

# BRIEFING NOTE

**TO: NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY & PERFORMANCE PANEL**  
**DATE: 22 JANUARY 2009**

**RE: Update on information requests from previous meetings**

## Purpose

To provide updates to Members on the information requests made at the Panel's meetings on 25 November and 4 December 2008.

## Report

### *Volunteers in Libraries and Heritage*

Volunteers cannot be substituted for professional library staff. However, the Council does work with volunteers who run adult and children's reading groups, 50 plus clubs, and do interpretation in the museums and some preservation work in the archive.

In the future we are considering using volunteers to be reading champions in libraries, to read to children and to people in residential homes and to manage deposit collections in community settings. The West Midlands Society of Chief Librarians is running training courses on the use of volunteers which Council staff are attending.

There is potential to use volunteers to maximise community use at the refurbished Bloxwich Library.

There is a need to ensure child and vulnerable adult protection and to obtain Criminal Records Bureau checks.

Appendix 1 contains a list of libraries staff and visitor numbers. This information was emailed to Members on 16 December 2009 and is reproduced here for completeness.

### *Income generation at Darlaston Town Hall*

We will be actively marketing the town hall to potential users, shortly. We are limited in what we can promote by the reduced events budget, proposed as part of the draft budget for 2009/10.

### *Assistance to voluntary organisations*

The Council can and does provide support to fund raising and other voluntary activities in the parks either through the Walsall Partnership Capacity Building Manager (Mike Gaffney) or by approaching Leisure, Culture and Lifelong Learning officers.

## *Bryntysilio*

### Current Position

Net budget	£389,501
Gross budget	£567,974
Property Services costs (average)	£75,000
Curriculum attendances	1,088

As the building is leased, the property services costs should be added to the revenue costs as there will be no return on their investment in terms of adding value to a Council asset.

If we are looking at alternate providers – we should use the gross cost for comparison purposes.

Therefore the current cost per user is **£591** ( $£567,974 + £75,000 \div 1,088$ )

### Costs for alternate provision:

**Staffordshire County Council** (Standon Bowers, Chasewater, Laches Wood, Shugborough)

Key Stage 2 (5-day visit)	<b>£133 - £190</b>
Key Stage 3 (5-day visit)	<b>£140 - £200</b>
Key Stage 4 (5-day visit)	<b>£160 - £250</b>

(prices vary based on high / medium / low demand weeks)

Based on very non-committal discussions with the Head of Outdoor Education for Staffordshire County Council our 1,088 residential places represents less than 7% of their total capacity and as such there is a strong likelihood they could accommodate our full provision. However they have already made their commitments for academic year 2009/10 – so we may need to compromise on bookings until academic year 2010/11.

**Stoke-on-Trent City Council** (Stanley Head Outdoor Education Centre)

5-day residential **£195 - £230**

Again based on very non-committal discussions Stanley Head is fully booked during the summer term, but has significant residential spare capacity in the Autumn & Spring terms.

### *Electoral Registers*

Members requested information on the cost of purchasing marked electoral registers. The actual cost of purchasing marked registers for the May 2008 Walsall Council elections is attached at Appendix 2 and guidance from the Electoral Commission is provided at Appendix 3.

## Walsall Illuminations

Following a meeting of the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny & Performance Panel on Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup> 2008, Members made the recommendation that:-

“Cabinet be asked to continue with the Illuminations in 2009, on the understanding that the viability of the event is based on realistic financial and visitor expectations.”

Members requested a breakdown of financial, visitor and pricing information relating to the event for their December 4<sup>th</sup> meeting and this is shown below:-

### EVENT SUMMARY 2008

The Illuminations event is funded from income generated from ticket sales, concessions and sponsorship. There is no revenue budget or subsidy, apart from any deficit, from the Council. Expenditure was budgeted at £620,000 for 2008, to include all costs, the wages of the technical staff, as well as an income target of £50,000. The total overall target from income was therefore £670,000.

Expenditure and income for the event is shown below:-

Expenditure:-	£
Staffing	131,000
Materials	35,900
Special lighting features	50,373
Entertainment & shows	104,435
Workshop	9,750
Site management, installation & operation	196,010
Marketing	79,515
Sub total	606,983
Income target to Council	50,000
Total Expenditure	656,983

Income:-	£
Ticket sales	402,084
Children's rides	28,601
Food concessions	41,475
Illuminated novelties	3,500
Sponsorship	14,000
Total	489,660

