



Walsall Council

Minutes of the **MEETING** of the Council of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough held on **Monday 22nd September 2014 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House.

Present

Councillor P.E. Smith (Mayor) in the Chair

Councillor A. Underhill (Deputy Mayor)

“ A.J.A. Andrew
“ M. Arif
“ D.J. Barker
“ O.D. Bennett
“ M.A. Bird
“ C. Bott
“ P. Bott
“ R. Burley
“ B. Cassidy
“ K. Chambers
“ A.G. Clarke
“ C.E. Clews
“ D. Coughlan
“ S.P. Coughlan
“ S.R. Craddock
“ C.U. Creaney
“ A. Ditta
“ B.A. Douglas-Maul
“ J. Fitzpatrick
“ S.F. Fitzpatrick
“ A.D. Harris
“ L.A. Harrison
“ D.T. Hazell
“ E.A. Hazell
“ K. Hussain
“ G. Illmann-Walker
“ D. James

Councillor L.D. Jeavons

“ C. Jones
“ T.J. Jukes
“ P. Lane
“ M. Longhi
“ Mrs. R.A. Martin
“ J. Murray
“ A.A. Nawaz
“ M. Nazir
“ G. Perry
“ K. Phillips
“ L.J. Rattigan
“ I.C. Robertson
“ J. Rochelle
“ E.B. Russell
“ H.S. Sarohi
“ K. Sears
“ Mrs. D.A. Shires
“ I. Shires
“ G.S. Sohal
“ C.D.D. Towe
“ S. Wade
“ F.J. Westley
“ V. Whyte
“ T.S. Wilson
“ R.V. Worrall
“ A. Young

32. **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Anson, Flower, Hughes and McCracken.

33. **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meetings held on 16th June, 24th June and 11th August 2014 copies having been sent to each member of the Council, be approved as correct records and signed

34. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

35. **Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985**

There were no items to be considered in private session.

36. **Mayor's announcements**

(a) **"At home" events**

The Mayor reminded members to respond to invitations to the "At home" events in October.

(b) **New administration**

The Mayor wished the new controlling group well in making the right decisions for Walsall Council in the foreseeable future.

He also took the opportunity, the first since the political changeover, to thank the previous administration, particularly the Leader Councillor Mike Bird for their hard work up until August this year.

Irrespective of party political differences his observation of the last few years was that Walsall Council had a Leader who worked exceptionally hard to minimise the effect of Government cuts not only on jobs but front line services, Council tax and even to the point of avoiding passing on £3 million of Council tax to some of those already amongst the lowest income recipients.

He said that Councillor Bird worked tirelessly and made himself available, in his experience, up to 18 hours a day. He was contactable wherever he was and his responses were quick to follow and sometimes immediate.

In that sense, he would be a hard act to follow and the Mayor wished Councillor Coughlan well in doing so.

(c) **Councillor S. Coughlan**

The Mayor called upon Councillor S. Coughlan who made the following personal statement:

“I previously raised an issue before Council on the 18th November 2013 in respect of my brother’s police record and Councillor Arif. This matter has been investigated by the Monitoring Officer and whilst there is no breach of the Council code of conduct, I accept that I should not have raised this matter in full Council and apologise to Council for doing so and assure the Council that I will raise the issue in the right place through the right processes following tonight’s meeting.”

37. **Petitions**

The following petitions were submitted:

- (1) Councillor Lane - stop the parking on the entrance/exit to Chepstow Estate.
- (2) Councillor S. Coughlan - re-instate the public toilets in Willenhall town.
- (3) Councillor Robertson - anti-social behaviour around the public right of way between New Forest Road and Wenlock Gardens, Blakenall.
- (4) Councillor Craddock - compulsory purchase Ravenscourt shopping area with a view to re-develop.
- (5) Councillor Martin - planning application - 1 Woodside Close, Walsall – proposed demolition of existing shops and construction of 14 flats.
- (6) Councillor Longhi - weekend access to GP and other hospital outreach services and the viability of locating dentistry services at Pelsall’s village centre.

38. **Council pitch fees - petition**

The report was submitted.

Mr. A.T. Wellings of the Walsall Junior Football League spoke to the petition.

It was **moved** by Councillor S. Coughlan, seconded by Councillor Nazir and:

Resolved

That the content of the petition be noted and discussions continue with relevant groups and individuals on budget proposals for 2015/16.

39. **Pedestrian crossing for Shire Oak - petition**

The report was submitted.

Miss S. Staples and Miss O. Tricklebank of Shire Oak Academy presented the petition.

It was **moved** by Councillor Jeavons, seconded by Councillor Cassidy and it was:

Resolved

- (1) That the content of the petition be noted.
- (2) That Council note the previous good road safety history for this section of Chester Road and the outcome of the Council's investigation into providing a pedestrian crossing facility at this location and that it is ranked 11th on the Measures to Encourage Walking programme.
- (3) That Council note the outcome from the Coroner's inquest that the death was caused by head injuries sustained in a Road Traffic Collision. Additional narrative from the Coroner indicated that 'the deceased attempted to cross Chester Road, Walsall when it was unsafe to do so, and was in collision with an approaching lorry that was being properly driven'.
- (4) That it be noted that the Council will undertake a refurbishment of the equipment at the existing zebra crossing on Lindon Road.

40. **Question from member of the public**

Mr. D. Allcock asked the following question of Councillor Nazir:

"I would like to know the reasons why you have knocked down the only public conveniences in Willenhall, without any consultation with the towns people?"

Councillor Nazir replied that the public convenience in Willenhall was one of the five sites closed as part of the approved budget savings for the financial year 2014/15. The proposal was subject to prior public consultation as part of the consultation on the budget savings options carried out in late 2013.

He said that overall the measure achieved a revenue saving of £120,000 per annum of which some £24,000 could be attributed to Willenhall. This was in addition to annual business rates of £2,130.

At the time of closure, the property was in need of significant investment, with redecoration, replacement downpipes and overflows, gutter clearance and minor roof repairs required. No formal quotes for the outstanding works were obtained but the cost of approaching £15,000 appeared to be reasonable. The demolition cost was £12,000.

Councillor Nazir said that in view of the condition of the property and the availability of alternative facilities available to the public some 235 metres away at Morrisons, the proposal to close and demolish the conveniences was accepted.

Mr. Allcock asked the following supplementary question:

“Can the toilets be replaced as Morrisons is not convenient for everyone?”

Councillor Nazir said he would reply to Mr. Allcock in writing.

41. **Birchills-Leamore Ward by election**

The Council noted the result of the by-election for the Birchills-Leamore ward held on 24th July 2014:

Names of candidates	No. of votes Polled	Candidate elected
Gazanfar Ali	710	
Christopher Jones	1075	Christopher Jones
Chris Newey	20	
Paul White	445	

Turnout 22.4%

42. **Revision of Constitution and timetable of meetings**

The report was submitted.

A list of nominations to Committees was circulated around the Council Chamber.

It was **moved** by Councillor S. Coughlan, seconded by Councillor Nazir and it was:

Resolved

- (1) That approval be given to the establishment of the following Scrutiny and Performance Panels with the remits set out in Appendix 1 of the report:

Business, Employment and the Local Economy
Children's Services
Neighbourhoods
Social Care and Health

- (2) That approval be given to the establishment of a Personnel Committee with the remit as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.
- (3) That approval be given to the amendment to the process for the appointment of the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board as set out in paragraph 3.3 of this report.
- (4) That the Constitution be amended to take into account the above changes.
- (5) That the revised timetable of meetings for the remainder municipal year 2014/2015 as set out in Appendix 3 of the report be approved.
- (6) That the following members be appointed to Committees for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15:

Business, Employment and Local Economy Scrutiny and Performance Panel

Councillors Andrew, Anson, Barker, Bird, Clews, Craddock, Ditta, Harrison, Illmann-Walker, James, Sohal, Worrall.

Children's Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel

Councillors Andrew, Clews, E. Hazell, Hughes, Jukes, Lane, Martin, Phillips, Sarohi, D. Shires, Wade, Wilson.

Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel

Councillors Arif, Creaney, Ditta, S. Fitzpatrick, D. Hazell, Murray, Nawaz, Phillips, Russell, I. Shires, Sohal, Towe.

Social Care and Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel

Councillors Bird, Burley, Clews, J. Fitzpatrick, E. Hazell, Jukes, Longhi, McCracken, Rattigan, Russell, Sarohi, D. Shires.

Personnel Committee

Councillors Bennett, Cassidy, Chambers, S. Coughlan, Harris.

43. **Members appointed to the Executive**

A list was submitted.

Resolved

That the following Cabinet responsibilities for the remainder municipal year 2014/15 be noted:

1. **Leader of the Council** - Overall responsibility for Council strategy, the corporate plan, communications and public relations, emergency planning, government relations and liaison with local MPs and West Midlands leaders. Association of Black Country Authorities and Black Country Joint Committee. Strategic and operational financial management and administration, insurance, risk management, policy led budgeting. Councillor S. Coughlan

2. **Deputy Leader and Regeneration** – Economic development, physical development, markets, property and asset management, Black Country Consortium, sub regional regeneration issues. Town and district centres, planning policy and local development framework. Strategic housing role. Councillor Nazir

3. **Children’s services and education** – services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, education services, interagency cooperation, involvement of children and young people, youth parliament, children’s trust arrangements, youth offending services, youth service, schools meals commissioning. Councillor Cassidy

4. **Community, leisure and culture** – Neighbourhood management, community engagement and consultation, community associations, voluntary and community sectors. parks, leisure and culture services including the New Art Gallery, libraries, adult learning, catering service, sports and museums. Cemeteries and crematoria. Community safety, Safer Walsall Partnership, public protection. Councillor Hussain

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|----|--|------------------------|
| 5. | Environment and transport – Traffic and transportation, car parks, gateways and corridors, strategic transport and highways. Pollution control, waste strategy, refuse collection, recycling, street cleaning and the Council’s vehicle fleet. | Councillor Jeavons |
| 6. | Health - Public health, Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board | Councillor Robertson |
| 7. | Personnel and business support – Advising the Leader on issues relating to governance and decision making processes including the corporate plan. HR function, shared services, including ICT, procurement, business change and member development. Financial regulations, audit, legal and democratic services. Other issues that may arise from time to time as directed by the Leader. | Councillor Chambers |
| 8. | Social care - care services for older people and people with learning disabilities, people with physical disabilities and people with mental health needs, health partnership, community meals, supporting people, protection for vulnerable adults. Money, home, job. | Councillor D. Coughlan |

Cabinet support members

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Children’s services | Councillor Wade |
| Community, leisure and culture | Councillor Nawaz |
| Environment and transport | Councillor Illmann-Walker |
| Social care
Health | Councillor Lane |

44. Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

A list was circulated around the Council Chamber and nominations were made as set out.

It was **moved** by Councillor S. Coughlan, seconded by Councillor Nazir and:

Resolved

That the following be appointed Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15:

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Audit	Mr. F. Bell (independent member)	Councillor Illmann-Walker
Health and Wellbeing Board	Councillor Robertson	-
Licensing and Safety	Councillor S. Fitzpatrick	Councillor Sarohi
Personnel	Councillor Chambers	Councillor Bennett
Planning	Councillor Westley	Councillor Jeavons
Standards	Councillor Underhill	Councillor Martin
Business Employment and Local Economy Scrutiny and Performance Panel	Councillor Anson	Councillor Harrison
Children's Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel	Councillor Hughes	Councillor Lane
Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel	Councillor Creaney	Councillor Towe
Social Care and Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel	Councillor Longhi	Councillor Jukes

45. **Appointment of representatives on outside bodies and charities**

A list was circulated around the Council Chamber and nominations were made as set out.

Resolved

That the following members be appointed to the undermentioned outside bodies and charities for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15 unless otherwise stated:

Bloxwich Housing Group

Councillor S. Fitzpatrick

Centro members

Councillors Clarke, Ditta and Worrall

Walsall Adult and Community College

Councillors Arif and Russell

West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority

Councillor Nazir (substitute)

West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Councillor Illmann-Walker

West Midlands Joint Committee

Non-voting member to be nominated by Labour Group

West Midlands Metropolitan Area Road Safety Partnership

Councillor Jeavons

West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

Substitute member - to be nominated by Labour Group

West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership Board

Councillor Illmann-Walker

Pelsall (Staffs) Mining Accident Fund

Councillors Bennett and Perry (period of 5 years expiring 14th September 2019)

Roger Hinton Charity

To be considered at next Council meeting

Catherine Walker Charity

Councillor Jukes (balance of 4 years expiring on 14th September 2017)

Sheffield Playing Fields Charity

Councillor Clews (balance of 4 years expiring on 18th December 2016)

Aldridge Brownhills Housing Group

The following nominations were made to the above:

Councillor Rattigan
Councillor Worrall

The nominations were put to the vote and it was:

Resolved

That Councillor Worrall be appointed a member of the Aldridge Brownhills Housing Group for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15:

Birmingham Airport Holdings Limited

The following nominations were made to the above:

Councillor Bird
Councillor S. Coughlan

The nominations were put to the vote and it was:

Resolved

That Councillor S. Coughlan be appointed a member of Birmingham Airport Holdings Limited for the balance of the 2 year period expiring in June 2016.

46. Annual Scrutiny report 2013/14

The Annual Report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Rochelle, seconded by Councillor Cassidy and it was:

Resolved

That the Annual Scrutiny report 2014/14 be noted.

47. Annual Report of Audit Committee 2013/14

The Annual Report was submitted.

Councillor Illmann-Walker presented the report and thanked officers and external auditors for their work during 2013/14.

It was **moved** by Councillor Illmann-Walker, duly seconded and:

Resolved

That the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2013/14 be noted.

48. **Recommendation of Audit Committee – Remit of Audit Committee**

The report to Audit Committee on 16th July 2014 was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Illmann-Walker, duly seconded and:

Resolved

That the Constitution be amended to reflect the proposed changes.

49. **Guidance on Honorary Freemen**

A report was submitted.

Members suggested various amendments to the guidance and it was:

Resolved

That the item be deferred to the next meeting to consider the points made in conjunction with the Leader.

50. **Changes in membership of Committees**

Resolved

That the following changes in membership of Committees for the remainder of the municipal year be noted:

- (a) **Planning Committee:** Councillor D. Shires to replace Councillor Barker.
- (b) **Licensing and Safety Committee:** Councillor Barker to replace Councillor D. Shires.

The meeting terminated at 7.20 p.m.

Mayor:

Date: