



Walsall Council

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Walsall to be held on **THURSDAY 24TH day of FEBRUARY, 2011 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Dated this 16th day of February, 2011.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive.

The business to be transacted is as follows:

1. To elect a person to preside if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are not present.
2. Apologies.
3. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10th January, 2011.
4. Declarations of interest.
5. Mayor's announcements.
6. To receive any petitions.

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

(a) From the public

(1) Ms. S. Ebbans on behalf of Family Voice of Walsall – Short breaks for disabled children (Councillor R. Andrew)

“Can the portfolio holder tell us how the budget for short breaks for disabled children in 2011 compares with that for 2010?”

(2) Mr. S. Hussain of Tantarra Street, Walsall – Pleck Library (Councillor Harris)

“As a member/resident of the Pleck ward, I have been concerned at the possibility of our local library closure. Alongside Pleck residents I feel it is an essential service that must remain operational in the ward and seek full assurance that the Pleck Library will remain open for public use in its present format?”

(3) Ms. J. Bethell of Clarendon Street, Bloxwich – Budget proposals (Councillor Bird)

“In respect of the recommendations before the Council this evening, would the Leader of the Council now list and categorise all the main budget proposals that would affect the quality of life of the pensioners and disabled people of this borough, grouped according to whether their impact on these citizens would be a positive, neutral or negative?”

(b) From members of the Council

(1) Councillor Robertson – Support to scout and guide organisations (Councillor Towe)

“How much support financial and otherwise has this Council given to the scout and guide organisations in Walsall in the last financial year and what support is planned for next financial year?”

(2) Councillor Jeavons – Short breaks for disabled children (Councillor R. Andrew)

“Could the relevant portfolio holder tell me, this Council and the public of Walsall how many short break Saturday places will be available to residents with disabled children and children with learning difficulties in the financial year 2011/2012?”

- (3) Councillor Longhi – Proposed Pelsall library, medical and children’s centre (Councillor Harris)**
- “Will the portfolio holder please advise me and this Council of the current situation regarding the proposed new combined facility of a new library, medical centre and children’s centre proposed for Pelsall?”
- (4) Councillor Smith – Respite care at Eldon House (Councillor R. Andrew)**
- “Would the portfolio holder assure me, this Council and the public that not only will there be no reduction in the availability of respite care at Eldon House for children with disabilities but also that re-assessment of individual child’s needs will not be skewed to justify an overall reduction in such availability?”
- (5) Councillor Robertson – Fly tipping (Councillor Harris)**
- “How does this Council act on information such as vehicle registration numbers given by members of the public reporting instances of fly tipping and how many convictions have been achieved in the last year?”
- (6) Councillor Smith – Performance of Serco (Councillor R. Andrew)**
- “Given the Leader of the Council’s expressed public concerns (Express & Star 18/1/11) over Serco’s performance as the manager of the Council’s education services, with Walsall recently coming 151st out of 171 local authorities for GCSEs and A levels, would the portfolio holder inform me, this Council and the public, assuming she agrees with the Leader, of the actions that she and others propose to take to address the Leader’s concerns, that are also the concerns of a great number of other people in Walsall?”
- (7) Councillor Smith – Pay inequalities (Councillor Towe)**
- “In welcoming the recognition that many local authority workers, mainly women, have suffered inequalities in terms of pay and conditions that quite rightly have needed to be addressed, would the portfolio holder inform me, this Council and the public the extent to which he agrees that one group of workers should now be made to pay for the inequalities of another group of workers, which for instance will lead to Walsall’s bin men facing big pay cuts of possibly several thousands of pounds a year?”

8. To confirm the following recommendation of **Cabinet**:

(1) **Corporate budget plan and Treasury management and investment strategy 2011/12**

(i) Revenue

- (a) That the recommendations of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves as set out in Annex 7 be endorsed.
- (b) That the net draft levies below for outside bodies be noted. At the time of despatch of this report, formal notification of all of the final levies had not been formally notified to the authority. (The final levy for Centro was approved on 7th February, and reflects no change to the estimated figure within the report. The final Environment Levy will be included within the final papers to Council. An estimate has been used within this report based on informal notification from the authorities).

DRAFT LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority	14,547,000
Environment agency	80,626

- (c) That approval be given to an opening working balance for 2011/12 set at a prudent level in line with the council's medium term financial strategy.
- (d) That the following statutory determinations be noted (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992):
- I. **£710,813,698** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act.
 - II. **£464,725,149** being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3) (a) to (c) of the Act.
 - III. **£246,088,549** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (I) above exceeds the aggregate at (II), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32 (4) as its budget requirement for the year.
 - IV. **£137,106,595** 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 (**£104,733,246**); Revenue Support Grant (**£32,373,349**); with the Collection Fund expected to break even.
 - V. **£1,384.64** being the amount at (d III) above, less the amount at (d IV) above, equal to **£108,981,954**, divided by the Council Tax Base of **78,707.79**, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (average council tax at band D)

VI. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (v) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act as 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
£923.09	£1,076.94	£1,230.79	£1,384.64
E	F	G	H
£1,692.34	£2,000.04	£2,307.73	£2,769.28

- (e) That the estimated precept from the Fire & Civil Defence Authority and the estimated precept for 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 and that the final figures be substituted for these provisional ones once they are available at the Council meeting on 24 February 2011.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
Police	A	B	C	D
	£66.30	£77.35	£88.40	£99.45
	E	F	G	H
	£121.55	£143.65	£165.75	£198.90
Fire & Civil Defence	A	B	C	D
	£31.89	£37.20	£42.52	£47.83
	E	F	G	H
	£58.46	£69.09	£79.72	£95.66

- (f) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (d) (vi) and (e) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2011/12 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below. This represents no change in council tax levels approved in 2010/11.

A	B	C	D
£1,021.28	£1,191.49	£1,361.71	£1,531.92
E	F	G	H
£1,872.35	£2,212.78	£2,553.20	£3,063.84

- (g) 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 Advertiser" newspaper circulating in the Authority's area.

- (h) That the chief financial officer 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.
- (i) Approve the budget plan, including the opening cash limits, savings and investment proposals set out in the annexes.

(ii) Capital

That the draft capital programme set out in the following tables be approved bearing in mind the principle that unless affordable from within current resources, specific projects funded by unsupported borrowing will not be commenced until a payback agreement is in place.

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12	
MAINSTREAM SCHEMES	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Project reserve / asset investment reserve	517,544
Council wide IT planned rolling replacement and upgrade	1,629,206
Release of leased accommodation	200,000
Barcroft Primary	225,000
Memorial safety	100,000
Shop maintenance	120,000
Aids and adaptations	1,500,000
General planned property maintenance	500,000
Demolition of redundant buildings to save on rates	200,000
Highways maintenance	950,000
Dilapidations at Bryntysilio	400,000
Fire risk assessment	200,000
Resources 'Delivering Right, Fast and Simple'	500,000
Increased productivity to be delivered by home working	150,000
Supporting independent living – transformation of Social Care	226,200
Preventative adaptations – transformation of Social Care	1,000,000
PARIS development phase 2 – working smarter	750,000
Health through warmth	500,000
Introduction of radio frequency identification in libraries – linked to revenue saving option	232,800
Greenspace improvement plan	50,000
Refurbishment of Leckie sons of rest	190,000
Capital insurance reserves – Risk management	100,000
Capital insurance reserves – Uninsured property damage	200,000
Capital insurance reserves – Asbestos removal	155,000
Capital insurance reserves – Control of legionella	275,000
Capital insurance reserves – Statutory testing of buildings	300,000
Capital insurance reserves – Lighting invest to save	250,000
Total	11,420,750

NON-MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM GRANT 2011/12	
NON MAINSTREAM SCHEMES	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Basic need	2,650,018
Devolved formula capital	868,878
Capital maintenance	4,711,108
Academies	25,726,332
Pelsall health centre, library and children's centre	450,000
Walsall arboretum restoration programme	2,215,912
Willenhall townscape heritage initiative - HLF	300,000
Willenhall townscape heritage initiative - VIEW	150,000
Disabled facilities grant	1,215,000
Department for Health capital allocation	739,992
Local transport plan	2,000,000
Red routes	3,000,000
Total	44,027,240

LEASING PROGRAMME 2011/12 (as set out in annex 13)	
PORTFOLIO	TOTAL BUDGET £
Environment portfolio	5,424,114
Total	5,424,114

(iii) Treasury Management

- (a) That the 2011/12 treasury management and investment strategy document set out in Section 2 of the budget plan, and the adoption of the prudential indicators set out in Annex 16 be approved.
- (b) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.
- (c) That decisions to use capital receipts or unsupported borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 9th February 2011 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

(2) Housing Renewal Assistance Policy

- (1) That the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy 2011-2012 as contained in Appendix A of the report with the commencement dates as listed in the policy document, be adopted and published.

- (2) That funds returned to the Council through the land charging process for all grants and loans be made available for future private sector housing renewal assistance.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 12th January 2011 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

9. Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1982 – adoption of Schedule 3 – Sexual entertainment venues. Report to follow.

10. Portfolio holder briefing. To receive 5 minute presentation from the portfolio holder for Children’s Services (Councillor R. Andrew).

(Note:(1) A copy of the presentation is reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.

(2) A member of the Council may ask the portfolio holder any question and other associate question without notice upon the each report. Questioning by members is limited to 10 minutes for each report presented.)

11. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by Councillors I. Shires and P. Hughes:

Council welcomes:

- The announcement of the new High Speed Rail link (HS2) from London to include a “Y” shaped network providing links via the Midlands to the North West and North East.

Council notes:

- The “Y” option has been chosen, which means that two High Speed lines will branch out north of Birmingham at Lichfield with a line towards Sheffield, Leeds and the East Coast Mainline, and a line towards Manchester and the West Coast Mainline.

Council also notes:

- The “Y” link will mean the great majority of the British population will have direct access to the High Speed network including Walsall and the Black Country
- To ensure that Walsall gains maximum benefit it is essential that the local network feeding into HS2 includes train stations at Willenhall, Bloxwich and Aldridge.

Council resolves to:

- Write to our three MPs asking that they support HS2 in Parliament and the Chief Executive writes to the Transport Secretary giving this Council's support to HS2.

(Note: Report to follow.)

12. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillor Oliver**:

This Council supports the principle of a national pooling of business rates and subsequent 'formula based' distribution across Councils on the basis of need - as opposed to any alternative system which favours the "haves" as against the "have nots".

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