Surplus / (Deficit)	(167,323)
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Year	Attendance figs		Fees & Charges (£)				
	Total	Av per week	2008 shows on Thurs - Sat	Adult	Junior	Family (4)	Family (5)
2003	193,000*	32,166	-	5.00	4.00	15.00	-
2004	163,000*	27,166	-	5.50	4.00	15.00	-
2005	188,500*	31,416	-	5.50	4.00	15.00	-
2006	157,000*	26,166	-	6.00	4.50	16.00	-
2007	120,000*	20,000	-	6.00	4.50	17.00	20.00
2008	111,000**	22,200	Sun - Wed	6.00	4.00	18.00	21.00
			Thurs - Sat	7.00	5.00	21.00	25.00

\* 6 week event

\*\* 5 week event

## OUTLINE PROPOSAL 2009

Cabinet and Scrutiny Members have agreed that from 2009 any future event will have to be put on against sustainable income generation as well as an awareness of the local economy and sponsorship opportunities. Within this framework officers have begun to draw up proposals to achieve this. Initial proposals however suggest the following scenario:-

Expenditure:- (5 week event)	£
Staffing	131,400
Materials	35,900
Special lighting features	34,000
Entertainment & shows	34,400
Workshop	9,800
Site management, installation & operation	179,000
Marketing	75,000
Other	2,500
Total	502,000
Income target to Council	50,000
Total Expenditure	552,000

Income:-	£
Ticket sales, & concessions (catering, children's rides &	500,000

merchandise)	
Sponsorship	5,000
Total	505,000

Surplus / (Deficit)	(47,000)
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Officers advise that it should still be possible to put on a good quality event for this budget although it might not have the high profile show element of 2008. There would still be a good mix of the traditional type features; a high profile laser show over the lake, large-scale projection incorporated into one of the main features, the provision of several types of entertainment every night such as on the bandstand and walkabout, along with a special events programme. One of the major savings would be to replace the marquee and staging and to include the big wheel as in 2006.

It is highly unlikely that the Council will be able to make the necessary investment required to radically change the Illuminations, indeed the consultants report in 2006 indicated that a capital investment of around £1million would be necessary.

The refurbishment of the Arboretum through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application does offer the opportunity to strategically reposition the Illuminations with a re-launch in 2012 to celebrate its re-opening, if the Council wishes it to continue.

#### Visitors

Members requested specific information regarding the percentage of Walsall residents that visited the event in 2008.

The ECOTECH survey undertaken throughout this year's event gave the following results:-

Postcode	2008 %	2007 %	2006 %
Walsall residents	41	31	34
Other WS postcodes	6	10	13
Other WV postcodes	7	7	9
Other B postcodes	20	23	18
All other postcodes	25	28	26

41% of the respondents were Walsall residents with approximately one in four being residents from outside of the area (postcodes other than WS, WV and B).

#### *Local Neighbourhood Partnerships*

The Local Neighbourhood Partnerships Team forms part of the Neighbourhood Partnerships and Programmes service. This service, managed by the Head of Neighbourhood Partnerships and Programmes, comprises the following:

- Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (10 staff)
- European Programmes Team (7 staff)
- Community Development (5 staff)
- Equality and Diversity (5 staff)
- Partnership Support (4 staff)

The service is responsible for a range of things, including:

- Supporting the 9 LNPs, including Community Action Groups, Community Action Tasking, local events and consultation activities, developing and implementing LNP projects, Neighbourhood Agreements
- Managing the implementation of European funded programmes
- Managing the voluntary sector grant budget
- Support to community based organisations, including delegated budgets
- The Community Playbus
- Implementation of the Local Government Equality Standard
- Interpretation, translation and transcription service
- Employee networks
- Community cohesion, including building resilience
- Compact
- Local Involvement Network (LINK)
- Administration of the Council's charities and trusts

The cost of the LNP team in 2008/09 is summarised below:

Staffing (salaries and on-costs)	£360,000
Overheads	£64,000
Events and publicity (including printing)	£16,000
Total	£440,000

The LNP team has been funded as follows for 2008/09:

ERDF	£90,000
Area Based Grant	£250,000
Council	£100,000

In summary, therefore, the LNP team receives £100,000 from the Neighbourhood Partnerships and Programmes £1.9M overall budget.

### *Car Park Ticket Machines*

The Panel made a request that investigations be undertaken regarding the introduction of car park ticket machines that print car registration numbers on the tickets.

Investigations with the car parking management team established that there were several reasons why these types of machines were considered not necessary nor value for money, as follow:

- General public find them confusing to use

- More maintenance required due to heavy keypad use
- The cost of replacing the pay and display machines would be significant (approx £5k each)
- We can already easily identify tickets from different machines / car parks through the serial numbers
- Very limited cases of ticket transfer experienced or witnessed due to the nature of our tariff structure (people only generally pay for what they need)

*Investigation to be undertaken to establish the possibilities of the Council's Crematorium being operated by the private sector.*

Streetly Crematorium was opened on 14 February 1984 to replace the existing cremation facilities at Ryecroft Crematorium which has since been demolished as it was determined structurally unsound.

There are 258 crematoria in the UK and with a large proportion being constructed in the 1950's and 1960's, therefore Streetly is still one of the most modern facilities in the country.

Over three quarters of the crematoria in the UK are municipally owned.

Streetly Crematorium consistently carries out more cremations than the national average for each facility. The national average number in the calendar year 2007 was 1652 cremations. Streetly carried out 1874 cremations during this period. In the calendar year 2008 there has been an increase with Streetly undertaking 1922 cremations.

Each year the Crematorium provides a considerable surplus to, amongst other things, subsidise the cost of the cemeteries service. In addition, this income helps support the Cemetery service and any capital investment. The resulting income reduction from the crematorium would require the General Fund to bear the loss made by the cemeteries side. Following previous decisions to increase fees in this area, Walsall's burial fees are now in the upper levels within the West Midlands. There is limited scope in recouping lost income from increased burial fees. This is because it could lead to some people not being able to afford or not being prepared to pay for a burial, and instead choosing cremation as a cheaper option, which in the event of not retaining the crematorium, would lead to a further loss of income to the Authority.

In the financial year 2007/2008 the Crematorium produced a surplus £414k for the Council.

The Crematorium shares the site with Streetly Cemetery which was opened in 1938. The internal road network is integral for the Cemetery and Crematorium traffic. In addition both the entrance and exit are shared. Any changes of crematorium ownership could lead to difficult operational/managerial conflicts with funeral corteges and the visiting traffic.

The security of the cemetery is integral with the security of the crematorium grounds

There would be a loss of fee setting control by the council in this sensitive area

Upwards of 70% of the population in urban areas of the country use cremation for the disposal of the dead rather than burial. The current facility at Streetly benefits from this

larger proportion of local residents requiring its services whilst the finite cemetery provision caters for the remainder.

Currently, Bereavement Services caters right across the board for almost all religious and racial communities either through cremation, particularly Sikh, or burial, significantly and recently enhanced Muslim facilities. Removing the crematorium service from Walsall Council influence would adversely affect the existing comprehensive provision offered to residents of Walsall and the surrounding districts by the council.

*Steve Pretty to write to all members of the Council regarding problem drains within their respective wards*

Letter sent to all Members on 22 December 2008. See attached copy for information.

*Number of prosecutions made under Public Protection Legislation from 1 April 2008 to 31 December 2008*

Trading Standards	33
Environmental Health	5
Public Protection	11
Total	49

*Number of deaths and cremations in the borough*

	Deaths in the Borough	Number of Cremations	Number of Full Coffin Burials	Total Funerals	% of Funerals in Walsall
2005	2295	1797	636	2433	106
2006	2419	2034	596	2630	109
2007	2315	1880	651	2531	109
2008	2351	1922	620	2542	108
Total	18150	14860	4831	19691	108

*Financial Benchmarking data to be provided for grass cutting/ grounds maintenance, street cleaning and litter picking.*

