



Walsall Council

Minutes of the **MEETING** of the Council of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough held on **Monday 19th September 2016 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House.

Present

Councillor K. Phillips (Mayor) in the Chair

Councillor M. Longhi (Deputy Mayor)

“ A.J.A. Andrew
“ D.J. Barker
“ O.D. Bennett
“ C. Bott
“ P. Bott
“ R. Burley
“ K. Chambers
“ A.G. Clarke
“ C.E. Clews
“ D. Coughlan
“ S.P. Coughlan
“ S.R. Craddock
“ C.U. Creaney
“ A. Ditta
“ S.K. Ditta
“ B.A. Douglas-Maul
“ K. Ferguson
“ M. Follows
“ J. Fitzpatrick
“ S.F. Fitzpatrick
“ N.Z. Gultasib
“ L.A. Harrison
“ D.T. Hazell
“ E.A. Hazell
“ A.J. Hicken
“ E.F. Hughes

Councillor K. Hussain

“ D. James
“ L.D. Jeavons
“ C. Jones
“ T.J. Jukes
“ A. Kudhail
“ Mrs. R.A. Martin
“ J. Murray
“ A.A. Nawaz
“ M. Nazir
“ A.S. Nazir
“ L.J. Rattigan
“ I.C. Robertson
“ J. Rochelle
“ E.B. Russell
“ H.S. Sarohi
“ K. Sears
“ I. Shires
“ G.S. Sohal
“ C.D.D. Towe
“ A. Underhill
“ S. Wade
“ M. Ward
“ P. Washbrook
“ T.S. Wilson
“ R.V. Worrall
“ A. Young

45. **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Allen, Bird, Cooper, Harris and Perry.

46. **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2016 copies having been sent to each member of the Council, be approved as a correct record and signed subject to the following paragraph being inserted in minute 44 as paragraph 2 in the motion listed on page 7:

‘The Council is shocked by the reported increase in race hate crimes and anti social behaviour directed at EU citizens in the UK and other ethnic minorities since the referendum result was announced and resolves to call an early meeting with the Police and other agencies to consider its response’

47. **Declarations of interest**

The Mayor informed members that the Monitoring Officer had granted the appropriate dispensation to enable all members to speak on Item 10 – Council tax empty property discounts 2016/17.

The undermentioned members declared an interest in the items indicated:

Councillor Hughes	Item 12 – governance proposals for Visionary Investment Enhancement Walsall Ltd. (pecuniary)
Councillor Longhi	Item 10 – Council tax empty property discounts (personal/pecuniary)

48. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 2985 (as amended)**

There were no items to be considered in private session.

49. **Mayor’s announcements**

Death of former Councillor Alan Davies

The Mayor referred to the recent death of Mr. A.G. Davies, Mayor in 1991/92.

The Mayor and members paid tribute to the services of Mr. Davies, following which it was **moved** by the Mayor, duly seconded and:

Resolved

That this Council expresses its regret at the death of Mr. A.G. Davies a member of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council from 1978 to 1999 and Mayor in 1991/92 and places on record their appreciation of his services to the borough over a period of many years and expresses its condolences to his family at this sad time.

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

50. Petitions

The following petitions were submitted:

- (1) Councillor Gultasib - Request to fix the paths in Hough Place.
- (2) Councillor Rattigan – to secure green space areas from repeated travellers encampments on Hawthorn Road, Mill Field and Grange Crescent as well as Parkway and King George Crescent/adjacent to Manor Farm community centre.

51. Petitions

- (a) **Stubbers Green implementation of better traffic calming to protect wildlife on Stubbers Green nature reserve**

A report was submitted.

Ms. A. Lawrence presented the petition and confirmed that following a number of meetings, further signage had been installed to encourage traffic to slow down. Ms. Lawrence thanked those involved for their help and support.

Resolved

That the content of the petition be noted.

- (b) **Edgings and flower be allowed around Muslim graves**

A report was submitted.

Mr. Hurley presented the petition making specific reference to relevant legislation and equality protocols. Also particular focus was given to the consultation undertaken.

It was **moved** by Councillor J. Fitzpatrick, seconded by Councillor Andrew and:

Resolved

- (1) That the content of the petition be noted.
- (2) That it be noted that edgings and flower beds are permitted on adult lawn graves as per section 6.9d) of the rules and regulations, approved by Cabinet on 15 June, 2016, namely; 'Any additional memorial in the form of a surround will not extend beyond 610mm (24" from the head end of the grave space or beyond the width of the grave space nor be of a height greater than 100mm (4")
- (3) That the decision by Cabinet on 15th June 2016 regarding the procedure that will be used where there is non-compliance of the rules and regulations in particular unauthorised memorials be noted.

52. Questions

There were no questions submitted.

53. Recommendation of Cabinet – Council tax empty property discounts 2017/18

It was **moved** by Councillor D. Coughlan and seconded by Councillor Chambers:

That the revised current discount scheme including the removal of the seven-day 100% discount for empty homes be approved.

Amendment moved by Councillor Andrew and seconded by Councillor Towe:

That consideration of this matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

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

The motion was put to the vote and declared carried. It was:

Resolved

That the revised current discount scheme including the removal of the seven-day 100% discount for empty homes be approved.

54. Annual Scrutiny report 2015/16

Councillor Hussain presented the report.

Resolved

That the Annual Scrutiny Report 2015/16 be noted.

55. Visionary Investment Enhancing Walsall Ltd. (VIEW) – governance proposals

Councillor Hughes left the room during consideration of the item.

The report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor D. Coughlan, seconded by Councillor S. Coughlan and:

Resolved

- (1) That the change of governance arrangements for Visionary Investment Enhancing Walsall Ltd and its Board requested by whg through a variation to part 2.1.2.2 of the 15th Schedule (Part II VAT Sharing Agreement of the Stock Transfer Agreement dated 22 March, 2003 be approved as follows:
 - (a) Reducing membership of the VIEW Board from 15 members to 12 members, thus reducing Council nominations from 5 to 4 members;
 - (b) Rewording of the 'charitable objectives' to meet the Charity Commission for England and Wales definition;
 - (c) Removal of the wording: *'the Charity [VIEW] will not be under the control of the Parent [whg] and any of the other Companies'* and replacing with *'the Charity's day to day activities will be controlled by the Board, subject to the Charity's status as a subsidiary of the Parent'*.
- (2) That it be noted that the number of Council Senior Officers on the VIEW Board will be reduced from 2 to 1;
- (3) That Council delegates authority to the Head of Business Change, to negotiate and agree the final terms of the Deed of Variation to be entered into with whg to record the changes as set out above.

56. Portfolio holder briefings

(a) Children's services and education

A report was submitted.

Councillor Burley, portfolio holder for education and children's services, gave a presentation.

Members asked questions in relation to the presentation which were responded to by Councillor Burley.

(b) Regeneration

A report was submitted.

Councillor Jeavons, portfolio holder for regeneration, gave a presentation.

Members asked questions in relation to the presentation which were responded to by Councillor Jeavons.

57. Roger Hinton Charity

Resolved

That Councillor Underhill be appointed a trustee of the Roger Hinton Charity for the remainder of the municipal year.

The meeting terminated at 7.15 p.m.