive.

The business to be transacted is as follows:

1. To elect a person to preside if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are not present.
2. Apologies.
3. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18th November, 2013.
4. Declarations of interest.
5. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended):**  
  
To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda. There are no items to be considered in private session.
6. Mayor's announcements.
7. To receive any petitions.

8. To answer any questions in accordance with Council procedure rules:

(a) From the public - **None**

(b) From members of the Council

**(1) Councillor James – Ring and ride services**

“How do you prevent social isolation of elderly people or improve their health and wellbeing by recommending cutting or closing Ride and Ride services Councillor Bird?”

**(2) Councillor Phillips – Site of Lower Farm Neighbourhood Office**

“October 2011 this Council demolished the Neighbourhood Office at Lower Farm, they lead the shop keepers and residents to believe a car park would be provided on the site. October 2011 I received a letter explaining a bund would be put around the site until funding became available. Can the cabinet member responsible tell me and the general public what steps have been taken to get the funding in place and see this now eye sore cleared up?”

**(3) Councillor Ditta – 20 mph speed limits**

“A number of other local authorities have introduced the 20 mph speed limit in the busiest areas. It was proposed by the late Councillor Tom Ansell that same would be introduced in Walsall in 2013. However nothing more has been done in this regard although the 20 mph limit needs to be introduced in some areas in Walsall especially in parts of the Palfrey ward?”

**(4) Councillor Ditta – Resurfacing in Palfrey**

“Many roads in the Palfrey ward are in a bad condition and require resurfacing. In particular Lord Street between Milton Street and Broadway West, Whitmore Street, Bescot Crescent between Wednesbury Road and Broadway West. Also most of the pavements in Palfrey ward are in need of resurfacing. We were told that this resurfacing would take place in the 2012-13 programme, however 2013 is at an end but unfortunately this resurfacing has not taken place?”

## **(5) Councillor Ditta – Coroner service**

“Last year I raised the question of Walsall coroner service being merged with other Black Country authorities and the problems that this raises for the families of the deceased. It has been requested that Walsall be provided with a deputy coroner. The Council is yet to take action on this issue. Furthermore in other parts of the country the family of the deceased have the right to opt for a MRI scan rather than the traditional Post-mortem examination, the people of Walsall do not have this choice available to them, it is the duty of the Council to have this choice made available to the people of Walsall?”

**9. Mayoralty 2014/2015.** Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 2(vi) to name the Mayor-Elect and Deputy Mayor-Elect for 2014/2015 in accordance with the powers contained in Sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

10. To confirm the following recommendations of **Cabinet**:

(1) **West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority – new governance arrangements**

That the amended terms of reference for the West Midlands Joint Committee as set out in the appendix to this report be agreed.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 11th December 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

(2) **Children and Young People’s Plan 2013 – 2016**

That the Children and Young People’s Plan 2013 – 2016 set out in Appendix 1 to the report be adopted.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 11th December 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

(3) **Localised Council tax reduction scheme 2014/15**

(1) That Option 4 be adopted for the Council tax reduction scheme to commence 1 April 2014 with the necessary amendments for the full disregard of all war disablement and war widows pensions.

(2) That any annual up rating notified by the Department for Work and Pensions in line with the Housing Benefit regulations and Council tax reduction scheme for pensioners, be adopted.

- (3) That for future years the preferred scheme, (1) and (2) above, be continued until such time as the Council considers changes are necessary.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 11th December 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

11. To confirm the following recommendations of the **Audit Committee**:

(1) **Annual report on Treasury Management 2012/13**

That the Treasury Management annual report be approved.

(Note: Report to Audit Committee on 25th September 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

(2) **Annual review of Treasury Management policy statement and practices and mid-year position statement 2013/14**

(1) That the Treasury Management policy statement and practices referred to in Appendix A of the report be approved.

(2) That the mid-year position statement for treasury management activities 2013/14 and prudential indicators in Appendix B of the report be approved.

(Note: Report to Audit Committee on 11th November 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

12. To confirm the following recommendation of the **Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel**:

**Review of polling districts and polling places 2013/14**

That the proposed changes to polling districts and polling places be approved.

(Note: Report to Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel on 28th November 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

13. **Portfolio holder briefings.** To receive 5 minute presentations from the following portfolio holders:

- Leisure and culture (Councillor Harris)
- Public protection (Councillor Ali)

(Note: A member of the Council may ask the portfolio holder any question and another associate question without notice upon each report. Questioning by members is limited to 10 minutes for each report presented.)

14. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillors Oliver, Chambers, S. Coughlan, Jeavons, Westley and Burley:**

"That this Council:

- (i) notes that payday lenders are trapping millions of people in spirals of debt.
- (ii) believes that the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)'s new proposals for regulating payday lenders are a step in the right direction, but do not go far enough.
- (iii) further believes:
  - (a) that the FCA's proposals would not prevent payday lenders from dripfeeding new loans to people who already have payday debts and are struggling to pay them back.
  - (b) that the FCA's proposals would not prevent people from being hit with escalating penalty fees
  - (c) that the FCA's proposals would not stop payday lenders from raiding people's bank accounts without telling them
- (iv) welcomes that some of Britain's biggest debt, consumer and anti-poverty organisations – including Which?, Citizens Advice, StepChange Debt Charity, Church Action on Poverty and the Centre for Responsible Credit – and MPs from every Party represented at Westminster have come together to support the 'Charter to Stop the Payday Loan Rip-Off'.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (i) endorse the Charter to Stop the Payday Loan Rip-Off which calls on the FCA to introduce tougher regulation of payday lenders.
- (ii) encourage residents of [local authority] to support the Charter by signing the online petition at <http://www.change.org/paydayloancharter>.

- (iii) continues to promote and further support the development of local credit unions and more affordable lending.
- (iv) work with partners on campaigns against increasing levels of personal debt.
- (v) to send a copy of this motion to Martin Wheatley, Chief Executive of the Financial Conduct Authority and to all local Members of Parliament."

(Note: Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

15. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillors I. Shires, D. Shires and Cook:**

Council notes that England is now widely recognised to be the country with the most centralised system of government in Europe. Council also notes that devolution has brought decisions about tax and spending, and the quality of public services, closer to voters in Scotland and Wales, while English voters have not gained comparably greater influence over decision-making that affects their taxes and services.

Council considers:

- that the likely scale of change in how public services are funded and provided makes it democratically unsustainable for those changes to be decided within the existing over-centralised model;
- that services need to be reformed and integrated across local agencies to enable them to prevent problems rather than picking up the pieces;
- that voters should be given back a meaningful say on a wide range of tax and spending decisions, through place-based budgetary arrangements, the abolition of the discredited Barnett formula and the reinstatement of fair financial distribution agreed among English councils, the recreation of a municipal bond market, and the certainty of multi-year funding settlements for the life of a Parliament;
- that central government should enable that local decision-making by joining up and reducing in size Whitehall departments in order to facilitate local place-based budgets, by reducing Ministers' powers to intervene in local decisions, and replacing bureaucratic tick-box inspection regimes with local service user champions; and
- that such a new more mature settlement between central and local government should be put beyond future revision by giving formal constitutional protection to local democracy; and

Council resolves

- to support the Local Government Association's Rewiring Public Services campaign, which embodies these objectives;
- to ask the borough's Members of Parliament to support the Rewiring Public Services campaign to improve local voters' influence over services, tax and spending; and
- to make the Council's position clear to the Secretary of State.

(Note: Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)