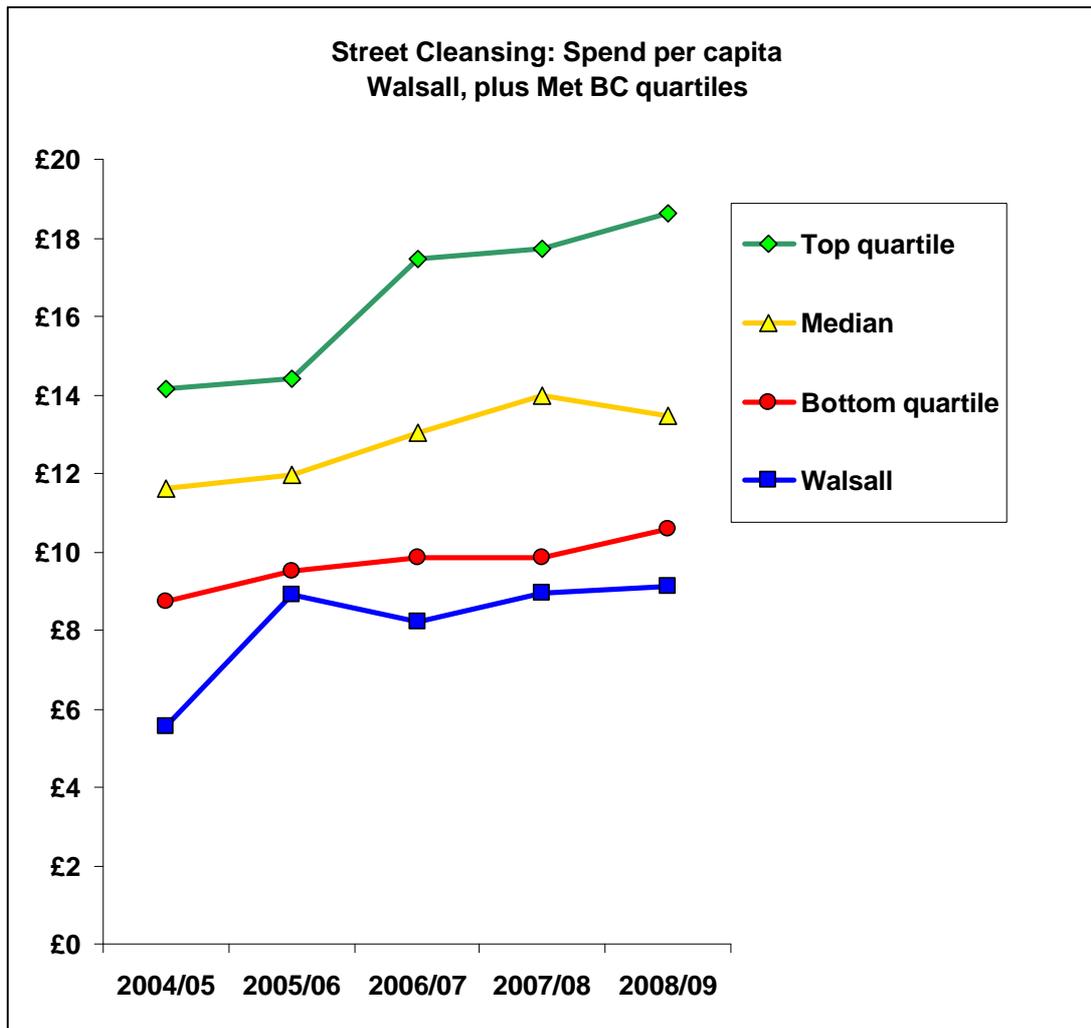
### **Grass cutting/Grounds maintenance**

Street Pride has submitted tenders in respect of grounds maintenance within the last 12 months to other organisations and won and narrowly lost work