



# Walsall Council

**AMENDED** Minutes of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the Council of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough held on **Wednesday 30 July, 2025, at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

## Present

### Councillor L. Harrison (Mayor) in the Chair

#### Councillors:

A. Andrew	K. Margetts
B. Bains	R. K Mehmi
H. Bashir	E. Morgan
M.A. Bird	J. Murray
C. Bott	L. Nahal
P. Bott	S. Nasreen
R. Burley	A.A. Nawaz
S. Cheema	A. Parkes
S.J. Cooper	K. Pedley
M. Coulson	W. Rasab
S. Elson	L.J. Rattigan
K. Ferguson	E. Russell
G. Flint	S. Samra
M. Follows	K. Sears
A. Garcha	G. Singh Sohal
P. Gill	P. Smith
A.J. Hicken	C.A. Statham
A. Hussain	M.A. Statham
I. Hussain	V.J. Waters
T. Jukes	J. Whitehouse
R. Larden	T. Wilson

#### 24. **Apologies**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Ditta, K. Hussain, Perry, Murphy, Martin, Towe, Ward, Lee, Gandham, Harris, Ali, S. Hussain, Kaur, Gultasib, Latham, Hassan and Chapman.

25. **Minutes**

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 19 May, 2025 and Extra Ordinary meeting held on 10 June, 2025, a copy having been sent to each member of the Council, be approved as a correct record subject to the following amendment:-

- Correct the name of the Mayor's chosen charity to 'The Local Hub (Bloxwich West),'

26. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

27. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)**

**Resolved**

There were no items in private session.

28. **Mayor's announcements**

**Death of John O'Hare**

The Mayor referred to the death of former member, Mr John O'Hare, who served as a Member of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council from October 1988 to March 2011. Mr O'Hare served as Leader of the Council from 2007 to 2009 and Mayor from 2009 to 2010. Councillors Bird, Smith, Margetts, Murray, Jukes, Nawaz, Andrew and Wilson paid tribute to former Councillor John O'Hare, following which it was moved by the Mayor, duly seconded and:

**Resolved:**

That this Council have heard with deep regret of the death of former Councillor John O'Hare, a member of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council from October 1988 to March 2011 and places on record their appreciation of his services to the borough and expresses its condolences to his family at this sad time.

29. **Petitions**

**Received from:**

**Councillor I. Hussain** – Local petition for the lollypop lady at the Butts Crossing.

**Councillor Wilson** – Retain the flying of model aircrafts at Aldridge Airport.

30. **Questions**

(a) From the public: None.

(b) From members of the Council:

**Councillor Smith**

Having received several complaints over a period of time about some shops & traders (especially in our town centres) who expand the display of their goods for sale on to footpaths and pedestrianised walk ways outside their shops, can I ask the appropriate Portfolio holder to respond to the three sub sections of my question (a,b,c) with regard to this growing practice:

- a) Is the Council aware of this issue and practice by some shop keepers/traders?
- b) Does the Council have a “policy” with regard to this practice? If not, should it have?
- c) If the Council has a policy on this, how does it or will it, go about encouraging compliance and if necessary, enforcement of its policy?

**Councillor Hicken** gave the following response:

The council is aware of the issues described.

As I am sure you are aware a great many businesses have over the years laid their products outside the front of their shop to attract passers-by.

It is understandable that following economic difficulties in the post covid world that businesses are trying different methods to encourage shoppers to spend money with them. A vibrant economy is something we all wish to see for Walsall but clearly this should not be at the cost of public safety.

The issue described is generally one of the public highway being obstructed and pursuant to section 137 of the Highways Act 1980:

*If a person, without lawful authority or excuse in any way wilfully obstructs the free passage along the highway, he is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding £1000.*

There is a code of practice with regard to ‘Shop Displays and A Boards on the Highway’ and as part of the process of prioritisation the code of practice will be reviewed to ensure it is still appropriate and is useful as part of the management of our towns and shopping centres and most importantly aids in the enforcement process..

