



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 14TH day of APRIL, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Dated this 4th day of April, 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 27th February 2014.
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. Road Safety in Blakenall Heath area - Petition:

- (a) Councillor Phillips submitted the following petition to Council on 27th February 2014:

“We the undersigned demand Walsall Council take urgent action to improve road safety in the Blakenall Heath area, in particular and especially Valley Road, Ryle Street and Ingram Road.”

- (b) Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting

(Note: The Council's petitions scheme states:

“Council debate - If a petition contains at least 1,500 signatures it will be debated at a meeting of the Council. This means that the issue raised in the petition will be discussed at a meeting to which all Councillors can attend and speak. The Council will endeavour to consider the petition at its next meeting although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will then take place at the following meeting. The petition organiser will be given 5 minutes to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by Councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes. The Council will decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting. They may decide to take the action that the petition requests; not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or to ask for further information. Where the issue is one where the Cabinet are required to make the final decision the Council will decide to make recommendations to the Cabinet. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision and this will be published on our website.”)

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

- (a) From the public

Mrs. B. Brady of Fletcher Road, New Invention – Walsall Society for the Blind transport service

"I am a partially sighted senior citizen of Walsall.

On behalf of the blind and partially sighted users of the Day Centres at the Hatherton Street premises of the Walsall Society for the Blind and on behalf of our friends, family, supporters and signatories of the 1000 plus petition and given that the 2013 Annual Treasurer's Report of the Society stated: "Our total reserves stand at £1,844,156, made up of the development fund of £1,200,000, restricted fund £14,202 and £629,956 unrestricted fund", I would like to ask in what ways Walsall Council can support us in persuading the Walsall Society for the Blind to reverse its decision to axe, at the end of June this year, the much needed and valued transport service for the Day Centre users, which will mean not only the loss of the mini-buses but also the loss of our two much valued, experienced and helpful part time drivers?"

(b) From members of the Council

(1) Councillor Smith – Walsall Society for the Blind transport service

“On behalf of many blind and partially sighted users of the Hatherton Street Day Centres and on behalf of their families, friends and supporters, would the Leader of the Council, as a matter of urgency, convey to the Board members of the Walsall Society for the Blind, the grave concerns surrounding its decision to axe the 2 driver posts and the bus service that takes users safely to and from the Centre to the comfort of their homes, and furthermore, would he do his utmost to urge the Walsall Society for the Blind to reconsider its decision and indeed to ensure that the bus service for the Day Centre users is retained?”

(2) Councillor Oliver – Grace Academy

“Could Councillor Adrian Andrew, as the (recently resigned) Local Authority Governor on the Grace Academy, Darlaston, list for us those contracts which have been agreed by the Academy since its foundation with companies (or individuals) in which Academy trustees, governors or their relatives have a direct interest, and the value of the same?”

10. Impact of welfare reform in Walsall. Report of Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.

11. Street entertainment and busking. Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.

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

- Children’s services (Councillor R. Andrew)
- Community engagement and voluntary sector (Councillor I. Shires)
- Environment (Councillor Arif)

(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.)

13. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillor Worrall**:

“This Council, whilst conscious that the decisions of Walsall Society for the Blind are entirely within that organisation’s gift, nevertheless wishes to register its concern at the Society’s recent decision, effective from 30th June, 2014, to withdraw its in-house transport, whereby blind and partially-sighted service users are collected from their homes around the Borough to attend Hawley House for activities and lunch, and are taken home later in the afternoon.

The Council asks the Society to revisit its decision, and postpone its implementation for a period of up to twelve months to enable discussions to take place with the Council and others, so as to ensure a continuity of transport provision beyond 30th June until a long-term outcome is assured, whereby all the Society’s users, present and future, will enjoy ongoing access to transport arrangements at least equivalent to what is currently provided.”

(Note: Report to follow.)

At this point the Council to consider the following item as charitable trustees –
When the Council is acting in this capacity, Council procedure rules do not apply. A corporate trustee is a corporation which has been appointed to act as a trustee of the charity. Trustees should bear in mind that when they are dealing with the business of the charity, their overriding duty is to act in the best interests of that charity.

14. **Annual report of Barr Beacon Trust Management Committee.** Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.