



Walsall Council

Minutes of the **MEETING** of the Council of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough held on **Monday 6th March, 2006, at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House.

Present

Councillor J.R. Cook (Mayor) in the Chair

Councillor B.V. McCracken (Dep Mayor)

“ A.J.A. Andrew
“ T.G. Ansell
“ D.A. Anson
“ M. Arif
“ C.M. Ault
“ J.M. Barton
“ L.A. Beeley
“ A.G. Bentley
“ Mrs. J. Beilby
“ M.A. Bird
“ P. Bott
“ M.R. Burley
“ B. Cassidy
“ K. Chambers
“ A.G. Clarke
“ R.J.H. Collins
“ S.P. Coughlan
“ C.U. Creaney
“ B.A. Douglas-Maul
“ A.E. Griffiths
“ A.D. Harris
“ L.A. Harrison
“ E.F. Hughes
“ H. Khan
“ M. Longhi
“ S.W. Madeley
“ Ms. R.A. Martin

Councillor Mrs. C. Micklewright

“ M. Munir
“ J.G. O'Hare
“ T.S. Oliver
“ A.J. Paul
“ G. Perry
“ K. Phillips
“ D.J. Pitt
“ Mrs. E.E. Pitt
“ M.G. Pitt
“ I.C. Robertson
“ R.S. Robinson
“ J. Rochelle
“ C.E.M. Rose
“ H.S. Sarohi
“ K. Sears
“ Mrs. D.A. Shires
“ I. Shires
“ C.D.D. Towe
“ D.J. Turner
“ W.T. Tweddle
“ A. Underhill
“ R.A. Walker
“ G. Wilkes
“ M. Yasin
“ P.A. Young
“ Zahid Ali

77. Prayers

Prayers were offered by the Reverend Peter Wilcox.

78. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Aslam, Johnson, Sanders and Woodruff.

79. Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meetings held on 16th January and 6th February 2006, copies having been sent to each member of the Council be approved as correct records and signed, subject to an amendment to the minutes of 16th January relating to the Mayor's Announcement regarding the death of Mr. R. Arkell to record that the Council did not stand in silence.

80. Declarations of interest

The following members declared an interest in the items indicated:-

Councillor Oliver	Employee of Palfrey Community Association (prejudicial)
Councillor Sears	Acorn Home Care (personal)
Councillor Perry	Employee of Walsall Hospital NHS Trust (personal)
Councillor Robinson	Chair of Collingwood Community Association and Board member Goscote Resource Centre (personal)
Councillor Young	Board member Collingwood Community Association (personal)
Councillor Towe	Board member Collingwood Community Association (personal)
Councillor Andrew	Board member Collingwood Community Association (personal)

81. Mayor's announcements

(a) Former Councillor Wilf Clarke

The Mayor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Wilf Clarke.

The Mayor paid tribute to former Councillor Wilf Clarke's services to the Borough over a period of many years. Councillors Ansell, Mrs. Pitt, Madeley, Mrs. McCracken and Bird also paid tribute, following which it was **moved** by the Mayor, duly seconded and:-

Resolved

That this Council have heard with deep regret of the death of Mr. W. Clarke, a member of the former Walsall County Borough Council from 1956 to 1972 and a member of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council from 1974 to 1988 of which Council he was Mayor in 1978/79, and place on record their appreciation of his services to the Town over a period of many years and extend to his family their sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

(b) Member development training

The Mayor referred to a presentation which had been made in recent days for member development training and said that he would like to congratulate all those officers involved in this aspect of training.

82. Petitions

The following petitions were submitted:-

- (1) Councillor Ault – removal of island in Leylands Croft, Pelsall;
- (2) Councillor Young – Residents of Harden/Leamore area opposed to upgrade of 02 telecommunications installation based on "Baileys News Shop";
- (3) Councillor Cassidy – provision of pedestrian friendly crossing facilities close to roundabout at Lichfield Road/High Street/Silver Street before opening of refurbished Brownhills Council House.

83. Questions from members of the public

(1) Council tax and business rate

Mr. P.E. Smith, 65 Harden Road, Leamore asked the following question of Councillor O'Hare:-

“Can you tell me, for the Walsall Borough, by what percentage the Council tax has risen on average year by year since the financial year commencing the year 2000 compared to the average percentage rise in the same periods for the business rate?”

Councillor O'Hare replied that the average Council tax increase between 2000 and 2006 was 8.28% and the average business rate showed a decrease of 1.9%.

Mr. Smith asked the following supplementary question:-

Given the fact that there has not been an even playing field between Council tax payers and the business rate payers over recent years (admittedly the Government's fault and not this Council's fault), would you like to comment on my suggestion that if there had been a more level playing field between the Council taxpayers and the business rate payers, then the £6 million of owed and unpaid Council tax at the end of March 2005 and recently highlighted in the annual audit report 2006 might well have been much less than £6 million and that the £2.5 million of owed and unpaid non domestic rates at the end of March 2005 is even less excusable, notwithstanding the worrying point made again by the annual audit report of January 2006 that Walsall Council is in the bottom quartile in the country for collecting non domestic rates owed to it?

Councillor O'Hare replied that the question was like comparing chalk with cheese. He said he could not agree with the figures and did not agree that Walsall was in the lower quartile of collecting non domestic rates. He went on to say that he failed to see what was meant by a more level playing field. Local authorities set Council tax and that Government set the business tax and that they were two completely different types of tax set by two completely different bodies.

(2) North Walsall Cemetery

Mr. S.R. Chapman, 171 Hough Road, Pleck asked the following question of Councillor Longhi

“Why was a petition of 2,021 signatures calling for improvements to the North Walsall Cemetery ignored by local authority officers and elected members, without so much as an apology that service users had been lied to by Walsall Council and led to believe that there were adequate security measures in place at the cemetery?”

Councillor Longhi replied that at the time of this regrettable incident a personal apology was given by the senior officer recording the complaint to the parents of Brett Ashmore at North Walsall Cemetery when the items were first reported missing from the grave. He went on to say that with hindsight he felt that the Council could have done better in expressing apologies in our letters to the family telling them what had been done. He said that the Council acknowledged the distress arising from the theft in letters but would now like to reiterate how sorry it was that this theft had occurred and he personally wished to apologise for the distress experienced by Mr. Chapman's family.

Councillor Longhi went on to say that he did understand how the family felt as he had recently buried his grandfather in the same cemetery. He went on to say that the Council had given a truthful account of the level of security measures in Council cemeteries. Cemeteries are staffed by grounds staff Monday to Friday when they were digging graves and carrying out grounds maintenance, also visits were made by the mobile patrol staff. At weekends the eight Council cemeteries are opened by the patrol staff and locked again at the required time and are also visited several times during the day, although unless there is a particular problem experienced, the visits are relatively short. The security measures employed by Walsall Council are at an equivalent level to those of the other Black Country burial authorities.

Councillor Longhi referred to Mr. Chapman's concerns which he had raised with the media comparing Walsall Council unfavourably with Burnley Council on the level of cemetery patrol and this was done as part of the "inside out" programme. He said that officers had ascertained that Burnley had less resources than Walsall and their ranger staff only visited the cemetery once a day. Burnley did, however, have the same problem with thefts as we do and like us their staff urged people to report thefts to the police.

In summing up his reply, Councillor Longhi said that the Council are taking a number of steps to see what improvements can be made. He assured Mr. Chapman that the Council did respond in the best way it could and that the Council had to work towards better security, however, the Council cannot install more CCTV cameras. However, the Council is investigating how digital technology can make a contribution to ensuring that cemeteries are not vandalised. Councillor Longhi said that although he knew this was extremely difficult, he would request that people did not leave valuable items at graves. The people who carry out these acts do not care about such things and his best advice was to leave nothing for them to damage. He said that if more people visited cemeteries it would help to make sure that these incidents did not happen.

Mr. Chapman asked the following supplementary question:-

This tonight was not about personal issues, but about other cemetery users and being fully aware of budget restraints, would it be possible to have a feasibility study carried out to set out all the options for action.

Councillor Longhi replied that this was exactly what was being done and in fact earlier this year a wider review of bereavement services was instigated which included how security at cemeteries could be improved.

84. Questions from members of the Council

Civic Square project

Councillor Oliver asked the following question of Councillor Andrew:-

"With regard to the Civic Square project (Darwall Street, Leicester Street, Tower Street), to give reassurances:-

- That the drainage work when completed will guarantee that rainfall will not create large areas of standing water – as elsewhere in the Town Centre.
- That the levels and paving styles are suitable and safe for pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities.
- As to the actual amount allowed as the budget for this project and that the project will be completed within this budget.
- As to the agreed project timescales and that the project will be completed within these timescales.

In addition to the above, who is responsible for monitoring the above project for WMBC in terms of quality of work and health and safety?"

Councillor Andrew thanked Councillor Oliver for the constructive way in which he had asked this question

In response to the first part of the question, Councillor Andrew said that Walsall Civic Quarter benefits from an entirely new drainage system that utilises slotted linear drains rather than traditional road gullies. The whole system has been designed to meet DfT guidance contained in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges with supporting calculations taken from a linear drainage design guide.

The design takes into account local rainfall intensity, this data is taken from a UK database which records local rainfall characteristics and includes the highest recorded rainfall intensities over a given period of years for that locality.

In this particular instance the designer has specified a 2 year storm return period with a recommended 5 minute storm duration, from this a rainfall intensity of 60mm per hour has been calculated which is specific to the Civic Quarter. This means that the system has been designed to cope with an intense storm having rainfall of 60mm per hour for duration of 5 minutes and that only 1 such storm is likely to occur within a 2 year period.

Having determined a design value for rainfall intensity, the peak discharge has been calculated. This is a measure (in litres per second) of the greatest amount of surface water that will be discharged over the area to be drained, it takes into account such factors as run off from rooftops and the impermeability of the ground over which the water will flow to the slotted channel. The channel size and capacity has been determined by taking into account the peak discharge and longitudinal gradient of the slotted channel.

For all surface water drainage systems in pedestrianised areas there must be some compromise between good drainage practice and the specific requirements of individual townscape scenes. The aesthetics of such an environment sometimes require flat areas with shallow longitudinal gradients and crossfalls; this does contribute to an efficient drainage system. It is for this reason that it is not possible to guarantee there will be no standing water for short periods following heavy rainfall.

The designer and contractor have made every effort to prevent standing water, but stress the importance for Walsall to implement a regime of regular maintenance for the linear drainage system if such problems are to be avoided.

In reply to part 2 of the question Councillor Andrew said that the design has been subject to a lengthy period of intense scrutiny by the Project Team evaluating all design options and final designs presented by the Design Team, Gillespie's and Faber Maunsell. Throughout this process the following issues have been critical:

- Levels are defined to produce an even surface, which is horizontal as possible given the drainage requirements and inherited constraints, such as threshold levels and existing trees;
- Levels have been defined by Gillespie's / Faber's to optimise performance for pedestrians, whilst ensuring good drainage;
- Raised kerbs have been removed to enhance movement within the Civic Quarter for those with disabilities;
- The materials chosen and the method of construction are both in compliance with the relevant standards for public realm schemes;
- Access to the post office is being improved as part of the scheme and a new entrance s being created to the Town Hall in Leicester Street;
- Conflict with vehicles has been greatly reduced for pedestrians
- Seats are being incorporated into areas where they did not exist previously, providing valuable resting places for those with movement difficulties / poor health etc;

In response to part 3 of the question Councillor Andrew replied that the original budget was £1,986,500. Through the implementation of the scheme there have been a number of unforeseen circumstances and increased costs that have had an impact on expenditure.

Due to issues such as unexpected poor condition of the carriageway requiring additional sub base construction, shallow utility mains and re-phasing of works due to stakeholder daily needs, the current projected target cost is £2,150,000 as reported to Cabinet in November 2005. This increase is to be accommodated with the existing overall Quality Streets Capital Programme.

With regard to part 4, Councillor Andrew said that the initial programme for the delivery of the Civic Quarter Initiative was based on a completion date for the paving by mid January 2006, with the erection of street furniture being completed by the end of February 2006.

A number of issues and incidents have occurred during the course of the works some of which would normally have had a detrimental impact on the delivery programme; in particular unexpected poor condition of the carriageway, shallow utility mains and re-phasing of works due to stakeholder daily needs. However, working as a tight project management team, we have successfully restructured the delivery programme to respond to such issues.

Despite the above, the critical milestone in the project was to achieve spend of £1.9 million by Christmas 2005 in order to meet the financial deadlines of the ERDF that supported the scheme. This milestone was met.

Under the revised programme agreed by Cabinet, paving works will be substantially complete by early March with the scheme is fully complete by the end of March 2006.

In response to the final part of the question Councillor Andrew replied that: the project is being delivered through the Councils Prudential Code Highway Maintenance contract. The project delivery team includes Gillespie's LLP, Birse Civils, Atkins, Faber Maunsell and Walsall Council. The team has worked closely to manage all elements of the delivery of this complex initiative. Walsall Council, as lead partner, has sought to maintain control over the following key issues:

- Delivery Programme
- Finance
- Quality and H&S

The Councils Environmental Regeneration Service has led the overall project management with support from Traffic and Transportation and Engineering Design and Construction Service areas. The scheme has been initiated through the Councils Project Management process and has been subject to regular reports to both the Chief Executive and Executive Management Team through the Councils Project Assurance Matrix.

Progress is also reported on a regular basis to the Councils Executive Management Team as part of the Councils Project Register Matrix. Cabinet has also been presented with project updates at regular intervals and a project-briefing note is circulated to EMT and Cabinet on a fortnightly basis.

During the construction phase of the project, the contractor has, at the request of the Council, registered under the "Considerate Contractors' Scheme". This scheme independently appraises the performance and customer care of a contractor during their implementation of projects. BIRSE have received an extremely positive site assessors' report which scored their performance at 39 points from a possible 40 maximum score. The assessor's report states that:-

"The site continues to be an excellent example of the Considerate Contractor's Scheme in operation."

Councillor Oliver asked the following supplementary question:-

Could the technical details which had been omitted from the reply be forwarded to him?

Councillor Andrew undertook to provide this information in writing.

85. Recommendations of Cabinet

(1) Capital programme 2006/7 to 2010/11

It was **moved** by Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Collins and:-

Resolved

That the capital programme set out in the following tables be approved:-

MAIN STREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2006/7	
SCHEME	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Schools access initiative	521,579
New pupil places	916,056
Local Transport Plan	5,599,000
Mental health	141,734
Disabled Facilities Grants	347,000
Risk Management	100,000
Uninsured property damage	300,000
Contingency	250,000
Clear major adaptations	3,897,000
Environmental regeneration capital programme	230,000
Shop Maintenance	112,821
Priority 1 backlog - school building repair	3,000,000
Major repairs to non-education premises	2,000,000
Regenerating Walsall	500,000
Fibbersley Park primary school	266,154
Barcroft primary school	228,887
Housing benefit electronic document system	40,700
Walsall arboretum restoration programme	100,000
Palfrey Park HLF	75,000
Youth service building refurbishment	100,000
Access for disabled people (Buildings)	200,000
Asbestos removal	100,000
Public lighting PFI	200,000
Willenhall Lane travellers site	350,000
Replacement of SOSCIS - PARIS project	365,000
Highways maintenance	160,000
Greenspaces improvement strategy	100,000
Secondary school re-development of dining facilities	210,000
Improving security In local neighbourhoods	250,000
Strategic corridors and gateways	350,000
Walsall town centre public realm improvements	750,000
Central revitalisation areas	250,000
Relocation of the school library support service	40,000
Roof repairs to school premises	200,000
Decriminalisation of parking enforcement	100,000
New build Beacon View	100,000
New build Fallings Heath	200,000
Replacement of obsolete boilers in schools	200,000
Targeted capital bids	382,500
Streetly cemetery extension phase B	34,000
Memorial safety	100,000

Control of legionella in water systems	500,000
Energy efficiency improvements	250,000
Highways maintenance	1,000,000
Highways maintenance - capital rather than revenue funding	375,000
Regeneration schemes falling within the Council's priorities	2,000,000
Social work locality team (East)	174,000
Brownhills town hall library	60,000
Corporate PC refresh programme	504,000
Corporate Printer refresh programme	116,000
Corporate Server refresh programme	190,000
Network resilience	50,000
Additional data storage	100,000
Document management phase II rollout	250,000
Disaster recovery and business continuity	75,000
Replacement telephony switches	50,000
Contact centre (40 seats)	383,750
TOTAL	29,445,181

NON MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM GRANT 2006/7	
SCHEME	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Devolved formula capital	4,992,198
Modernisation - primary	2,009,678
Modernisation - secondary	1,842,306
Fibbersley Park primary school	1,064,618
Barcroft primary school	915,547
Targeted capital bids	1,530,952
Childrens centres - phase 2	1,287,255
Youth capital funding	132,000
Integrated children's system	86,000
Housing Benefit electronic document system	81,400
Walsall arboretum restoration programme	600,000
Palfrey Park HLF	225,000
Palfrey Park bowling green fencing project	5,000
Fibbersley local nature reserve pool improvement works	50,000
Pelsall Nest Common community play area	65,000
Palfrey Park bandstand	180,000
High Heath Park fencing and community improvements	15,000
Willenhall Memorial Park lido redevelopment	120,000
Manor Farm open space - toddlers play area	60,000
Willenhall Memorial Park gardeners stores	20,000
Willenhall Memorial Park sensory garden	30,000
Willenhall Memorial Park fishing pool wall/path repairs	30,000
Wallington Heath pool heritage scheme	55,000
Short Heath Park youth provision	70,000
Daw End limestone infilling	7,500,000

Town Centre Transport Package	8,290,000
Darlaston Strategic Development Area	500,000
Recycling initiatives	251,625
Community Regeneration in Walsall	562,500
Transforming your space	673,258
Bloxwich THI	69,218
Darlaston HERS	10,328
Darlaston PSCA	50,000
ERDF district centres (Brownhills)	340,000
ERDF central revitalisation areas	62,265
ERDF quality streets	369,701
Lichfield Street HERS	98,000
New deal for communities	3,500,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	520,000
Private sector renovation grants	3,000,000
Housing market renewal	350,000
Stock condition survey	50,000
Multi-sensory centre	50,000
Gypsy Council grant	200,000
Improving information grant (PARIS project)	153,000
TOTAL	42,066,849

LEASING PROGRAMME 2006/7	
DIRECTORATE	TOTAL BUDGET £ million
Neighbourhood Services	7.475
Social Care and Inclusion	0.900

(2) **Corporate revenue budget 2006/7 to 2010/11**

It was **moved** by Councillor O'Hare and seconded by Collins:-

That the resolution of the Cabinet set out below as amended to take into account the final levies and precepts be approved:-

(a) That the net levies for outside bodies be noted.

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority	12,556,531
Environment agency	81,106

(b) That approval be given to an opening working balance for 2006/7 set at a prudent level of £4.6m in line with the council's medium term financial strategy.

(c) That the following opening cash limited budgets for 2006/7 be approved.

BUDGET	2006/7 BUDGET (£)
DIRECTORATE BUDGETS:	
Corporate services	15,088,292
Social care and inclusion	63,799,230
Children and young people	70,189,790
Neighbourhood services	66,353,470
Regeneration	2,513,026
CORPORATE PROVISIONS/CONTINGENCIES ETC:	
Capital financing	14,637,575
Non-service specific central items	711,000
Contribution to general reserves	355,000
Less: Capital Charges	-42,306,481
LEVIES:	
Passenger Transport Levy	12,556,531
Environment Agency Levy	81,106
WALSALL MBC NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	203,978,539

- (d) That the following statutory determinations be noted (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992):
- £611,581,074** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act.
 - £407,602,535** being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3) (a) to (c) of the Act.
 - £203,978,539** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32 (4) as its budget requirement for the year.
 - £112,651,396** being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates (£94,843,268); Revenue Support Grant (£18,308,128); and the Collection Fund Deficit (£500,000).
 - £91,327,143** being the amount at (c) above, less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the Council Tax Base of 76,095, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
- (f) **Valuation bands**
- Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) above by the proportions set out in Section 5 (1) of the Act and calculated in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act of the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

A	B	C	D
£800.12	£933.47	£1,066.82	£1,200.17
E	F	G	H
£1,466.88	£1,733.58	£2,000.29	£2,400.35

- (g) That the final precepts from the Fire & Civil Defence Authority and the Police Authority, issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below be noted.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
Police	A	B	C	D
	£58.37	£68.09	£77.82	£87.55
	E	F	G	H
	£107.00	£126.46	£145.92	£175.10
Fire & Civil Defence	A	B	C	D
	£28.79	£33.59	£38.38	£43.18
	E	F	G	H
	£52.78	£62.37	£71.97	£86.36

- (h) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (f) and (g) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2006/7 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

A	B	C	D
£887.28	£1,035.15	£1,183.02	£1,330.90
E	F	G	H
£1,626.66	£1,922.41	£2,218.18	£2,661.81

- (i) That notice be given of the council tax within twenty one days of it being set by publishing details of the same in the "Walsall Observer"; the "Express & Star" and "Evening Mail" being newspapers circulating in the Authority's area.
- (j) That the appropriate officers be instructed to take all necessary action in relation to council tax, community charge and national non-domestic rates, including, where appropriate, the signing of all documents, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.

Amendment moved by Councillor Coughlan and seconded by Councillor Madeley:-

- (1) That a one-off revenue budget of £300,000 be established for allocation to the Community Wardens service;
- (2) That funding for the above be provided from the year 1 Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant settlement.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost the voting at the request of several members of the Council being recorded as follows:

For the motion - 22 members	Against the amendment - 29 members	Neutral – 1 Member
Cllr. Oliver	Cllr. Ansell	Cllr. Arif
I. Shires	Ault	
Anson	Beilby	
Barton	Bird	
Bentley	Clarke	
Bott	Collins	
Burley	Douglas-Maul	
Cassidy	Griffiths	
Chambers	Harris	
Cook	Harrison	
Coughlan	Hughes	
Creaney	Khan	
Madeley	Longhi	
Phillips	Martin	
E.E. Pitt	McCracken	
Robertson	Micklewright	
Robinson	Munir	
Sarohi	O'Hare	
D.A. Shires	Paul	
Underhill	Perry	
Wilkes	D.J. Pitt	
Young	M.G. Pitt	
	Rochelle	
	Rose	
	Towe	
	Turner	
	Walker	
	Yasin	
	Zahid	

Amendment moved by Councillor Underhill and seconded by Councillor Burley:-

- (1) That a one-off revenue budget of £400,000 be established for allocation to Community Associations (CAs) to assist with sustainability and core functions to be assessed against plans for ongoing viability through the financial year;
- (2) That funding for the above be provided from any 2005/6 youth and community services underspends over and above those currently reported; the balance to come from year 1 Local Authority Business Growth (LABGI) grant settlement.

At this point in the proceedings, Councillor Bird rose on a point of order and asked for advice from the Monitoring Officer as to whether he was aware that certain members in the Chamber tonight were members of boards of Community Associations and appeared to have a prejudicial interest in the matter about to be discussed.

The Monitoring Officer, Mr. Gill, advised the Council that each and every member has to decide if they have a personal interest in the item to be discussed. Members would then have to decide whether this interest was also a prejudicial interest. He went on to say that if the members concerned had any involvement in management then this would constitute a personal and prejudicial interest which must be disclosed and members must leave the Chamber.

Councillors McCracken, Bott, Towe, Beeley, Andrew, Martin, Oliver and Robinson left the Chamber during consideration of this item

At this point in the meeting, the time being 8.30 p.m., it was **moved** by Councillor Bird and duly seconded

That procedure rule 9.8 be suspended in order to complete Summons items 7 and 8.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried and it was:-

Resolved

That procedure rule 9.8 be suspended in order to complete Summons items 7 and 8.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost – the voting at the request of several members of the Council being recorded as follows:-

For the motion - 18 members

Cllr. I. Shires
Anson
Barton
Bentley
Burley
Cassidy
Chambers
Cook
Coughlan
Creaney
Phillips
E.E. Pitt
Robertson
Sarohi
D.A. Shires
Underhill

Against the amendment - 27 members

Cllr. Ansell
Arif
Ault
Beilby
Bird
Clarke
Collins
Douglas-Maul
Griffiths
Harris
Harrison
Hughes
Khan
Longhi
Micklewright
Munir

Cllr. Wilkes
Young

Cllr. O'Hare
Paul
Perry
D.J. Pitt
M.G. Pitt
Rose
Turner
Tweddle
Walker
Yasin
Zahid

Amendment moved by Councillor Cassidy and seconded by Councillor Robinson:-

- (1) That a further one-off revenue budget of £100,000 be established for allocation to Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNPs).
- (2) That funding for the above be provided from the year 1 Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant settlement.

At this point in the proceedings, Councillor M.G. Pitt **moved** that the vote be taken. The motion was seconded by Councillor Bird and duly carried and it was:

Resolved

That the vote be taken.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost – the voting at the request of several members of the Council being recorded as follows:-

For the motion - 22 members

Cllr. Oliver
I. Shires
Anson
Barton
Bentley
Bott
Burley
Cassidy
Chambers
Cook
Coughlan
Creaney
Madeley
Phillips
E.E. Pitt

Against the amendment - 33 members

Cllr. Ansell
Andrew
Arif
Ault
Beeley
Beilby
Bird
Clarke
Collins
Douglas-Maul
Griffiths
Harris
Harrison
Hughes
Khan

Cllr. Robertson
Robinson
Sarohi
D.A. Shires
Underhill
Wilkes
Young

Cllr. Longhi
Martin
McCracken
Micklewright
Munir
O'Hare
Paul
Perry
D.J. Pitt
M.G. Pitt
Rochelle
Rose
Towe
Turner
Tweddle
Walker
Yasin
Zahid

Amendment moved by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Oliver:-

- (1) That a revenue budget of £310,000 be established for allocation to the extension of the garden waste collection service to all eligible properties.
- (2) That funding for the above in 2006/7 be provided from the year 1 Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant settlement.
- (3) That funding from 2007/8 onwards be provided from additional efficiencies arising from more efficient processes and outcomes in the Council's procurement and ICT delivering savings of £110,000 and £200,000 respectively.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor M.G. Pitt moved "That the vote be taken". The motion was seconded by Councillor Bird and it was:-

Resolved

That the vote be taken.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost – the voting at the request of several members of the Council being recorded as follows:-

**For the motion -
22 members**

Cllr. Oliver
I. Shires

**Against the amendment -
33 members**

Cllr. Ansell
Andrew

Cllr. Anson
 Barton
 Bentley
 Bott
 Burley
 Cassidy
 Chambers
 Cook
 Coughlan
 Creaney
 Madeley
 Phillips
 E.E. Pitt
 Robertson
 Robinson
 Sarohi
 D.A. Shires
 Underhill
 Wilkes
 Young

Cllr. Arif
 Ault
 Beeley
 Beilby
 Bird
 Clarke
 Collins
 Douglas-Maul
 Griffiths
 Harris
 Harrison
 Hughes
 Khan
 Longhi
 Martin
 McCracken
 Micklewright
 Munir
 O'Hare
 Paul
 Perry
 D.J. Pitt
 M.G. Pitt
 Rochelle
 Rose
 Towe
 Turner
 Tweddle
 Walker
 Yasin
 Zahid

On being put to the vote the original motion was declared carried and it was:-

Resolved

That the resolution of the Cabinet set out below as amended to take into account the final levies and precepts be approved:-

(a) That the net levies for outside bodies be noted.

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority	12,556,531
Environment agency	81,106

(b) That approval be given to an opening working balance for 2006/7 set at a prudent level of £4.6m in line with the council's medium term financial strategy.

- (c) That the following opening cash limited budgets for 2006/7 be approved.

BUDGET	2006/7 BUDGET (£)
DIRECTORATE BUDGETS:	
Corporate services	15,088,292
Social care and inclusion	63,799,230
Children and young people	70,189,790
Neighbourhood services	66,353,470
Regeneration	2,513,026
CORPORATE PROVISIONS/CONTINGENCIES ETC:	
Capital financing	14,637,575
Non-service specific central items	711,000
Contribution to general reserves	355,000
Less: Capital Charges	-42,306,481
LEVIES:	
Passenger Transport Levy	12,556,531
Environment Agency Levy	81,106
WALSALL MBC NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	203,978,539

- (d) That the following statutory determinations be noted (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992):
- b) **£611,581,074** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act.
 - c) **£407,602,535** being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3) (a) to (c) of the Act.
 - d) **£203,978,539** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32 (4) as its budget requirement for the year.
 - e) **£112,651,396** being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates (£94,843,268); Revenue Support Grant (£18,308,128); and the Collection Fund Deficit (£500,000).
 - f) **£91,327,143** being the amount at (c) above, less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the Council Tax Base of 76,095, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

- (f) **Valuation bands**

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) above by the proportions set out in Section 5 (1) of the Act and calculated in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act of the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

A	B	C	D
£800.12	£933.47	£1,066.82	£1,200.17
E	F	G	H
£1,466.88	£1,733.58	£2,000.29	£2,400.35

- (g) That the final precepts from the Fire & Civil Defence Authority and the Police Authority, issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below be noted.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
Police	A	B	C	D
	£58.37	£68.09	£77.82	£87.55
	E	F	G	H
	£107.00	£126.46	£145.92	£175.10
Fire & Civil Defence	A	B	C	D
	£28.79	£33.59	£38.38	£43.18
	E	F	G	H
	£52.78	£62.37	£71.97	£86.36

- (h) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (f) and (g) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2006/7 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

A	B	C	D
£887.28	£1,035.15	£1,183.02	£1,330.90
E	F	G	H
£1,626.66	£1,922.41	£2,218.18	£2,661.81

- (i) That notice be given of the council tax within twenty one days of it being set by publishing details of the same in the "Walsall Observer"; the "Express & Star" and "Evening Mail" being newspapers circulating in the Authority's area.
- (j) That the appropriate officers be instructed to take all necessary action in relation to council tax, community charge and national non-domestic rates, including, where appropriate, the signing of all documents, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.

(3) **Annual review of treasury management and investment strategy**

It was **moved** by Councillor O'Hare, duly seconded and:-

Resolved

That the 2006/7 treasury management and investment strategy document set out in Appendix 1 and the adoption of the Prudential Indicators set out in section E of Appendix 1 be approved.

(4) **West Midlands local transport plan 2006/7 to 2010/11**

It was **moved** by Councillor O'Hare, duly seconded and:-

Resolved

That the final West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2006/07 – 2010/11 be approved.

(5) **Corporate plan 2006-2007**

It was **moved** by Councillor O'Hare, duly seconded and:-

Resolved

That the Corporate Plan 2006-2007 be adopted.

86. **Children and young people's plan 2006/7**

The report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Hughes, duly seconded and

Resolved

That the Children and young people's plan be approved.

The meeting terminated at 9.55 a.m.

(Note: The following items of business remained to be dealt with:-

- (1) Revised governance arrangements for Local Neighbourhood Partnerships
- (2) Membership of Employment Appeals Committee B
- (3) Notice of motion – employment of sex offenders
- (4) Notice of motion – Re-organisation of Police forces
- (5) Notice of motion – recycling of household waste)