



# 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 21ST day of FEBRUARY, 2013 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Dated this 13th day of February, 2013.

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 7th January, 2013.
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 - none
- (b) From members of the Council

**(1) Councillor Wade – Improvement to Ravens Court, Brownhills**

“Given that a new Tesco store in Brownhills no longer seems to be on the horizon, can Councillor Andrew provide guarantees to me and the people of Brownhills that he will now instruct officers to begin to explore viable options relating to the improvement of Ravens Court? I ask this because many in Brownhills believe that Walsall Council have quietly abandoned any plans for the Court, have been complicit in the Court’s demise and have allowed the area to become a blot on Brownhills’ landscape.”

**(2) Councillor Ditta – Coroner service**

"The Walsall coroner service was merged with that of Dudley and Sandwell under the promise of better service and greater savings to the taxpayer, and recently Wolverhampton was also added to the collective - increasing the demand on service greatly; furthermore it was promised that Walsall would receive two deputy coroners, which has not happened, and the service has not been of the quality promised. I would like to ask over the years how much Walsall Council has contributed to the merged coroner service, and what savings have been made on behalf of the taxpayer as was proposed?"

**(3) Councillor Smith – “Bedroom tax”**

“Given that at the Council meeting of 9th July 2012, following my question about the impact of the “bedroom tax” on Walsall Households and in particular my request for a ward by ward breakdown of the household numbers affected and given your response that Borough wide approximately 3300 households of working age would be affected, adding that it was at that stage not possible to give a ward by ward breakdown, could I ask you, now that seven months has elapsed since my original question, to give me, this Council and the public a ward by ward breakdown of the number of households likely to be affected by the so called “bedroom tax”?”

**(4) Councillor Ditta – Academies**

"As we are all too aware, many of the schools in borough have become or are in the process of becoming academies, and there is already the fear expressed of covert selection creeping into our local schools. Would the portfolio holder agree with me that - as with the housing associations and hospital trusts - local elected members will lose their influence in how our schools are run, and furthermore outline the policies this council intends to follow to retain accountability and ensure improved performance on behalf of our young people?"

## **(5) Councillor Smith – Walsall North area profile**

“Having recently received details of the latest 6 Area Partnership Profiles and with particular reference to the Walsall North Area Profile (Area 3) that indicates; significantly lower life expectancy than the Borough average; some of the worst multiple deprivation not only in the Borough but in the country; a higher than Walsall average of young people not in employment, education or training; a well below Borough and national average for Secondary school attainment; a higher than Borough average level of youth offending; the highest level of child poverty in the Borough and much higher than the Walsall and national averages; much higher rates of infant and perinatal mortality than the Borough and national averages; higher hospital emergency admissions than the Borough and national averages; cancer mortality rate significantly higher than the Borough average; higher levels of anti-social behaviour than the Borough average; the highest levels of burglary, vehicle damage ,criminal damage and incidents of arson attacks in the Borough; given all this and even more worrying comparative statistics, what is Walsall Council planning to do that the £52m of New Deal money seemingly failed to do, to help reduce the inequalities across the Borough?”

## **(6) Councillor Smith - Mortality rates**

“Having noted that the Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel has commissioned a private business called Mott MacDonald to undertake an “independent” review of mortality rates at the Manor Hospital, at a cost so far unspecified, Mott MacDonald being a limited company, whose group, according to its website is “a diverse management, engineering and development consultancy delivering solutions for public and private clients world-wide”, could the Chair of the Scrutiny and Performance Panel comment on a widely held view that this is nothing more than a public relations exercise and a total waste of public money by the Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel, designed, by the very nature of the terms of reference set down, to come to the self fulfilling prophecy that the Manor Hospital has made sufficient progress in reducing its mortality rates since April 2011, and thus hoping that such a conclusion might strengthen the Trust’s bid for Foundation status?”

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

### **Corporate Budget Plan and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2013/14**

#### **(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 3 be approved.

- (b) That the net draft levies below for outside bodies be noted. The final levies are expected to be approved early February, so any changes will be reflected in a revised resolution to be provided to the Council meeting of 21 February 2013. An estimate has been used within this report based on informal notification from the authorities.

DRAFT LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority	<b>14,314,000</b>
Environment agency	<b>80,532</b>

- (c) Council on 7 January 2013 approved the localised council tax support scheme 2013/14, and approved changes to council tax discounts for empty properties and second homes. These changes have been reflected in the council tax base, which was also approved at Council, and all changes are reflected in this report.

- (d) That approval be given to an opening working balance for 2013/14 set at a prudent level in line with the council's medium term financial strategy.

- (e) That the following statutory determinations be noted and approved (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992) with subsequent changes in the Localism Act 2011:

- I. **£637,922,260** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Localism Act 2011. This includes collection fund deficit of £583,000.
- II. **£552,370,345** being the aggregate income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Localism Act 2011.
- III. **£85,551,915** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (e) (I) above exceeds the aggregate at (e) (II), calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Localism Act 2011, as its council tax requirement for the year.
- IV. **£1,410.26** being the amount at (e) (III) above, divided by the council tax base of **60,664.11**, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31B of the Localism Act 2011, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average council tax at band D)

V. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) (iv) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Local Government Act 1992, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 30 and 36 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.

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£940.17	£1,096.87	£1,253.56	£1,410.26
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£1,723.65	£2,037.04	£2,350.43	£2,820.51

- (f) That the estimated precept from the Fire and 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 approved and that the final figures be substituted for these provisional ones once they are available at the Council meeting on 21 February 2013.

<b>PRECEPTING AUTHORITY</b>	<b>VALUATION BANDS</b>			
<b>Police</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
	£66.30	£77.35	£88.40	£99.45
	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
	£121.54	£143.64	£165.74	£198.89
<b>Fire &amp; Civil Defence</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
	£31.89	£37.20	£42.52	£47.83
	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
	£58.46	£69.09	£79.72	£95.66

- (g) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (e) (v) and (f) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2013/14 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£1,038.36	£1,211.42	£1,384.48	£1,557.54
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£1,903.65	£2,249.77	£2,595.89	£3,115.06

- (h) 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.
- (i) 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.
- (j) That the budget plan be approved, including the opening cash limits, savings and investment proposals set out in the annexes to the report.

(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. Schemes funded from grant will commence when final allocations are published. Reserve list items will only commence should funding become available during the financial year.

<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14</b>	
<b>MAINSTREAM (COUNCIL FUNDED) SCHEMES</b>	<b>ESTIMATED VALUE £</b>
Arboretum Play Area	175,000
Walsall Arboretum Restoration Programme – Illuminated Park proposals	270,000
Willenhall Memorial Park	180,000
Greenspace Improvement Plan	100,000
Allotment and Community Garden Strategy – Borneo Street	50,000
Roadway extensions in Streetly Cemetery	150,000
Headstone safety in Cemeteries	80,000
Willenhall Lawn Cemetery extension	120,000
Highways Maintenance	1,450,000
Verge Parking	250,000
Retained Housing Land	100,000
Health Through Warmth and related Retro Fit schemes	470,000
Demolition of Redundant Buildings	200,000
Regenerating Walsall	200,000
Civic Centre Essential Maintenance	566,306
Improving the customer experience when visiting the Council House - includes front of house facilities	700,000
Shop Maintenance	120,000
Aids and Adaptations (statutory element)	1,000,000
Preventative Adaptations - part of the transformation of Social Care (non-statutory element linked to Aids and Adaptations above)	750,000
Essential Enhancement to Data Security Systems	60,000
Bring your own device security layers	70,000
Council wide IT planned rolling replacement and upgrade: Telephony consolidation	50,000
Council wide IT planned rolling replacement and upgrade: Upgrade of Windows	705,700
Replace essential Wide Area Network data circuits that will no longer be supplied by BT. These circuits connect buildings that are not being consolidated by Smarter Workplaces.	21,120
General reactive/planned property maintenance	500,000
Asbestos Removal	155,000
Control of Legionella	275,000
Work resulting from the statutory testing of building services	300,000
Fire Risk Assessment	200,000

Leasing versus Buy	340,000
Risk Management	100,000
Uninsured property damage	200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,908,126</b>

<b>NON-MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES 2013/14</b>	
<b>NON MAINSTREAM SCHEMES</b>	<b>ESTIMATED VALUE £</b>
Basic Need	2,097,621
Devolved Formula Capital	662,580
Capital Maintenance	3,530,556
Local Transportation Plan Highway Maintenance	1,945,000
Local Highways Maintenance funding	352,000
Low Emissions Town & Cities	100,000
Disabled facilities grant	1,351,000
Gypsy & Travellers	20,000
Darlaston Strategic Development Area Access	10,880,000
Local Transport Plan (excluding contribution to Darlaston Strategic Development Agency)	1,115,000
Local Sustainable Transport Fund	260,000
Personal Social Services Grant	769,958
Blackwood Park	95,700
Play Strategy	512,000
George Rose Park	50,000
High Heath Park	129,515
Holland Park	230,000
King George V Playing Fields	280,000
Kings Hill Park	55,000
Health in Parks	30,000
Bentley Green Spaces	88,000
Oak Park and Walsall Wood	40,000
Palfrey Park	30,000
Pelsall Common	78,400
Pleck Park	110,000
Reedswood Park	115,000
The Croft	66,000
Willenhall Memorial Park	123,250
Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative – Heritage Lottery Fund	150,000
Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative - VIEW	100,000
Black Country Enterprise Zone - Darlaston Site Investigation Programme	847,250
Noirit Site Infrastructure	987,189
Black Country Property Investment Programme	3,075,490
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,276,509</b>

<b>LEASING PROGRAMME 2013/14</b>	
<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>NEW EXPENDITURE £</b>
Transport and Environment portfolio	4,412,657
Business Support portfolio	69,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,481,657</b>

<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME RESERVE LIST ITEMS 2013/14</b>	
<b>NON MAINSTREAM SCHEMES</b>	<b>ESTIMATED VALUE £</b>
Refurbishment of Fryers Road Transfer Station / HWRC site	250,000
Hatherton multi story car park	200,000
Generic highway improvement	125,000
Darlaston Town Hall	500,000
Aids and adaptations	500,000
Health through warmth and retro fit schemes	330,000
Preventative adaptations	250,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,155,000</b>

(iii) **Treasury Management**

- (a) That the 2013/14 treasury management and investment strategy document set out in Section 2, and the adoption of the prudential indicators set out in Annex 6, 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: 1. Report to Cabinet 23rd January 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.

2. At its meeting on 23rd January 2013 the Cabinet approved the following amendment to the budget plan:

“The catering saving proposal be reduced from £762,000 to £600,000 to allow the catering service to work with schools to develop a new model. The reduction of £162,000 to be funded as a one-off in 2013/14 from general reserves.”)



9. To confirm the following recommendation of the **Audit Committee**:

**Annual review of Treasury Management policies**

That the Treasury Management policies as set out in Appendix A of the report be approved.

(Note: Report to Audit Committee 14th January 2013 reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.)

10. **Deputy Mayor 2013/2014.** To name the Deputy Mayor-Elect for 2013/2014 in accordance with the powers contained in Sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

11. **Transition of Public Health.** Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.

12. **Portfolio holder briefing.** To receive a 5 minute presentation from the portfolio holder for Children's services, Councillor R. Andrew.

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