Since approximately October 2024 the community protection team have identified eleven regular and repeat offenders in Walsall Town Centre and initiated action to reduce or negate the impact of their activities. All premises were dealt with using the standard enforcement approach enshrined in the services enforcement policy. That is to say visits were made where verbal advice was given, this was followed by written warnings and finally escalated to legal enforcement notices issued by the council under the Highways Act 1980.

Many of the businesses complied with the notices - that is not to say they do not exhibit their products at all, but they have largely complied with allowing free passage along the highway. All businesses but particularly those who push the limits of acceptability are routinely monitored to ensure the matter doesn't deteriorate again.

We are aware that there are other sites in the borough where these issues occur and the process used in the Town Centre can be rolled out to those sites too.

As part of a review of enforcement functions across the council the level of priority and resource given to issues such as this compared to for example unauthorised encampments, fly tipping, litter or anti-social behaviour is being considered so that Walsall is a safe, vibrant and clean place for residents to live.

**Councillor Smith** asked the following supplementary:

If someone who is visually impaired, falls over the stuff that is stocked outside the shops and has an accident, who is responsible / legally viable, the Council or the shop keeper?

**Councillor Hicken** gave the following response:

If you have had report of this, or any members of the public have experiences this, I urge you to get in touch. I will take legal advice and get back to you in writing.

**Councillor Cheema**

Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the rollout of electric vehicle charging points across the borough, including: how many charging points have been installed to date; any available statistics on their usage; and the income generated from these charging points over the past 12 months?

**Councillor Andrew** gave the following response:

We know there is a big opportunity to provide electric vehicle charge points on our streets and in our car parks and parking bays. The council

has an Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy in place, setting out ambitious targets for 2030.

So far, 14 electric vehicle charge point sockets have been installed at 7 locations as part of the on-street residential charge point scheme.

Usage data is currently available for 6 of these sockets, which have been operational since September 2024. The early signs are encouraging. These chargers are averaging around 4 charging sessions per week, and usage is steadily increasing.

At present, we don't yet have usage data for the 8 most recently installed sockets, as they only went live on 4 July. However, experience shows that as the number of charge points grows, overall usage increases significantly. We're also seeing a steady flow of requests through the Black Country Charge Point Suggestion Tool from Walsall residents. This clearly indicates strong and growing demand for on-street electric vehicle charging for households without off-street parking and we want to make sure we can continue to meet this need.

Of course, there are practical challenges. Some residents have raised concerns about charge point locations and the use of street space. These are real issues, and we are working carefully to address them through engagement and careful site selection.

The West Midlands Combined Authority is playing a key role in supporting regional EV infrastructure through funding and strategy. While there have been some challenges, the responsibility for creating a comprehensive charging network is shared between local councils, regional bodies, and the private sector.

National planning regulations have also changed so that most new homes and major developments must now include EV charging points as standard. Over time, this will make a big difference by reducing pressure on on-street charging. We're already seeing this within the borough. For example, at the new affordable housing development in Bloxwich, which includes EV charging as part of the scheme.

The private sector is also investing heavily in EV charging across the country, with supermarkets, petrol retailers, and specialist companies installing rapid chargers to meet growing demand. We want Walsall to benefit from these developments alongside our own plans.

What's clear is that delivering a reliable and accessible EV charging network will require partnership between the public sector, private operators, developers, and local communities. Together, we can make sure Walsall is ready for the EV transition.

By 2026, we aim to deliver 250 standard on street EV charging sockets, 10 rapid EV charging sockets, 20 EV charging sockets across Council

owned car parks, 10 charge points across broad Council facilities and 10 charging sockets at pay and display bays.

**Councillor Cheema** asked the following supplementary:

Is there an appetite for this Council to look at different ways to bring in EV charging, such as using lampposts?

**Councillor Andrew** gave the following response:

Yes.

**Councillor Coulson**

The former Bloxwich Hospital site continues to hold significant importance for the local community. Although it no longer operates as a hospital, it is evident that a new purpose for the premises must be identified. Correspondence and conversations with residents have made it clear that there are strong opinions regarding its future use.

I would like to express my appreciation to Councillor Flint for his assistance with my inquiries on this matter. Nonetheless, considerable concerns persist about what lies ahead for the site, which brings me to my question this evening:

Could you please confirm who currently owns the site and advise what information Walsall Council holds concerning any future plans for the Bloxwich Hospital site?

**Councillor Andrew** gave the following response:

Thank you for your question, which gives the opportunity to highlight it isn't just this Council that needs to communicate with the public.

The building of the former Bloxwich Hospital site is still owned by the NHS Trust.

The sale of the site is part of an agreement that allowed the Trust to secure funding for the new Older Peoples' Inpatient Unit at Dorothy Pattison Hospital. A formal decision was only taken by the Trust Board (in private) earlier this month (June 2025) to dispose of the site.

There are no existing planning permissions for the site and no live planning applications under assessment by the Local Planning Authority for an alternative use. The Trust, after interventions with officers, myself and Councillor Flint, are committed to ensuring that any future use of the site aligns with the needs of our community and are working closely with us now to support the disposal and deliver a scheme that will need local need. Any forthcoming proposal will be subject to a planning application and associated formal statutory consultation process.

In the interim, the Trust are carrying out works on site currently to secure the building and grounds and prevent any unauthorised activity whilst it is unoccupied.

A really important point here is that other public organisations that own public property in this borough, need to ensure that they are secure and are not causing a problem to the communities we represent and other parts of the public sector, resulting in enforcement action.

I have contacted the Chief Executive of the Health Trust about their responsibilities as a public sector organisation, to the people we represent.

### **Councillor Cheema**

Businesses in Walsall are increasingly concerned about the lack of economic growth and support, with recent figures showing the town is performing below average on nearly every economic indicator. In Willenhall, ongoing roadworks are further impacting local trade. Can the portfolio holder set out what targeted support is being offered to help affected businesses—particularly in Willenhall—and what wider measures the council is taking to stimulate and sustain local economic recovery across Walsall?

**Councillor Andrew** gave the following response:

Thank you for your question, it gives me an opportunity to tell you what we are doing to help businesses across the borough.

We to engage directly with businesses affected by road closures to understand their needs and provide tailored support. This includes practical guidance, access to funding opportunities, and promotional assistance to help mitigate disruption.

Beyond this, the Council has delivered a wide-ranging and impactful programme of business support and engagement, including:

#### Direct Business Engagement

- Held over 750 businesses engagements across the borough over the past three years, offering tailored advice and support resulting in outcomes such as increased investment, turnover, and employment growth.
- Provided dedicated one-to-one assistance through business-facing officers, with a focus on growth, workforce expansion, and navigating challenges.
- Delivered over 14 days of direct outreach engagement in industrial areas of Aldridge, Walsall, Willenhall and Darlaston.

## Business Grants and Financial Support

- Distributed over £1.36 million in grants during 2023/24 and 2024/25 to support business resilience, innovation, and recovery.
- Built on the earlier £720,000 AIM for GOLD programme (2022/23), bringing total direct business grant funding to over £2 million in three years.
- Secured and is deploying an additional £500,000 from the WMCA to support local growth, job creation, and business process adaptation in the current financial year.
- Supported businesses in accessing external funding, including regional and national schemes focused on sustainability, innovation, and digital transformation.

## Events and Recognition

- Hosted the Walsall Business Awards at Calderfields Golf Club, celebrating enterprise and recognising contributions to the borough's economic growth.
- Delivered a WMCA Business Road Show at Bescot Stadium, connecting local businesses with regional funders, advisors, and support services.
- Partnered with Business Insider to host the Midlands Property Lunch: Revitalising the High Street at Walsall College (July 2025), bringing together regional leaders to explore town centre transformation.
- Delivered themed business workshops, including a recent session on AI and digitisation, with future events planned on sustainability, funding, and innovation.

