



Walsall Council

Council Summons – 8th January, 2024

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Walsall to be held on **Monday 8th January, 2024 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Public access via: [Livestream Link](#)

Dated this 22nd December, 2023

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 6th November, 2023
(Enclosed - Page 6 to 20)
4. Declarations of interest.
5. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended):**
To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda.
6. Mayor's announcements.
7. To receive any petitions.

Democratic Services, The Council House, Walsall, WS1 1TW
Contact name: Neil Picken Telephone: 01922 654369 Email: neil.picken@walsall.gov.uk
[Walsall Council Website](#)

**If you are disabled and require help to and from the meeting room,
please contact the person above**

8. To answer any questions in accordance with Council procedure rules:
- a. From the public: None.
 - b. From members of the Council:

Councillor Ward

Overnight, Covid-19 changed the way organisations and their staff operated. A survey conducted by KPMG estimates that 63% of all workers will return to the office by 2026. Given this, could the portfolio holder confirm the following:

- 1) How many staff worked exclusively from the civic building pre COVID-19?
- 2) How many staff now work exclusively from the civic building?
- 3) How many staff have been given permission to work outside of the UK and if any staff have been given permission, where are they located?
- 4) Are there any plans to bring all staff back into the office on a permanent basis?

Councillor Smith

The Blakenall area in particular has been plagued by the very dangerous actions of a few youths (male and female it seems) who have, over a period of many months, and even after recent arrests, been involved in throwing bricks and stones at moving vehicles and at buses in particular, resulting in damage to many vehicles, the cancellation of Bus 19 after 3pm, the reduction in the 30 minute service to an hourly service for the number 19 bus and the re-routing of other buses, all at considerable inconvenience to the local community whose dependence on public transport is above average compared to many areas of our Borough.

Given this and that despite collaborative efforts by Police, Council, Schools and Housing Associations, this behaviour is apparently still taking place in the same area, (as at the time of the submission of this Question on 20/12/23) can I ask you to tell us as much as you can do publicly:

- a) What actually is being done to solve this on- going problem and what reassurance can the appropriate Portfolio holder give me, this Council and above all, the residents of Blakenall, Harden, Goscote and Coalpool, the bus users, bus drivers and local shopkeepers that this dangerous criminal activity will be stopped, that proven offenders will be dealt with appropriately and that normal bus services in our area will be restored as soon as possible?
- b) Do you agree with me that despite all of this, we must put all this in perspective and recognise that the vast majority of adults and children in our area are good, law abiding folk who are doing their best (for many in difficult circumstances) to cope with everyday life and all that this brings, are helpful and kind to each other and to their neighbours and just want to live a safe and peaceful life?

Councillor Smith

Now that Walsall Council has a closer “handle” on Borough wide housing waiting lists, can the appropriate Portfolio holder inform me, this Council and the public what their records show relating to:

- a) The number of persons on a waiting list for suitable accommodation because they are homeless, including the number of children involved,
- b) The number of persons on a waiting list because they are living in inadequate , unsuitable or overcrowded accommodation including the number of children involved,
- c) The number of people who are currently living in temporary accommodation such as hostels or hotels, including the number of children involved, and could you also tell us whether the figures are generally on the rise for these three categories or whether they are declining?

Councillor Smith

In a Government Press release entitled “Simpler recycling collections and tougher regulation to reform waste system published 21 October 2023 it states:

“Weekly collections of food waste will also be introduced for most households across England by 2026 – ending the threat of smelly waste waiting weeks for collection and cutting food waste heading to landfill. This will also stop a trend towards three- or four-weekly bin collections seen in some local authorities across the UK, particularly in Wales”

Can I ask the appropriate Portfolio holder:

- a) What the Council’s response to this is and whether indeed it plans to introduce a weekly collection service for food waste, presumably subject to prior public consultation?
- b) If it does, when is this likely to commence?
- c) If it does, how, in practice, will this work?

9. Mayoralty 2024/25. Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 2(vi) to name the Mayor-Elect and Deputy Mayor-Elect for 2024/25 in accordance with the powers contained in Sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

10. Formation of Political Groups

(To Follow)

11. To appoint members to serve on Committees

(To Follow)

12. To appoint Councillor Natalie Latham as Chair of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13. Appointment of representatives on outside bodies and charities

(To Follow)

14. Auditor's Annual Report 2022/23 – Value For Money Summary'

(Enclosed - Page 21 to 67)

15. To confirm the following recommendations of Cabinet:

(a) Treasury Management Mid-Year Position Statement

That Cabinet notes and forward to Council, for consideration and noting (and in line with the requirements of the Treasury Management Code of Practice (2021)), the mid-year position statement for treasury management activities 2023/24 including prudential and local indicators (Appendix A).

(Note: Report to Cabinet held on 13th December, 2023 reproduced for this meeting **(pages 68 to 82)**)

(b) Walsall Youth Justice Annual Service Plan

a) That Walsall's Youth Justice annual strategic plan is recommended to Council for approval.

b) That Cabinet delegate authority to make any future minor amendments to the plan, if and when required, to the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's services.

(Note: Report to Cabinet held on 13th December, 2023 reproduced for this meeting **(pages 83 to 137)**)

16. Portfolio holder briefings - To receive a 5 minute presentation from the following portfolios:

a. Internal Services – Councillor Ferguson

(Enclosed - Page 138 to 143)

b. Children, Early Help, Social Care and Youth Justice– Councillor Elson

(Enclosed - Page 144 to 151)

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