



**Councillor Sean Coughlan**  
**Leader of Walsall Council**  
2015

Your Ref:

Our Ref: SC/MS

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> March

Dear Area Panel Chair

## **Community Hubs**

As you know Walsall Council is committed to empowering local communities in order to help people help themselves. To encourage this we want to develop community hubs across the Borough, locally-based focal points for the delivery of services. The cabinet recently agreed a policy statement on community hubs and a copy is attached to this letter.

You will see from this report that area partnerships will have a major role to play in identifying what sort of community hubs are needed in localities. We need better outcomes for local people, but there will be less resource to do this. So we will need to design services in different ways in the future and community hubs will be one way we could achieve this. My purpose in writing to you now is to invite you and your area partnership to start local discussions about community hubs and how they might help improve services in your area. I also attach some questions which might prompt these discussions.

The council is not looking to have a standard approach in all areas. Our philosophy is one of encouraging local solutions to local issues. We can learn from the wide variety of experience of the council, partner organisations and community groups in providing locally based services in Walsall. There is a rich legacy here and we want to learn from what works rather than to impose any uniform model.

In due course I want to invite each area partnership to develop a strong business case for what configuration of community hubs suits your area, based on the needs of the area, the services that need to be provided and the buildings and assets already in place. The business case will need to demonstrate why community hubs are needed in your area and the value they will add. There will be more information and advice provided about how to do this and the support that will be made available to help you.

In the meantime I want to start local debates with councillors, service providers and residents about community hubs and how we can take this exciting opportunity forward.

Yours faithfully



# Walsall

*Metropolitan Borough Council*

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S P Coughlan'.

Councillor Sean Coughlan  
Leader of the Council