



Walsall Council

Minutes of the **MEETING** of the Council of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough held on **Monday 8th July 2013 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House.

Present

Councillor M. Nazir (Mayor) in the Chair

Councillor P.E. Smith (Deputy Mayor)

“ Z. Ali
“ A.J.A. Andrew
“ R.E. Andrew
“ D.A. Anson
“ M. Arif
“ I. Azam
“ D.J. Barker
“ O.D. Bennett
“ M.A. Bird
“ C. Bott
“ P. Bott
“ R. Burley
“ B. Cassidy
“ K. Chambers
“ A.G. Clarke
“ J. R. Cook
“ D. Coughlan
“ S.P. Coughlan
“ C.U. Creaney
“ A. Ditta
“ B.A. Douglas-Maul
“ J. Fitzpatrick
“ S.F. Fitzpatrick
“ M. D. Flower
“ A.D. Harris
“ L.A. Harrison
“ E.F. Hughes
“ K. Hussain

Councillor G. Illmann-Walker

“ D. James
“ L.D. Jeavons
“ T.J. Jukes
“ P. Lane
“ M. Longhi
“ Ms. R.A. Martin
“ Mrs. B.V. McCracken
“ J. Murray
“ T.S. Oliver
“ G. Perry
“ K. Phillips
“ L.J. Rattigan
“ J. Rochelle
“ E.B. Russell
“ H.S. Sarohi
“ K. Sears
“ Mrs. D.A. Shires
“ I. Shires
“ R.M. Thomas
“ C.D.D. Towe
“ D.J. Turner
“ S. Wade
“ F.J. Westley
“ V. Whyte
“ V.G. Woodruff
“ R.V. Worrall
“ A. Young

22. **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cassidy, Russell and Underhill.

23. **Minutes**

It was **moved** by the Mayor and duly seconded:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2013 copies having been sent to each member of the Council, be approved as a correct record and signed.

Councillor Oliver referred to minute no. 11 – Members appointed to the Executive and said that in his opinion no resolution to note the Cabinet responsibilities for 2013/14 was put to the meeting. He went on to say that in his opinion the minute should read “The following Cabinet responsibilities were presented to the meeting”.

Councillor Oliver then referred to minute no. 19 – Notice of motion – Social housing and said that his recollection of the discussion was that in relation to the amendment moved by Councillor I. Shires, Councillor Oliver had agreed to accept the additional words included within his motion and that in his opinion the reference to the minutes to an amendment was not correct and another form of words should have been used referring to a “composite” motion and therefore it should not have been necessary to move an amendment to the original motion, but instead have put the composite motion to the vote.

In reply to Councillor Oliver’s comment in relation to minute no. 11 – Members appointed to the Executive, the Chief Executive reminded members that this matter had been included on the Summons for the Council to note. He went on to say that he would wish the Council to note the point raised by Councillor Oliver and that an explanatory report would be brought back to Council. In the meantime he requested the Council to approve the minutes with the exception of minute nos.11 and 19.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2013 copies having been sent to each member of the Council, be approved as a correct record and signed, with the exception of minute nos. 11 and 19.

24. **Declarations of interest**

The following members declared their interest in the items indicated:

Councillor I. Shires	Notice of motion – Bedroom tax – Member of WHG board
Councillor Worrall	Notice of motion – Bedroom tax – member of Burrowes Street Tenant Management Committee
Councillor Wade	Notice of motion – bedroom tax – Member of WHG board
Councillor S. Coughlan	Notice of motion - bedroom tax - WATMOS
Councillor Burley	Notice of motion – bedroom tax – Caldmore housing
Councillor Arif	Notice of motion – bedroom tax – Central Walsall Housing Group

With regard to his declaration of interest Councillor Shires stated that he reserved the right to debate the item, but had been advised that he should not vote.

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

It was **moved** by Councillor Oliver and seconded by Councillor Coughlan:

That this Council be adjourned after item 17 and that a revised report be presented as to the Phoenix 10 site, including overall financial estimates and relevant risks to this Council, to be debated in public session at the earliest opportunity to be determined by the Mayor.

Resolved

That this Council be adjourned after item 17 and that a revised report be presented as to the Phoenix 10 site, including overall financial estimates and relevant risks to this Council, to be debated in public session at the earliest opportunity to be determined by the Mayor.

26. **Mayor's announcements**

(1) **Death of Councillor T.G. Ansell**

The Mayor referred to the recent death of Councillor Tom Ansell and paid tribute to his services to the town over a period of many years. Councillors P. Bott, Bird, Murray, I. Shires, Ali and Worrall also paid tribute to Councillor Ansell, following which it was **moved** by the Mayor, duly seconded and:

Resolved

That this Council expresses its regret at the death of Councillor T.G. Ansell a member of this Council from May 1980 of which Council he was Mayor in 2008/2009 and places on record their appreciation of his services to the town and the people throughout the borough and expresses its condolences to his family at this sad time.

(2) Death of former Councillor H.J. Hughes

The Mayor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Jack Hughes and paid tribute to his services over a period of many years. Councillor Smith also paid tribute to Mr. Hughes following which it was:

Resolved

That this Council expresses its regret at the death of Mr. H.J. Hughes a member of Walsall County Borough Council from 1971 to 1974 and a member of this Council from 1974 to 1980 and places on record their appreciation of his services to the town and the people throughout the borough and expresses its condolences to his family at this sad time.)

Members and officers stood in silence as a mark of respect

(3) Statement by the Mayor

The Mayor made the following statement with regard to the killing of Lee Rigby and the discovery of a homemade bomb at the Rutter Street Mosque:

“Previously former Mayor, Councillor Dennis Anson and I did a press release condemning the killing of soldier Lee Rigby and as the Mayor presiding over this Council meeting I would like to place it on the record that the Council condemns the killing of serviceman Lee Rigby in the strongest possible term. The killers should be severely punished for committing such a barbaric crime and we wish to convey our condolences to his family and friends.

To the discovery of homemade bomb outside the Rutter Street Mosque in Palfrey, Walsall on 22 June 2013. As members of this Council and members of the community we are shocked and saddened by this event. If this proves to be an attack against a place of worship, then it is an attack on everyone whatever their beliefs because it's an attack on the right to believe and practice your beliefs.

I want to thank and express that I am very happy with the prompt response from Police who moved quickly to protect local people and make this device safe. I want to thank Walsall Council for the way they supported and accommodated some 150 people evacuated from their homes.

I also want to thank local people who opened their doors to neighbours and relatives who were forced to leave their homes; simple kindness is a wonderful and powerful thing and is the best answer to whoever did this.

We still can't say what the motivation behind this act is but I am proud of the response of the local community, it refused to be panicked, it refused to be intimidated or cowed; not just Muslims but all sections of Walsall's community. There is great community spirit in Walsall.

The one who planted this device intended to divide us then they have failed. We have to keep that unity and determination to live our lives in peace and not let violence win. We stand together and united against any act of terrorism or any form of extremism whether it is through hate, fascism or racism."

Councillors Oliver, Barker and Bird spoke in support of this statement.

27. **Petitions**

The following petitions were submitted:

- (1) Councillor Ditta – reinstatement of crossing warden at Whitehall Junior Community School.
- (2) Councillors Russell and Whyte – against the closure of Walsall Gala Baths.
- (3) Councillor D. Shires – provision of car park in front of shops in Lucknow Road.
- (4) Councillor Young – opposition to the closure and probable demolition of Ryecroft Neighbourhood Resource Centre.

28. **Questions from members of the public**

Arboretum boating lake

Mr. T. Gray of the Jerome K. Jerome Society asked the following question of Councillor Harris:

"Now that the work to the arboretum is finished, when will the rowing-boats be reinstated in the boat house for the enjoyment of fresh air and exercise by the people of Walsall?"

Councillor Harris replied that the Grade 2 listed Boathouse on Hatherton Lake was restored as part of the Heritage Lottery funded Arboretum restoration programme and works to the Boathouse were completed in February 2012.

He said that it had been hoped that the newly restored boathouse would be used as boat storage by the Council's watersports team who were going to operate it as an ancillary centre to the Sneyd Watersports Centre for canoeing and sailing. But it would not be sustainable in the current financial climate to operate two separate centres for watersports and so watersports provision was focused at Sneyd.

Councillor Harris said that he too was keen to restore boating to the lake which he was sure would be really popular with users of the Arboretum. The site needed to be made safe, for example, there was some submerged scaffolding which was used in the Walsall Illuminations and which needed to be removed. Once the safety of the site was ensured for boating he wanted to invite expressions of interest from people who would be able to operate a boating concession. There was some way to go, but Councillor Harris was hopeful that boating would be reintroduced in the future and he was happy to keep Mr. Gray and the Council, updated on progress.

Mr. Gray asked the follow supplementary question:

"What happened to the boats previously located in the boathouse, are they in storage or were they scrapped or sold?"

Councillor Harris replied that boating on the lake ceased in the mid-1990's due to financial pressures and concerns over the safety of lake users. The rowing boats were stored on site and were disposed of when their condition deteriorated and they became uneconomical to repair. The Council was looking for fresh interest in the site.

29. **Questions from members of the Council**

(1) **Business rates**

Councillor Oliver asked the following question of Councillor Towe:

"Could this Council and the people of Walsall be given an explanation of the Council's under-performance in failing to collect the sum of £2,346,833 in business rates due in 2012/2013, and as to the impact on our Council's finances should this be repeated in the current financial year?"

Councillor Towe replied that in April 2012 8,500 bills were issued to businesses in Walsall, with a total of £69m to be collected over either 10, 11 or 12 instalments up to March 2013. At the close of the financial year on 31 March 2013 £66.8m had been received leaving a further £2.3m still to be collected.

Of the £2.3m, a total of £300,000 was written off in 2012/13 due to businesses becoming insolvent. £1m was only at the billing or reminder stage as at 31 March 2013 which meant allowing time for the businesses to pay. That left a further £1m that had reached a summons stage and the need to commence court action, which would then involve alternative enforcement methods throughout 2013/14.

Councillor Towe said the process of collecting the remaining accounts had since continued into the new financial year and officers would ensure that where possible businesses paid the amounts due in good time.

The Council was always mindful of the need to allow businesses time to pay and not to create any undue financial burdens that might put the business at risk. However, the Council was also prepared to use the full force of its recovery powers to deal with those businesses who could pay, but refused to do so.

Councillor Towe said that the levels of collection within the financial year were expected to remain at similar levels in subsequent years.

Councillor Oliver asked the following supplemental question:

Can you agree with the methodology by which the government is deciding to partly repatriate business rates to local Councils will work to the detriment of Councils such as Walsall?

Councillor Towe replied that on the issue of collection there would always be bad debts estimated at £1.5m. We will make all efforts to collect business rates. Any consequence of under collection would have to be dealt with.

(2) Town centre swimming baths

As the questioner, Councillor Russell, was not present at the meeting the question was not put.

(3) 20 mph speed limits

Councillor Worrall asked the following question of Councillor A. Andrew:

"New Government speed limit guidance asks all local traffic authorities to consider 20 mph limits as a 'priority for action', the intention being to reduce road casualties and encourage walking and cycling. Could the portfolio holder advise the Council of what actions, or plans for action, are being taken in this regard within the Borough?"

Councillor Andrew replied that a review of the borough's 20mph zones was being undertaken. The review would consider the latest practice such as 20mph zones making use only of signs and contrast the performance with traditional zones that used physical features as well. Using this information the Council would introduce restrictions at a small number of pilot sites across the borough to establish the local effects of introducing such measures. When the evidence from these pilot sites was available, he would be recommended Cabinet to consider a policy. It was important to consult local residents.

Councillor Worrall asked if there was a plan for a pilot scheme.

Councillor Andrew said that he did not know as he had only just taken over the portfolio.

(4) **Fryers Road waste centre**

Councillor Anson asked the following question of Councillor Arif:

“Will the portfolio holder for waste disposal explain to me why staff at Fryers Road waste centre have been instructed not to help residents to unload, this even applies to disabled people who are instructed to go away and come back with a person to help them?”

Councillor Arif replied that the Household Waste Recycling Centres located at Fryers Road, Bloxwich and Merchants Way, Aldridge were managed under contract by May Gurney Limited. He said that the contract stated that site staff should direct residents to which containers to use in order to maximise recycling and to assist residents when reasonably requested, this rule applied to disabled residents. There was not a requirement in the contract for site staff to automatically unload cars on behalf of residents.

From the point of view of the contractor, Councillor Arif said that there was a risk to them in unloading cars, for example, where a resident had loaded heavy or awkward waste into the car in such a way that site staff could not unload the waste safely or without risk of damaging the resident's car. In these circumstances the site staff could decline to empty the car and to ask the resident to return to the site with someone else who could unload the car for them. He said that he had used Fryers Road on a regular basis and had seen staff operate and they did go out of their way to help residents.

Councillor Arif said that Clean and Green Services were not aware of any complaints of this nature from Fryers Road, but they were aware of an issue with one resident of Merchants Way. Council staff had spoken with the resident on three occasions to reassure them that disabled residents would be offered assistance when reasonably requested.

A customer satisfaction survey carried out in July 2012 showed that 97% of site users found the staff helpful.

Councillor Anson asked the following supplementary question:

In the past I have visited the site and in the past they have helped me. The last time I went they told me that they could not help, they had been instructed not to help. The Council gave the contractor the contract and we should get them to do the job properly. Tell me why I was told by the staff that they have instructed disabled users to go home and get someone to help?

Councillor Arif replied that his experience was different and that if Councillor Anson wanted to put in a complaint identifying people or staff, Clean and Green would look at the complaint so that it could be investigated. His experience was different.

(5) **Community hubs**

Councillor Oliver asked the following question of Councillor I. Shires:

"Whilst welcoming the social capital and financial investment in the disadvantaged areas of Darlaston South and Blakenall, could the portfolio holder explain to Council:

- how much has been spent and committed to the two pilot 'community hubs' in these wards
- the detail of the selection process for the two pilot projects
- the proposed timescale for this pilot project to be rolled out to other disadvantaged areas of the borough
- which other areas are to be considered for the roll out of this project?"

Councillor Shires replied that funding for the pilot of the community hubs project was detailed in the Cabinet report of 24 April 2013. This showed that the level of funding approved for Moxley was £300,000 (running over 3 years) and £200,000 for Ryecroft (running over 2 years).

He said that most of the Moxley funding had already been committed for activities that helped residents lead more independent lives. This included the Moxley Medical Centre running new health lifestyle activities and helping residents who were at risk of isolation, to have health checks and access community activities. Moorcroft Wood Primary School was providing after-school and holiday activities for all of their pupils giving them time to learn new skills and activities and for their parents to access training or employment.

The Ryecroft hub had only allocated £25,000 so far to employ a staff member to help develop activities as well as oversee their move into the New Forest Road Centre and Dartmouth Youth Centre.

Councillor Shires said that the selection of the Moxley area was on the basis of levels of worklessness and poor health as well as the potential of community assets such as the Moxley People's Centre. The inclusion of Ryecroft within this work was unanimously agreed by Council on 9 July 2012.

He said that it he had made it clear that there would be no further rollout of the community hubs project until an evaluation had been completed showing how savings could be made by enabling residents to live more independent lives. This would take around 12 months after the start of the activities. The evaluation would consider the learning and how and where that might be applied in the future.

Councillor Oliver asked the following supplementary question:

Could Councillor Shires outline the criteria which will be used to allocate the local Co-ordinators pilots?

Councillor Shires said that he would send a written reply.

(6) **Town centre toilets**

Councillor Smith asked the following question of Councillor A. Andrew:

“Following the Resolution of Council (22/5/13), amended by Councillor Smith and carried unanimously as a substantive motion, which not only opposed Centro's proposals to introduce charges for the use of Walsall town centre toilets but also requested Walsall Council's 3 Councillor representatives on the Transport Authority to make the strongest representations on the issue in support of Walsall Council's concerns, could this Council and the public have a statement from the Council informing us what action has been taken by the Council and its Transport Authority representatives following this resolution and what has been the outcome of such action?”

Councillor Andrew said that a meeting had been arranged with the Chairman of Centro and himself to take place on 11 July where this matter was going to be discussed further. At the present time the toilets would remain free.

Councillor Smith asked why it had taken 6 weeks to get the meeting together.

Councillor Andrew said that this matter was in the late Councillor Ansell's portfolio, but was now in his diary.

30. **Annual report of Audit Committee 2012/13**

The report was submitted.

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

Resolved

That the annual report of the Audit Committee 2012/13 be noted.

31. **Safeguarding children and young people - update**

The report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor R. Andrew, seconded by Councillor A. Andrew and:

Resolved

That the significant progress and overall direction of travel against the improvement priorities set out in the Walsall Strategic Improvement Plan for Safeguarding Children be noted.

At 7.30 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The meeting reconvened at 7.35 p.m.

32. Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013

The report was submitted.

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

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Licensing and Safety Committee to set an appropriate schedule of fees under the provisions of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 taking into account any statutory guidance.
- (2) That Council delegate the discharge of all of its powers and responsibilities under The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to the Licensing and Safety Committee, such Committee to be the “local authority” for the purposes of the Act.
- (3) That the Constitution be amended where appropriate to delegate the power to Licensing and Safety Committee to licence, administer and regulate as a “local authority” scrap metal dealers under the provisions of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013
- (4) That the Executive Director Neighbourhood Services be delegated authority to take action in accordance with the scheme of Delegations of Functions to Officers of Non Executive functions as laid down in paragraph 25, Table 5 of Part 3 of the Constitution under the provisions of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.

33. Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

It was **moved** by Councillor R. Andrew, seconded by Councillor A. Andrew and:

Resolved

That the report of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education be noted.

34. Portfolio holder briefing

Councillor Towe, portfolio holder for resources gave a presentation.

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

35. **Appointments on outside bodies in place of the late Councillor Ansell**

(a) **River Trent Flood and Coastal Committee**

The following nominations were made to the Committee:

Councillor Arif
Councillor Illmann-Walker

The nominations were put to the vote and it was:

Resolved

That Councillor Arif be appointed to the River Trent Flood and Coastal Committee for the remainder of the current municipal year.

(b) **Steps to Work (Walsall) Limited**

The following nominations were made:

Councillor Arif
Councillor Chambers

The nominations were put to the vote and it was:

Resolved

That Councillor Arif be appointed to Steps to Work (Walsall) Limited for the remainder of the current municipal year.

(c) **Walsall and Wolverhampton Transport Users Advisory Committee**

Councillor Worrall informed the Council that the Committee was no longer in existence.

(d) **Joint Committee for Civil Parking Enforcement and Parking and Traffic Regulations**

The following nominations were made:

Councillor A. Andrew
Councillor Ditta

The nominations were put to the vote and it was:

Resolved

That Councillor A. Andrew be appointed to the Joint Committee for Civil Parking Enforcement and Parking and Traffic Regulations for the remainder of the current municipal year.

(e) West Midlands (Metropolitan Area) Road Safety Partnership Board

The following nominations were made to the above:

Councillor A. Andrew
Councillor Ditta

The nominations were put to the vote and it was:

Resolved

That Councillor A. Andrew be appointed to the West Midlands (Metropolitan Area) Road Safety Partnership Board for the remainder of the current municipal year.

36. Appointment to Catherine Walker Charity

Resolved

That Councillor Russell be appointed a trustee of the Catherine Walker Charity for a period of 4 years from 13 September 2013.

37. Notice of motion – Badger cull

The following motion, notice of which had been duly given was **moved** by Councillor P. Bott, seconded by Councillor C. Bott and it was:

Resolved

That Walsall Council calls on the Government to stop the cull of badgers on the following grounds:

- Over 70% of the badger population in large areas of the country will be killed, many of them healthy and many of them injured and suffering before death as a result of being shot.
- The method of free-shooting badgers could cause severe stress, suffering and pain to many thousands of badgers.
- Independent scientific studies have shown that culling would be of little help in reducing bovine TB, and even suggest that it could make things worse in some areas.
- The go-ahead for the killing of badgers might provide an excuse for a general “free for all” attack on badgers, wherever their habitats may be.

and therefore Walsall Council urges the Government to stop the cull and implement the more sustainable and humane solution of both a vaccination programme for badgers and cattle, along with improved testing and biosecurity. *(Good biosecurity practice refers to a way of working that minimises the risk of contamination and the spread of animal and plant pests and diseases, parasites and non-native species.)*

At 8.45 p.m. it was **moved** by Councillor Bird, duly seconded and:

Resolved

That Council procedure rules be suspended to enable the business of the meeting to be completed.

38. Notice of motion – Bedroom tax

Councillor Burley having declared an interest in this item left the room for the duration of the discussion.

The following motion, notice of which had been duly given was **moved** by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor P. Bott:

Given that this Council at a recent Council meeting on 8 April 2013, unanimously expressed its opposition to the so called “bedroom tax” and resolved to call on the Government to scrap the “bedroom tax”, this Council now calls upon the Walsall Housing Group (whg) and other social landlords of properties in the Borough of Walsall to give assurances that they will take no eviction action against any of their tenants, solely as a result of arrears resulting from the imposition and impact of the “bedroom tax.

Amendment moved by Councillor I. Shires and seconded by Councillor Barker:

Given that this Council at a recent Council meeting on 8 April 2013, unanimously expressed its opposition to the so called “bedroom tax” and resolved to call on the Government to scrap the “bedroom tax”, this Council notes that it is now three months since the introduction of the reduction in subsidy for under occupied buildings, commonly known as the “bedroom tax”. It therefore requests the Council to:

- (1) Survey all Housing Associations, Citizens Advice Bureaux and similar organisations working in Walsall to establish:
 - The amount of rent arrears built up in the first quarter
 - The increase in administrative costs associated with the changes

- The increase in staff costs delivered to dealing with arrears
 - The changes in occupation rates as people try to move to smaller properties.
- (2) Survey all relevant organisations with a view to understanding the changes in the housing market, occupation levels and levels of Housing Benefit paid out since the Labour Government introduced its own “bedroom tax” in the private sector in September 2007.
- (3) Publish a report on both of these issues (bedroom tax 2007 and bedroom tax 2013) to support this Council’s wish to see both these iniquitous benefits changes scrapped.

This Council now calls upon the Walsall Housing Group (whg) and other social landlords of properties in the Borough of Walsall to give assurances that they will take no eviction action against any of their tenants, solely as a result of arrears resulting from the imposition and impact of the “bedroom tax”.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost – the voting at the request of several members of the Council being recorded as follows:

**For the amendment -
24 members**

Cllr: Bird
Ali
Andrew
R. Andrew
Azam
Barker
Bennett
Clarke
Cook
Douglas-Maul
Flower
Harris
Harrison
Longhi
Martin
Murray
Perry
Rattigan
Rochelle
Sears
D. Shires
Towe
Turner
Woodruff

**Against the amendment –
24 members**

Cllr: Oliver
Anson
C. Bott
P. Bott
Chambers
D. Coughlan
Creaney
Ditta
J. Fitzpatrick
S. Fitzpatrick
Hussain
Illmann-Walker
James
Jeavons
Jukes
Lane
Nazir
Phillips
Sarohi
Smith
Thomas
Westley
Whyte
Young

The motion was put to the vote and declared carried – with no members voting against and it was:

Resolved

Given that this Council at a recent Council meeting on 8 April 2013, unanimously expressed its opposition to the so called “bedroom tax” and resolved to call on the Government to scrap the “bedroom tax”, this Council now calls upon the Walsall Housing Group (whg) and other social landlords of properties in the Borough of Walsall to give assurances that they will take no eviction action against any of their tenants, solely as a result of arrears resulting from the imposition and impact of the “bedroom tax.

39. **Notice of motion – Bedroom tax – right of appeal**

The following motion, notice of which had been duly given, was **moved** by Councillor Smith and duly seconded:

This Council, cognisant of the fact that those who have been informed and those who might be informed in the future, by the Council’s Housing Benefits office of a requirement to pay Bedroom tax, do indeed have a right of appeal in relation to the benefit decision following the implementation of ‘bedroom tax’, therefore resolves to ensure that this right of appeal is made much more clearly to those affected as it has become apparent that many of those affected by the bedroom tax are not aware of their right of appeal.

Amendment moved by Councillor D. Coughlan and duly seconded:

This Council, cognisant of the fact that those who have been informed and those who may be informed in the future, by the Council’s Housing Benefits department of a reduction in benefit, that is due to the bedroom tax, do indeed have a right of appeal in relation to the benefit decision following the implementation of the bedroom tax, therefore resolves not only to ensure that this right of appeal is made much clearer to those affected by the bedroom tax, but also makes much clearer the opportunity to apply for a discretionary housing payment, as it has become apparent that many of those affected by the bedroom tax are unaware of these options.

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

The substantive motion was put to the vote, declared carried and it was:

Resolved

This Council, cognisant of the fact that those who have been informed and those who may be informed in the future, by the Council's Housing Benefits department of a reduction in benefit, that is due to the bedroom tax, do indeed have a right of appeal in relation to the benefit decision following the implementation of the bedroom tax, therefore resolves not only to ensure that this right of appeal is made much clearer to those affected by the bedroom tax, but also makes much clearer the opportunity to apply for a discretionary housing payment, as it has become apparent that many of those affected by the bedroom tax are unaware of these options.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 9.35 p.m.

Mayor:

Date: