



Walsall Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Walsall to be held on **MONDAY the 16TH day of JULY, 2018 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Dated this 6th day of July, 2018.

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 21st May 2018.
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.
6. Mayor's announcements.
7. To receive any petitions.

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

(a) From the public:

(1) Mr. P.E. Smith – The Saddlers Centre

“Given that “strapped for cash” Walsall Council has borrowed £13.8m to buy a previously privately owned town centre shopping centre (the Saddlers Centre) that had made a loss of over £2.9m in the year before (2016), according to Topland (Saddlers, Walsall) Limited Financial Statement dated 31/5/16 and given that subsequent to the Council purchasing it, the Leader of the Council, Cllr. Sean Coughlan (now the former Leader of the Council) had stated that the Saddlers Centre has already brought in around £500,000 revenue to the Council, would the Leader of the Council or appropriate Portfolio Holder inform me and the general public, how much the following items related to the Saddlers Centre, are likely cost the Council:

- (a) Repairing/replacing leaking/porous roofs
- (b) Replacing the “past its sell by date” escalator
- (c) The growing number, 10 at the last count, of empty shop units (in terms of lost rent)?”

(2) Mr. P. Bassford – First World War Commemorative oak tree – Portland Road, Aldridge

“I attended a Council Planning meeting in April, 2018 where the Oak Tree (Tag number 979) was discussed and it was stated that the tree would have received a Tree Preservation Order had it not been hack, hack, hacked by Walsall Housing Group. I would like to know, this being the case, why Walsall Housing group were not prosecuted?”

(b) From members of the Council: None

9. To note the following recommendation of **Cabinet**:

West Midlands Devolution Deal 2 and action plan

That the West Midlands Devolution Deal 2 set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 20th June 2018 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

10. **Annual report of Audit Committee 2017/18.** Report to Audit Committee on 18th June 2018 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.

11. Change in political group membership. Report to follow

12. Portfolio holder briefing. To receive a 5 minute presentation from the Leader of the Council.

(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. Appointments to Overview and Scrutiny Committees: To note the following Liberal Democrat Group nominations to Overview and Scrutiny Committees following Adjourned Council:

- Children's Services – Councillor Barker
- Education – Councillor Barker
- Social Care and Health – Councillor Shires

14. Appointments to outside bodies

(a) **Visionary Investment Enhancing Walsall (VIEW) Board**

- (i) To report the resignation of Councillor Waters as a member of the Board.
- (ii) To appoint a representative for the balance of the municipal year.

(b) **Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**

- (i) The term of office of Councillor Robertson expires in July 2018.
- (ii) To appoint a representative for a period 3 years.

(c) **Adoption Panel:** To report that Councillor Neville will be the representative on the Panel for the municipal year 2018/19.

15. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillors S. Coughlan, D. Coughlan, Shires, Ward, Jeavons, Chambers, Jukes, Robertson, Underhill, Burley, Nawaz and Hussain:**

That this Council notes:

- the continuing challenges of austerity cuts on our staff, services and our residents;
- the step change that took place in 2016 by taking tough decisions on budgets and setting a rolling programme of four yearly budgets; and
- that £8 million year on year is lost to our most vulnerable residents and our economy.

Furthermore, this Council notes that members have been shielded from austerity in their paid allowances, especially Extra Responsibility Allowances.

Further, this Council instructs officers, to call for the formation of an Independent Remuneration Panel, with recommendations that there is a reduction of 20% on all extra responsibility allowances, allowing members to feel the same austerity pain as our residents.

16. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillors S. Coughlan, D. Coughlan, Shires, Ward, Jeavons, Chambers, Jukes, Robertson, Hussain, Underhill and Nawaz:**

Council notes that:

- Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council has the ability to move from the current system of governance to a committee system.
- This change could involve more Councillors in the decision-making process without compromising the efficiency of the process.
- Several Councils have returned to a committee system and others are looking at this option.
- Such a process can still retain, and be consistent with, other features such as scrutiny and call-in, and need not necessarily mean any significant increase in the number of committees overall.

Council therefore requests Cabinet to establish a review group, comprising all parties and appropriate external representation, to examine the case for a return to the committee system and to report, with recommendations, to a future meeting of the Council.

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

17. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillors S. Coughlan, D. Coughlan, Shires, Ward, Jeavons, Jukes, Robertson, Chambers, Underhill, Hussain and Nawaz:**

That this Council notes the progress made through the Locality Model in bringing partners together to maximise the benefits of shared budgets and helping to tackle the long standing inequalities which have divided communities across Walsall.

Further, this Council notes the continuing effects of austerity measures, imposed by the Conservative Government, and instructs officers to:-

- Investigate ways in which to assist the voluntary sector to bring funding into the borough to add value to work already being done through the locality model.
- Bring a report to Council providing options to devolve budgets to localities in order to give the people of Walsall a say in how certain services such as Grounds Maintenance, Street Cleansing and Clean and Green, are delivered in their locality area.

(Note: Report to follow.)