## Business Support Programmes

- Delivered a suite of tailored programmes, including:
  - Start-Up Walsall – supported over 80 new entrepreneurs with mentoring, workshops, and access to finance.
  - High Growth Business Support – helping established businesses scale through strategic planning and investment readiness advice.
  - Walsall Works – providing recruitment support, apprenticeships, and workforce development services.
- Promoted and facilitated access to regionally delivered programmes via WMCA and Business Growth West Midlands, such as:

- Business Energy Advice Service (BEAS)
- Export Support Programme
- AI Maturity Assessment
- Skills for Growth
- Peer-to-Peer Groups

#### Strategic Partnerships and Investment

- The Walsall Economic Forum continues to play a central role in strengthening collaboration between the Council and the business community.
- Worked with the WMCA, Walsall Economic Forum, and local partners to align business support with regional strategies and contribute to the emerging Walsall Growth Plan and West Midlands growth plan.
- Initiated work on the Black Country Innovation Strategy, aimed at improving access to public funding for businesses engaged in research, development and innovation.

**Councillor Cheema** asked the following supplementary:

Thank you for your very thorough reply. However, speaking to the businesses on the ground, as I do on a weekly basis, this is not being felt by them. One business I have spoken with have lost £250,000 due to roadworks from the cycle lane.

Will you meet with me and affected business to discuss further how this Council can support them?

**Councillor Andrew** gave the following response:

I am happy to meet with you, but will you get the Government Minister there too, to defend their actions and what they have done to businesses over the last 12 months?

#### **Councillor Coulson**

Fly tipping continues to blight areas of Bloxwich, and other parts of Walsall, but getting the evidence to prosecute the awful people who carry out these offences is not easy. CCTV seems to be the most effective weapon in the battle against these people, but there is a particular part of my ward where I can't understand how it is not met the threshold for getting a CCTV camera to target fly tippers, for at least a few weeks.

Can I be given the statistics for how many CCTV cameras are in each ward in Walsall, specifically targeting fly tipping?

**Councillor Hicken** gave the following response:

Fly tipping is an absolute scourge on our communities and a significant cost to the council and indeed any landowner who has had material fly tipped on their land, because of costs incurred cleaning it up. It is something that harms our area and that residents do not want to see and is an absolute menace. So, any effort to try and tackle fly tipping has my full support.

CCTV whether council, private or from a partner agency is certainly a key component in the councils bid to tackle fly tipping and other waste crimes. It is also important that everyone in Walsall remains vigilant and where they have information or evidence of someone who has fly tipped or a fly tipping 'hot spot' to come forward to council staff to make them aware.

We are constantly reviewing our use of CCTV and enforcement policies, and I would urge every member to report fly tipping.

I am not going to go into details with numbers, as some of the cameras are covert and I do not want to give the game away. However, I am willing to have the conversation with you, or any Councillor, if there is a hot spot. We need to make sure that the best cameras are in the right locations and have the best capabilities. This is something we are working on going forward.

If you know of any hot spots that do need additional surveillance, please let us know.

**Councillor Coulson** asked the following supplementary:

As you cannot give us an idea on the ward breakdown of cameras, can you share the total number of cameras in Walsall, targeted towards fly tipping.

**Councillor Hicken** gave the following response:

There are around 200 CCTV cameras. Some get deployed every so often, whilst some get redeployed regularly. They are redeployed based on what we believe is the priority in specific areas at the time.

**Councillor Smith**

I am sure that all Members of the Council recognise that volunteer litter pickers such as the "Bloxwich Busters" and many other groups and individuals across the Borough are doing a sterling job in helping to keep our streets clear of litter and fly tipped rubbish. However, I have gauged from speaking to some of them that the feeling is that litter dropping and fly tripping is actually getting worse and not better.

Given the above, can the Portfolio holder inform me, this Council, the volunteer litter pickers and the general public, whether

- a) he is satisfied with Walsall Council's record of enforcement action regarding fly tipping and litter dropping, and
- b) if he will commit to further increasing preventative and enforcement efforts and action so that Councillors, the litter pickers, the fly tippers and the general public can see much more evidence that the Council "means business" when it comes to enforcement action against the anti-social litter louts and fly tippers who are a scourge on our local environment and neighbourhoods.

**Councillor Hicken** gave the following response:

Thank you, Councillor Smith, for your question. I really value the work of our litter pickers and have for many years. I have been out on numerous occasions, as many have, with their community litter pickers. They do sterling work and care about their communities, which is an absolute delight to me.

I am unable to give full details at the moment, but I can assure you that enforcement will increase across a range of areas. Between June 2022 and May 2025, we have issued 2,131 fixed penalty notices (FPN's). We did a trial, which doubled the rate of FPN's being issued. We are taking that forward as part of a review and are aiming to fine more of the people who ruin our neighbourhoods.

So, in answer to your specific questions the litter pickers, street cleansing staff and enforcement staff have worked incredibly hard to ensure we have a clean and green borough. The number of enforcement actions is increasing, and I am absolutely committed to ensuring this trend continues at pace.

I am not satisfied that despite our best endeavours residents, businesses and visitors to the town still feel they are able to litter and fly tip at will and so we will take more enforcement action to drive the message home that being irresponsible with your waste is totally unacceptable in this borough and will be met with punishment. As the leader previously said, "we are putting the force back in enforcement." Education is a part of this, and we will continue to enforce preventative measures. However, some people cannot be educated and need to feel it where it hurts, which is usually their pocket.

I am happy to meet with any litter pickers, having already met with some, and if you have any further issues to bring to my attention, I am happy to meet with you as well.

## **Councillor Smith**

Given that The Express & Star reported on July 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 that on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, and I quote:

“West Midlands Police teamed with Walsall Council's Trading Standards team to seize around £365,000 of tobacco products from retail premises around the borough.

Walsall Neighbourhood teams supported the Trading Standards-led operation on Wednesday, July 2, where four retail premises, a vehicle and a storage unit were all raided.

The operation uncovered approximately 100 kilograms of illegal hand-rolling tobacco, 287,000 illicit cigarette, and 350 illegal disposable vapes worth £365,000.

Some of the counterfeit cigarettes were even found to be concealed inside boxes labelled as barbecues. Sergeant David Woods, from the West Midlands Police St Matthew's Team 2, said: "It is great to support our partners at Walsall Council Trading Standards, and this operation was a huge success as a large amount of illegal goods were taken off our streets". unquote,

I would like the Portfolio to inform me, this Council and the general public what happened next that seems not to have been reported? And in particular:

- a) Are these businesses on these premises still trading?
- b) Have criminal proceedings been taken against the owners of these businesses? and
- c) Why has the Council so far not named the premises raided in order that the public can make more informative choices about whether or not to patronise these businesses in future?

**Councillor Hicken** gave the following response:

Walsall Council Trading Standards team are incredibly active in the disruption of the illicit tobacco trade and the removal of illegal or dangerous vapes from the marketplace.

The team work with HMRC, Immigration, professional sniffer dog services and Walsall Police to ensure each organised raid is as successful as possible as well as carrying out surveillance and disruption as they conduct their own day to day visits. Much of the work is extremely discreetly organised so as not to 'tip off' the criminals involved in the sale of these products.

All visits are organised based on the intelligence received from partner agencies, residents and other businesses. Intelligence from national agencies which identifies new techniques used to hide illegal products as they are smuggled into the country and across the region is shared via a network of professional operating groups within the Trading Standards profession of which Walsall is a key member.

To answer the questions posed:

1. Many of the businesses will continue to trade after a visit by the service as there are very few legal remedies to close premises down. Those remedies that do exist allow closure for a maximum period of three months following a court hearing. The service regularly reviews whether this is an appropriate course of action as well as considering reviews for those premises that may have a premises licence issued under the Licensing Act 2003. The service has had some success in convincing the landlords of these premises to terminate their lease and remove the trader from their premises.

2. The service operates on two levels:-

A. Disruption - whereby the intention is solely to remove as much illegal stock as possible to dent the profits of organised crime groups and traders and gather intelligence. It is unlikely a trader caught selling illicit tobacco would be fined in the region of £300,000 but losing that amount of stock would be significant to them.

B. Prosecution - where products are seized and evidence that meets the criminal threshold for action is gathered then the service will always seek to prosecute. To bring a criminal case to court can take over 12 months depending on the cooperation of the defendant and the availability of the Courts themselves, therefore any cases from the last few weeks will still be in the process of evidence preparation.

The most recent prosecutions include a resident of Marigold Crescent, Dudley, was sentenced following a jury trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court to 44 weeks in prison. There were also prosecutions in Walsall town centre, Darlaston and Pelsall.

Several other cases are currently being prepared for court and results will be published once a verdict is reached.

In terms of naming and shaming businesses or individuals the service must ensure the legal process is followed correctly and there is no complaint of adverse publicity prejudicing the outcome of a case the details are treated discreetly until a court verdict is reached in open court.

It is understandable that people would wish to know if premises are acting unlawfully and we hope by publicising the results of seizures it will make people think twice about purchasing illegal products and to ensure their

children are not purchasing illegal products underage restrictions from any shop they visit.

When I became aware of the seizure you referred to, of goods worth £365,000, I ensured this was publicised by the communications team. I believe it is important we do publicise incidents like this, as it gives residents the confidence that we are doing the right thing by them. We should be proud that this work is taking place to keep the borough safer, as Councillors, but equally so should residents, that we are doing the right thing.

In terms of the court cases, one of the issues we are having is the time it is taking for these incidents to appear in court, you may be looking at several years. We need to see quicker action in that area.

**Councillor Smith** asked the following supplementary:

Is it possible that innocent customers may be using these very premises to buy these sorts of products, or other products, at this very moment?

**Councillor Hicken** gave the following response:

We are limited by legal powers, but I will send you the full brief. There are incidences where we do speak with landlords, and it is unlikely that landlords would want their tenants selling illegal goods.

31. **Senior Management Restructure**

A report was submitted [annexed].

**Resolved**

That the changes to the senior structure, as set out in the report, be noted.

32. **Pay and Grading**

A report was submitted [annexed].

It was **moved** by Councillor Bird, seconded by Councillor Andrew and:

**Resolved:**

3.1 That overlapping grades between Spinal Column Point (SCP) 002 Grade 1 and SCP 058 Grade 14 within the National Joint Council for Local Government Terms and Conditions (NJC) pay spine are removed.

3.2 That a Head of Service Grade is created between SCP 059 to SCP 063 replacing the previously locally agreed SCP values with new ones and to a consistent 5-point scale. The bottom value and the top value are the same as the existing SCP 059 and SCP 062.

3.3 That a new grade for Deputy Director is created with new locally agreed points of SCP 064 to SCP 068 on the NJC pay spine. The role of Deputy Director is a new role created as part of the Senior Management Review.

3.4 Noting that the creation of the Deputy Director grade has changed the upper limit of the NJC scale therefore it is necessary to create a new salary range for Directors on the Joint National Council for Chief Officers pay spine.

3.5 That the new pay scales are introduced from 1st October 2025 and when the senior management review is completed that G15 and G16 are removed from the NJC pay spine and that the existing directors pay range is removed from the JNC pay spine.

3.6 That the allowances paid to the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer are removed from these posts. Given the removal of allowances paid to statutory officers it is recommended that the Director of Finance and Procurement is placed at the top of the new Director scale. The Monitoring Officer post is not currently filled by a permanent postholder, so no one is affected.

3.7 That the Director of HR, OD and ABS (in consultation with the Head of Paid Service) is delegated authority to make changes to the current Pay Policy Statement and other related policies in line with changes being made to the pay and grading structure to deliver an efficient and smooth transition to the new arrangements.

**Upon the conclusion of the item and with the consent of Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7.43 p.m.**

**The meeting re-convened at 7.51 p.m.**

### **33. Scrutiny Annual Report**

The Scrutiny Annual Report was presented to Council.

Councillor Murray highlighted the work of Democratic Services for their support during the year. Councillor Murray informed Members of a Scrutiny training session on 16 July, 2024, and welcomed all Members to attend.

It was **moved** by Councillor Murray, seconded by Councillor Bird and:

#### **Resolved**

That the Scrutiny Annual Report be noted.

#### 34. **Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report**

The Scrutiny Annual Report was presented to Council.

Councillor Rattigan congratulated the Officers, Children's Services partner teams, Senior Leaders, including political and corporate leaders, Members on Children's Services, the Corporate Parenting Board, Education and Overview scrutiny's, children in care and care leavers, involved in the successful Ofsted result of 'Overall Outstanding' for Children's Services. Councillor Rattigan referred to the achievements of the Corporate Parenting Board, providing a summary of the report, and requested that all Members, as Corporate Parents, attend Total Respect Training

It was **moved** by Councillor Rattigan, seconded by Councillor Bird and:

##### **Resolved**

That the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report be noted.

#### 35. **Outside Body Appointments**

A report was submitted [annexed].

It was **moved** by Councillor Bird, seconded by Councillor Andrew and:

##### **Resolved that:-**

Councillor I. Hussain be appointed the substitute member on the West Midlands Combined Authority – Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor W. Rasab be appointed the substitute member on the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor G. Flint be appointed the member to the Black Country NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor A. Andrew be appointed the member to Sherbourne Recycling Ltd.

Councillor T. Jukes be appointed as the member to the Walsall Society for the Blind.

##### **Council noted the:**

Disestablishment of the following Boards by the West Midlands Combined Authority: -

- Economic Growth Board
- Environment & Energy Board

- Housing & Land Delivery Board
- Wellbeing Board
- West Midlands Combined Authority Investment Zone Joint Committee

36. **Appointment to Committees**

A report was submitted [annexed].

The Mayor advised that the nomination to the Health and Wellbeing Board was no longer required as the original nomination stood.

It was **moved** by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bird and:

**Resolved that:-**

Councillor Jukes be appointed Vice-Chair of Corporate Parent Board.

Councillor Ward be appointed to the Planning Committee.

Councillor Rattigan be appointed to Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

37. **Recommendations from the Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE)**

A report was submitted [annexed].

It was **moved** by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Bird and:

**Resolved:**

2.1 That Mr J. Hart be appointed to SACRE to fill the vacancy for the Jewish faith.

2.2 That Mrs R. Rai be appointed to SACRE as a replacement for Mr J. Singh Bachra on behalf of the Sikh faith.

2.3 That Council delegate authority to the Director – Access & Inclusion, to make appointments to SACRE for Groups A, B and C.

38. To confirm the following recommendations of **Cabinet**:

a. **Treasury management Annual Report**

The report to Cabinet held on 16 July, 2025 was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Bird, seconded by Councillor Andrew and:

**Resolved**

That in line with the requirements of the Treasury Management Code of Practice (2021)), the Annual Treasury Management Report 2024/25 including prudential and local indicators (Appendix A) be noted.

**39. Portfolio Holder and Outside Body briefings**

**a. Leader of the Council**

Councillor Bird gave a presentation.

Members asked questions in relation to the presentation which were responded to by Councillor Bird.

**b. West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Councillor Waters**

Councillor Waters gave a presentation.

Members asked questions in relation to the presentation which were responded to by Councillor Waters.

**40. Notice of Motion – Victory in Japan Day (VJ Day)**

The following notice of motion was **moved** by Councillor M. Statham and seconded by Councillor Hicken that:-

This Council notes that 15 August 2025 marks the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) signifying the end of the Second World War and the final chapter of one of the most challenging periods in modern history.

This Council recognises the immense sacrifice, endurance, and courage of the Armed Forces personnel, including those who served in the Far East campaign, and acknowledges the suffering and resilience of prisoners of war and civilians affected by the conflict.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VJ Day with appropriate commemorative events within the community, in collaboration with local veterans' association, community organisation, and schools.
2. Encourage reflection, remembrance, and education about the contributions of all those who served, ensuring that the legacy of VJ Day continues to be recognised by future generations.

3. Express its gratitude and deep respect to all those who contributed to the conclusion of the Second World War and reaffirm our commitment to peace and international cooperation.

**The following Amendment** was moved by Councillor Nawaz (additional wording in bold), and seconded by Councillor Smith that:-

This Council notes that 15 August 2025 marks the 80th Anniversary of Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) signifying the end of the Second World War and the final chapter of one of the most challenging periods in modern history.

