



# 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 the TWENTY-FOURTH day of APRIL, 2006, at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Dated this 11th day of April, 2006.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive.

The business to be transacted is as follows:-

1. Apologies.
2. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 6th March 2006.
3. Declarations of interest.
4. Mayor's announcements.
5. To receive any petitions.
6. To answer any questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:-
  - (a) From the public.
  - (b) From members of the Council.

## **Uncompleted business from meeting on 6th March 2006**

7. Proposal to consider revised governance arrangements for Local Neighbourhood Partnerships. Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting. Council to agree the recommendation set out in the report

8. Membership of Employment Appeals Committee B:

Council to note the following change in membership for the remainder of the current municipal year:-

Councillor Underhill to replace Councillor Robinson.

9. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been submitted by Councillor Hughes:-

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.

10. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been submitted by Councillors Martin, Walker, Rose, Perry, Zahid, Andrew and M. Pitt:-

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.

11. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been submitted by Councillors Longhi and Walker:-

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.

## **New business**

12. Annual report statement on Walsall – oral report of the Leader of the Council

13. Review of the Council's Constitution. Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting. Council to agree the recommendation set out in the report

14. Proper Officer for Registration Service. Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting. Council to agree the recommendation set out in the report

15. Risk management. Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting. Council to agree the recommendation set out in the report.

16. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been submitted by Councillor Longhi:-

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 PCT's 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:

- 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
- to 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
- to 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.

17. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been submitted by Councillors I. Shires and Bentley:-

This Council notes that one of the most high profile social problems today is anti-social behaviour. Its effects can be debilitating to communities and particularly worries older people. It's not simply a problem of intimidating behaviour. Graffiti, littering, noise pollution and decaying urban spaces all contribute to the feeling that our communities are slipping out of control.

This Council believes that anti social behaviour orders can work.

This Council supports the call for ASBO PLUS.

This Council believes there are actions we should try before issuing an ASBO.

Local communities have a central role in finding a solution to anti-social behaviour.

Community Justice Panels – made up of victims and volunteers from the local community – are potentially an effective way of modifying behaviour.

The scheme would give the public an unprecedented say in the way that local crime problems are dealt with, as well as offering offenders a way to pay back for the harm they have done to their community. Going before one of the panels would be a very uncomfortable experience. Offenders will see the anger and hurt they cause to those living in their streets and their communities.

18. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been submitted by Councillors I. Shires and Bentley:-

That Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council:

- (i) expresses concern at
  - the decline of local services and facilities which affects local communities and in particular the elderly and people on the lowest incomes;
  - the resulting decline of local jobs and local economies and the resulting extra traffic and pollution caused by the need to travel further;
- (ii) and notes that this combination of factors increases people's feelings of exclusion and lack of involvement; and so
- (iii) supports measures to reverse this process and
- (iv) supports the concept of local sustainability as envisaged in the Sustainable Communities Bill, namely:

- the promotion of local economies
- the promotion of local services and facilities
- the protection of the environment
- the reduction of social exclusion and
- measures to increase involvement in the democratic process

(v) and accordingly resolves to support the Sustainable Communities Bill which:

- requires the Government to assist Councils and communities in promoting local sustainability in ways decided by them; and
- sets up a participative process whereby Councils and communities can drive the way in which Government uses its power and influence to assist with the promotion of local sustainability; and
- recognises therefore that the Bill provides for a “bottom up” rather than a “top down” one-size fits-all process
- notes that this Bill is therefore fully in accord with current thinking in Local Government in that it impacts on central authorities and does not impose any new duties on Councils but instead enables them to influence how Government uses its resources and influence to help Councils and communities; and
- specifically provides that where Councils themselves decide to take action to promote local sustainability that they should be given the resources to do so; and so

(vi) and further resolves

- to inform the local media of this decision;
- to write to local MPs, asking them to support the Bill; and sign EDM (Early Day Motion) No. 641; and
- to write to the Local Works Campaign (at 94 White Lion Street, London, N1 9PF) expressing its support.