with Beechdale and WHG Housing associations respectively. It is anticipated that further bench marking will be carried out in the next financial year.

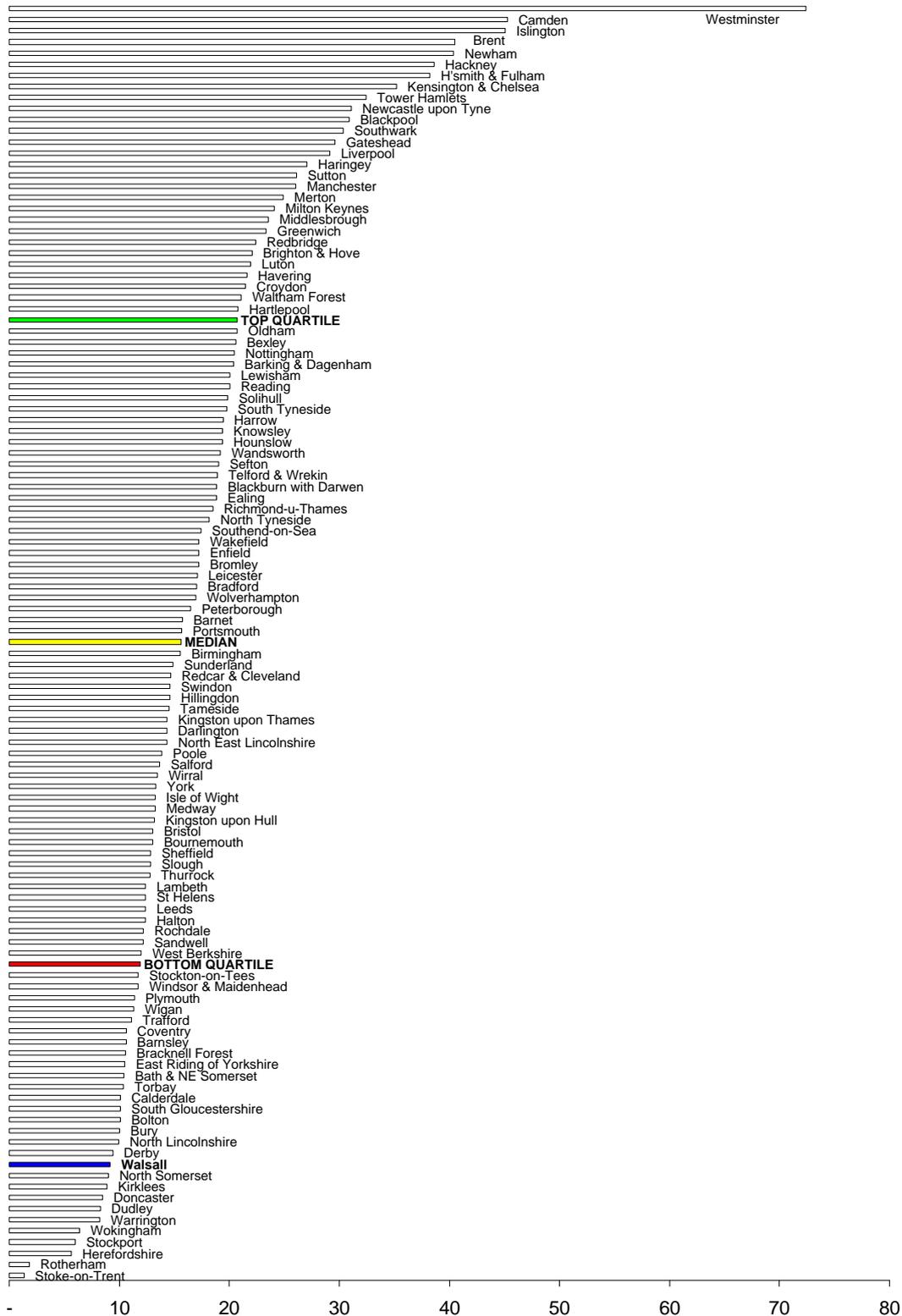
### **Street Cleaning and Litter Picking**

Recent work facilitated by Street Pride to consider funding levels and Benchmarking for the service have been carried out. Key findings show that Walsall have been in the lowest spend quartile for the last 5 years (compared with Metropolitan, Unitary and London Boroughs and Nearest Neighbours) Walsall's spend per person is approximately £9.50

with the average slightly less than £14, a difference of £4.32 per person per year. Further information and analysis is attached.



**Street Cleansing Spend per person 2008/09 (est.)  
Mets, London Boroughs, Unitaries**

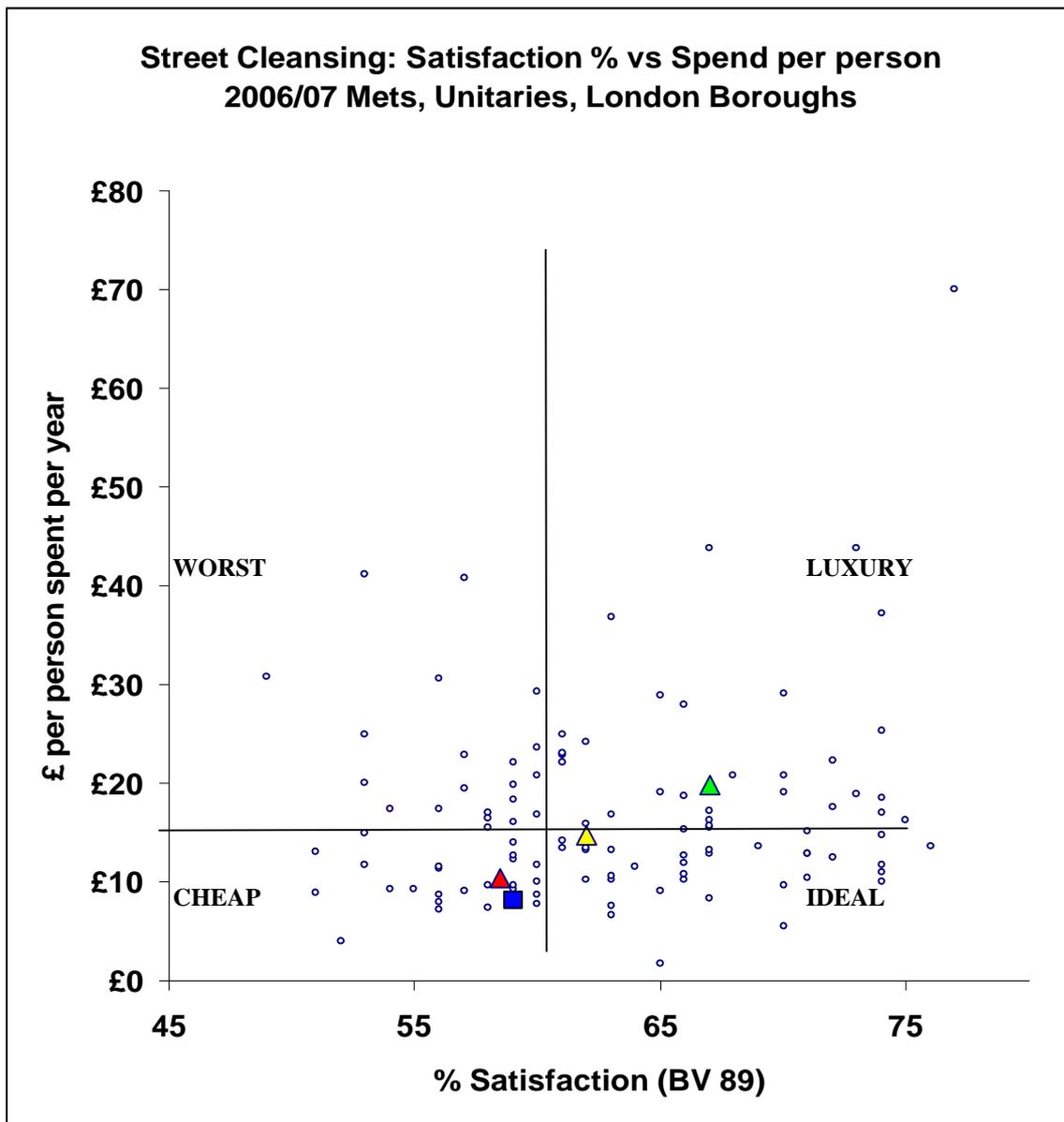


- Walsall sits in the “Cheap” Quadrant, with both low cost and low satisfaction. It is necessary to steer towards the “ideal” quadrant, low cost but high satisfaction and avoid the “Worst” quadrant, high cost and low satisfaction

The chart below cross-matches spend per person per year for 2006/07 against satisfaction in 2006/07 for Street Cleansing. Each dot represents the Metropolitan, Unitary and London Boroughs. Further symbols used are:

 Blue square	Walsall MBC
 Green triangle	Intersection between upper quartiles of satisfaction and of spend
 Yellow triangle	Intersection between medians of satisfaction and of spend
 Red triangle	Intersection between lower quartiles of satisfaction and of spend

Quadrant	Satisfaction Level	Spending Level
<b>Ideal</b>	High	Low
<b>Luxury</b>	High	High
<b>Cheap</b>	Low	Low
<b>Worst</b>	Low	High



Walsall is in the Cheap quadrant (spend and satisfaction are both low). The challenge is to steer into 'Ideal' quadrant without drifting into 'Worst' quadrant.

### **Recommendations**

**That the report be noted.**

### **Authors**

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Keith Stone  
Assistant Director for Built Environment

Clive Wright  
Director, Walsall Partnership

## Libraries and Heritage

## Libraries Structure – December 2008

Job Title	Grade	FTE	Role	Front Line Responsibility
Head of Libraries and Heritage		1	Head of Service	No
Group Library Manager	PO38-41	2	Strategic Manager	No
Information Services Manager	PO38-41	1	Strategic Manager	No
Mobile & Support Service Manager	PO38-41	1	Strategic Manager	No
Children's & Schools Library Services manager	PO38-41	1	Strategic Manager	No
Central Library Manager	PO35-38	1	Operational Manager – some front line responsibility	Yes
Flexible Learning Centre Manager	PO35-38	1	Operational Manager – some front line responsibility	Yes
Ethnic Services Manager	PO35-38	1	Operational Manager – some front line responsibility	Yes
Library Service Manager: Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston, Willenhall, Mobiles, African Caribbean Services, Reader Development	SO1/2	8	Responsible to develop the library service to the local community	Yes
Senior Schools Library Adviser	SO1/2	1	Provide advice to schools on books and learning	Yes – to schools
Schools Library Adviser	SO1	2	Provide advice to schools on books and learning	Yes– to schools
Library Manager: Children's, Reference, Lending, Support Services	SO1	4.5	Responsible to develop part of the library service to residents	Yes
Learning Skills Tutor	AP5/6	1	Develop basic learning opportunities in libraries	Yes
Computer officer	AP5/6	1	Develop website and online services in line with Government targets	No
Senior Librarian: Lending, Reference, Mobiles, Children's	AP5/6	4.5	Professional knowledge for operational element of the service	Yes
Senior Librarian Support Services	AP5/6	1.5	Professional knowledge for operational element of the service	Yes
District Supervisor: Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston, Willenhall	AP5	5	Operational day to day supervision of libraries in an area	Yes
FLC Support Officer	AP5	1	Support for library flexible learning centres and public access computers	Yes
Schools Library Officer	AP4/5	2.5	Liaison with schools	Yes– to schools
Supervisor Support	AP4/5	1	Operational supervision of staff	No

Services			handling order, receipt and processing of new stock	
Supervisor Mobiles	AP4/5	2	Operational day to day supervision of mobile services	Yes
Home Library Officer	AP4/5	4.25	Delivery of service to housebound people	Yes
BME Outreach worker	AP4/5	1	BME Community liaison	Yes
Supervisor CE: Adult, Children's, Reference	AP4/5	3	Service supervisor based in Central Library	Yes
Supervisor: branch libraries	AP4/5	14	Supervisors responsible for day to day operation of individual libraries	Yes
Assistant Supervisor: Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston, Willenhall	AP4	5	Deputy for District Supervisor	Yes
Information Officer	AP3	3	Skilled information providers	Yes
Admin. Assistant	AP3	1	Essential support for front line services e.g. arranging daily relief for sickness to maintain opening hours	No
Mobile Library Driver/Assistant,	AP2/3	2	Driving and operating the mobile library service across Walsall	Yes
Mobile Relief Driver/Assistant	AP2/3	3	Driving and operating the mobile library service across Walsall	Yes
Assistant Community Library Officer	AP2/3	1	Mobile service to BME communities	Yes
Senior Library Assistants	AP1/3	42	Providing direct service to customers	Yes
Library Assistant Support Services	AP1/2	5	Processing orders and new stock for libraries	No
Operational Support Library Assistants	AP1/2	15.25	Providing direct service to customers – particularly at weekends	Yes

## Libraries and Heritage – Use of Libraries

### Visits to libraries in 2007/08

Library	Number of Customer Visits	Ranking for use 1 = most used	Premises costs: rates, utilities, cleaning, etc	Ranking for premises costs 1 = most expensive	Cost per visit
Aldridge	85,738	6	£17,622	6	£2.22
Beechdale	36,841	12	£28,968	3	£2.23
Blakenall	42,184	10	£63,551	1	£2.84
Bloxwich	103,401	3	£18,873	5	£2.15
Brownhills	95,763	5	£15,325	7	£1.84
Darlaston	117,984	2	£23,566	4	£1.84
New Invention	29,694	15	£6,059	14	£1.70
Pelsall	53,973	8	£11,391	10	£1.38
Pheasey	39,659	11	£8,145	11	£1.55
Pleck	44,300	9	£4,743	15	£1.22
Rushall	34,630	13	£3,390	16	£1.66
South Walsall	34,042	14	£12,802	9	£1.83
Streetly	66,615	7	£6,776	13	£1.18
Walsall Wood	17,412	16	£8,067	12	£3.13
Willenhall	97,612	4	£13,614	8	£1.95
Walsall Central Library	626,031	1	£59,957	2	£0.87



## Appendix 3

### 1 May 2008 Council Elections

			£10 Admin fee per request £2/1000		£10 Admin fee per request £2/1000	
	No of electors		Marked Register (Polling stn) - Paper	No of postal voters	No postal voters - rounded	Marked Register (Postal) - Paper
Aldridge Central & South	10781		£22.00	1321	2000	£4.00
Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	10284		£22.00	1106	2000	£4.00
Bentley & Darlaston North	8944		£18.00	931	1000	£2.00
Birchills Leamore	8901		£18.00	890	1000	£2.00
Blakenall	8221		£18.00	866	1000	£2.00
Bloxwich East	8570		£18.00	889	1000	£2.00
Bloxwich West	9657		£20.00	795	1000	£2.00
Brownhills	9570		£20.00	859	1000	£2.00
Darlaston South	9210		£20.00	838	1000	£2.00
Paddock	9559		£20.00	1065	2000	£4.00
Palfrey	10205		£22.00	1237	2000	£4.00
Pelsall	9017		£20.00	931	1000	£2.00
Pheasey	8466		£18.00	612	1000	£2.00
Pleck	9564		£20.00	1218	2000	£4.00
Rushall-Shelfield	9107		£20.00	920	1000	£2.00
Short Heath	8829		£18.00	719	1000	£2.00
St. Matthews	9183		£20.00	1233	2000	£4.00
Streetly	10756		£22.00	1031	2000	£4.00
Willenhall North	9525		£20.00	861	1000	£2.00
Willenhall South	10753		£22.00	1010	2000	£4.00
	189102			19332		

Priority	Medium
Event specific	No
Action required	Yes – update electoral registration manual
Area	Great Britain
Retain	Until replaced

## Circular EC19/2008

### Fees for the marked register and marked lists

18 July 2008

For the attention of:

**The Electoral Registration Officer**

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England  
Unitary authorities in England and Wales

For the information of:

**The Acting Returning Officer**

Parliamentary constituencies in England and Wales

**The Returning Officer**

Parliamentary constituencies in Scotland

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England  
Unitary authorities in England, Scotland and Wales

**The Electoral Registration Officer**

Unitary authorities and joint boards in Scotland

**The Chief Electoral Officer**

Northern Ireland

## Purpose

1. The fee payable by eligible purchasers of the marked register of electors and marked postal vote list for all elections in England and Wales and UK Parliamentary elections in Scotland has changed. This change follows a UK Government consultation of electoral participants and electoral administrators. This circular indicates the new structure of fees and includes an attachment of replacement pages for our electoral registration guidance manual.
2. The new fee structure comes into effect today, 18 July 2008<sup>1</sup>. It applies to all requests for marked registers received on or after this date from any relevant election in the past or in the future. Therefore copies of marked registers and lists for the 1 May 2008 election ordered today are now to be charged at the new lower rate. The legislation does not apply retrospectively to copies of these marked registers or lists purchased before 18 July 2008.
3. Fees for the sale of the full register to credit reference agencies and government departments and the sale of the edited register are unchanged.

## The new fee structure

4. Applications for copies of the marked registers and lists, showing those who voted in person or returned their postal vote statement at an election, must be accompanied by the correct fee.
5. The new fees are as follows:
  - Paper version: £10 plus £2 for every 1000 entries or part thereof
  - Data version: £10 plus £1 for every 1000 entries or part thereof
6. These fees are for applications for documents which are made from 18 July 2008 onwards. Any copy of marked registers and lists purchased before this date were supplied according to the fee structure in place at that time. Therefore those who have purchased copies of these documents before 18 July cannot be refunded the difference in fee levels.
7. This fee structure applies to all election types in England and Wales. In Scotland, this fee structure applies only to UK Parliamentary elections.
8. It remains the case that for Scottish Parliamentary elections, copies of, or extracts from, documents that are open for public inspection after an election may be requested from the relevant Sheriff Clerk on payment of such fees and subject to such conditions as may be sanctioned by the Treasury.
9. We understand that the Scotland Office intends to review the Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2007 (as amended) later this year and as part of this review intend bringing the fees into line with the new fee structure for UK Parliamentary elections.
10. This circular does not apply to marked registers at Scottish local government elections.

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<sup>1</sup> The Representation of the People (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

## Replacement pages for electoral registration guidance manual

11. To ensure that our electoral registration guidance manual is accurate we have produced new pages to reflect the new fee structure. Please find these attached to this circular. These are also available to download from our website. Please note the new [website address for the registration manual](#) which also includes the new address for the index (as referred to in EC18/2008).
12. Please print the page and replace the current corresponding page in your manual.

## Contact

For any further questions, please contact the appropriate Commission office:

### **Scotland Office**

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South West

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This circular was approved by Karen Quintmere, Head of Electoral Administration.



# Walsall Council

## Engineering & Transportation

Your Ref:  
Our Ref: SPP/JAK  
Date: 22/12/2008  
Please Ask For: Steve Pretty  
Direct Line: 01922 652598  
Fax No: 01922 623234  
Email: prettys@walsall.gov.uk

Cllr.

Dear Councillor,

### **Constantly flooding drains within your Ward**

We are currently in discussions with Tarmac to become our partner in the delivery of the Highway Maintenance Service. Tarmac will be bringing their expertise in highway maintenance to the Council and a number of areas have been highlighted where efficiencies can be introduced. One of those areas is gully cleansing.

For clarification I must state that the Council is only responsible for gully cleansings and a very small number of highway sewers. Flooding caused by overflowing sewers is in the majority of instances the responsibility of Severn Trent. We are communicating with Severn Trent on their maintenance regime in a number of locations where we have persistent problems with flooding.

Due to consistent budget cuts for gully cleansing and climate change whereby we are experiencing more frequent and heavier rainfalls problems with gullies are becoming more prevalent. To give you a greater understanding of the problem we are facing a few years ago the budget was sufficient to clean every gulley on a three monthly cycle, the cycle is now every 18 months. In addition to this we know of a number of 'hot spot' where the gully vehicles are directed to them in the first instance to ensure that the network is kept open to road users.

Can you therefore let Marion Parry, Senior Engineer, Roadworks Management know on 01922 653781 of any hot spots within your Ward so that these can be checked and added to a list being compiled.

The programme for the commencement of the contract with Tarmac is March 2009 and there will be discussions with them during the first month to work out a more efficient way of dealing with gully cleansing.

Your assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated in clearing up these problem areas.

Yours sincerely

**S. P. Pretty**  
**Head of Engineering & Transportation**

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