This Council recognises the immense sacrifice, endurance, and courage of the Armed Forces personnel, ~~including~~ **particularly** those who served in the Far East campaign, **including those from the commonwealth countries that made up the British Empire at the time**, and acknowledges the suffering and resilience of prisoners of war and civilians affected by the conflict.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Mark the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day with appropriate commemorative events within **our diverse** ~~the~~ communities, in collaboration with local veterans' association, community organisation, and schools.
2. Encourage reflection, remembrance, and education about the contributions of all those who served, ensuring that the legacy of VJ Day continues to be recognised by future generations.
3. Express its gratitude and deep respect to all those who contributed to the conclusion of the Second World War and reaffirm our commitment to peace and international cooperation.

On being put to the vote, **the amendment** was declared **lost** (14 in favour and 16 against)

**The following Amendment** was moved by Councillor Andrew (additional wording in bold), and seconded by Councillor Bird that:-

This Council notes that 15 August 2025 marks the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) signifying the end of the Second World War and the final chapter of one of the most challenging periods in modern history.

This Council recognises the immense sacrifice, endurance, and courage of the Armed Forces personnel, **particularly** those who served in the Far East campaign, **including those from the commonwealth countries that made up the British Empire at the time**, and acknowledges the suffering and resilience of prisoners of war and civilians affected by the conflict.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VJ Day with appropriate commemorative events within the community, in collaboration with local veterans' association, community organisation, and schools.
2. Encourage reflection, remembrance, and education about the contributions of all those who served, ensuring that the legacy of VJ Day continues to be recognised by future generations.
3. Express its gratitude and deep respect to all those who contributed to the conclusion of the Second World War and reaffirm our commitment to peace and international cooperation.

On being put to the vote, **the amendment** was declared **carried**.

There being no further amendments, the Mayor put the **substantive motion** to the vote which was declared **carried**.

**Resolved that:-**

This Council notes that 15 August 2025 marks the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) signifying the end of the Second World War and the final chapter of one of the most challenging periods in modern history.

This Council recognises the immense sacrifice, endurance, and courage of the Armed Forces personnel, particularly those who served in the Far East campaign, including those from the commonwealth countries that made up the British Empire at the time, and acknowledges the suffering and resilience of prisoners of war and civilians affected by the conflict.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VJ Day with appropriate commemorative events within the community, in collaboration with local veterans' association, community organisation, and schools.
2. Encourage reflection, remembrance, and education about the contributions of all those who served, ensuring that the legacy of VJ Day continues to be recognised by future generations.
3. Express its gratitude and deep respect to all those who contributed to the conclusion of the Second World War and reaffirm our commitment to peace and international cooperation.

41. **Notice of Motion – Planning Committee**

The following notice of motion was **moved** by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Nawaz that:-

This Council supports and upholds the general principle that “Officers recommend and Elected Members decide” with regard to reports before Council and Committees both generally and particularly with regard to Planning applications that come before the Planning Committee and this Council furthermore rejects any suggestion, insinuation or innuendo that members of the Planning Committee are anything less than “beyond reproach” when they vote on planning applications before them.

**The following Amendment** was moved by Councillor Bird (additional wording in bold), and seconded by Councillor Andrew that:-

This Council supports and upholds the general principle that “Officer recommend and Elected Members decide” with regard to Reports before Council and Committees both generally and particularly with regard to Planning applications that come before the Planning Committee and this Council **commends the Planning Committee members for supporting the democratic process of decision making and their duty to challenge officers recommendations in support of the residents and communities who elect them as their representatives. We also welcome the Peer Review which we look forward to debating its content in the near future, ~~furthermore rejects any suggestion, insinuation or innuendo that members of the Planning committee are anything less than “beyond reproach” when they vote on Planning applications before them.~~**

On being put to the vote, **the amendment** was declared **carried**.

There being no further amendments, the Mayor put the **substantive motion** to the vote which was declared **carried**.

**Resolved:-**

This Council supports and upholds the general principle that “Officer recommend and Elected Members decide” with regard to Reports before Council and Committees both generally and particularly with regard to Planning applications that come before the Planning Committee and this Council commends the Planning Committee members for supporting the democratic process of decision making and their duty to challenge officers recommendations in support of the residents and communities who elect them as their representatives. We also welcome the Peer Review which we look forward to debating its content in the near future.

The meeting terminated at 9.36 p.m.

Mayor:

Date: