



Walsall Council

Minutes of the **MEETING** of the Council of the Walsall Metropolitan Borough held on **Thursday 25th February, 2021 at 6.00 p.m. Digital meeting via Microsoft Teams.**

Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution.

Present

Councillor P. Bott (Mayor) in the Chair

Councillor R. Burley (Deputy Mayor)

“ G. Ali
“ B. Allen
“ A.J.A. Andrew
“ D.J. Barker
“ H. Bashir
“ M.A. Bird
“ C. Bott
“ O. Butler
“ B. Chattha
“ A.G. Clarke
“ S.J. Cooper
“ D. Coughlan
“ S.P. Coughlan
“ S.R. Craddock
“ S.K. Ditta
“ B. Douglas-Maul
“ K. Ferguson
“ J. Fitzpatrick
“ M. Follows
“ N.Z. Gultasib
“ A.D. Harris
“ L.A. Harrison
“ A.J. Hicken
“ K. Hussain
“ L.D. Jeavons
“ S. Johal

Councillor T.J. Jukes

“ P. Kaur
“ M. Longhi
“ Mrs. R.A. Martin
“ F. Mazhar
“ J. Murray
“ S. Nasreen
“ A.A. Nawaz
“ M. Nazir
“ A.S. Nazir
“ G. Perry
“ W. Rasab
“ L.J. Rattigan
“ I.C. Robertson
“ S. Samra
“ H.S. Sarohi
“ K. Sears
“ S. Sohal
“ I. Shires
“ C.A. Statham
“ M.A. Statham
“ C.D.D. Towe
“ A. Underhill
“ M. Ward
“ S. Wade
“ V.J. Waters
“ T.S. Wilson
“ R.V. Worrall
“ A. Young

118. **Welcome**

At this point, the Mayor opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the digital meeting of the Council.

The rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held was explained and members of the public viewing the meeting were directed to the papers which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information system (CMIS) webpage.

All members confirmed that they could see and hear the proceedings.

119. **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance was submitted on behalf of Councillors Creaney and Neville.

120. **Minutes**

The Mayor moved approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January, 2021.

This was duly seconded by Councillor Bird. The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call, declared carried and it was:

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January, 2021 copies having been sent to each member of the Council, be approved as a correct record.

121. **To approve a correction to the Minutes held on 27th February, 2020**

The Mayor moved approval of a correction to the minutes of the meeting held on 27th February, 2020.

This was duly seconded by Councillor Bird. The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call, declared carried and it was:

Resolved

- (a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th February, 2020 and approved on 14th September, 2020 be amended to correct an inaccuracy subsequently discovered, as set out in appendix 'A' to the report as submitted; and
- (b) The Monitoring Officer make a note against the original minutes indicating the subsequent corrections

122. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

123. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)**

There were no items in private session.

124. **Mayor's announcements**

Death of former Councillor Dave Turner

The Mayor referred to the death of former Councillor Dave Turner. Members paid tribute to former Councillor Dave Turner, following which it was **moved** by the Mayor, duly seconded and:

Resolved

That this Council have heard with deep regret of the death of Dave Turner, a member of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council from May 1990 to May 2014 and places on record their appreciation of his services to the borough over a period of many years and expresses its condolences to his family at this sad time.

125. **Petitions**

The following petition was submitted:

Councillor Richard Worrall - Traffic Calming Measures at Barns Lane, Rushall.

126. **Recommendations of Cabinet**

(a) **Corporate Plan 2021-2022 Refresh**

The report to Cabinet on 10th February, 2021 was submitted.

Councillor Bird moved the approval of the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Andrew.

The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of members and subsequently declared carried and it was:

Resolved

That the refreshed 2021-22 Corporate Plan be approved.

(b) **Corporate Budget Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24, incorporating the Capital Strategy; and the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2021/22.**

The report to Cabinet on 10th February, 2021 was submitted.

The Mayor reminded members that a recorded vote would be required on the final budget recommendation.

He also said that the final precepts and settlements had now been received and there were no changes to the figures in the budget recommendation.

It was **moved** by Councillor Bird and seconded by Councillor Andrew:

That the following be approved:

3.3.1 Revenue

- a) The financial envelope of resources for 2021/22 as set out in **Section B - Part 1** "The Revenue and Capital Budget Plan".
- b) A Walsall Council net council tax requirement for 2021/22 of £132.55m and a 4.99% increase in council tax (inclusive of 3% precept for Adult Social Care).
- c) That the recommendations of the S151 Officer in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves **be approved**, including the levels of central contingency and an opening general reserve of no less than £16.64m, as set out in the S151 Officer Section 25 statement in **Annex 12** of the Budget Plan.
- d) The final levies below for outside bodies:

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy	11,182,889
Environment Agency	83,781

- e) The following statutory determinations (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 as amended), and subject to any final changes arising from receipt of final specific grant allocations, and technical/legislative guidance:
 - I. **£660,041,370** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act.
 - II. **£527,495,589** being the aggregate income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.
 - III. **£132,545,781** 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 Act, as its council tax requirement for the year.
 - IV. **£1,871.87** being the amount at (e) (III) above, divided by the council tax base of 70,809.41, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, 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.

A	B	C	D
1,247.91	1,455.90	1,663.88	1,871.87
E	F	G	H
2,287.84	2,703.81	3,119.78	3,743.73

- f) The final precepts from the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner, 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:

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
	A	B	C	D
Police And Crime Commissioner	118.37	138.09	157.82	177.55
	E	F	G	H
	217.01	256.46	295.92	355.10
Fire & Rescue	42.02	49.03	56.03	63.04
	E	F	G	H
	77.04	91.05	105.06	126.07

- 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 2021/22 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

A	B	C	D
1,408.30	1,643.02	1,877.73	2,112.46
E	F	G	H
2,581.89	3,051.32	3,520.76	4,224.90

- 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 "Express and Star" newspaper circulating in the Authority's area.
- i) That the S151 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, billing, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.
- j) That the S151 Officer **be given delegated authority** to make transfers to and from reserves in order to ensure that reserves are maintained as necessary and in particular, adjusted when reserves are no longer required, or need to be replenished.

- k) That, pursuant to Section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the relevant basic amount of council tax for the Council is not excessive in relation to determining whether a referendum is required.

3.3.2 Capital

- a) The allocation of capital expenditure plans as set out in **Section B - Part 1** "The Revenue and Capital Budget Plan" and that the capital and leasing programme as set out in **Annex 9 be approved** bearing in mind the principle that unless affordable from within current resources, specific projects funded by 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) That the S151 Officer be **given delegated authority** to determine how each source of finance is used to fund the overall capital programme and to alter the overall mix of financing as necessary, to maximise the flexibility of capital resources used and minimise the ongoing costs of borrowing to the council.
- c) That the S151 Officer, after consultation with the Leader (portfolio holder for finance), be **given delegated authority** to release capital resources held back for any contingent items that may arise (earmarked capital receipts for essential or emergency spend), and also for any match funding requirements that may be required of the Council in order to secure additional external capital funding (e.g. bids for government or other funding).
- d) The Capital Strategy set out in **Annex 8** of the Budget Plan **be approved**.
- e) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy set out in **Annex 11** of the Budget Plan be approved.

3.3.3 Treasury Management

- a) **Section B – Part 2A** – The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2021/22 onwards, including the council's borrowing requirement, borrowing limits, and the adoption of the prudential indicators, **be approved**.
- b) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.
- c) That decisions to use capital receipts or borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.
- d) **Section B – Part 2B** – Treasury Management Policies, **be approved**.

The motion was put to the vote and declared carried – the voting being recorded as follows:

**For the motion –
30 members**

Cllr: Bird
Ali
Allen
Andrew
Butler
Chattha
Clarke
Cooper
Craddock
Douglas-Maul
Ferguson
Follows
Harris
Harrison
Hicken
Johal
Kaur
Martin
Murray
Perry
Rasab
Rattigan
Samra
Sears
Sohal
C. Statham
M. Statham
Towe
Waters
Wilson

**Against the motion –
26 members**

Cllr: Nawaz
Shires
Barker
Bashir
C. Bott
P. Bott
Burley
D. Coughlan
S. Coughlan
Ditta
Fitzpatrick
Gultasib
Hussain
Jeavons
Jukes
Mazhar
Nasreen
A. Nazir
M. Nazir
Robertson
Sarohi
Underhill
Ward
Wade
Worrall
Young

and it was:

Resolved

That the following be approved:

3.3.1 Revenue

- a) The financial envelope of resources for 2021/22 as set out in **Section B - Part 1** “The Revenue and Capital Budget Plan”.
- b) A Walsall Council net council tax requirement for 2021/22 of £132.55m and a 4.99% increase in council tax (inclusive of 3% precept for Adult Social Care).
- c) That the recommendations of the S151 Officer in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves **be approved**, including the levels of central contingency

and an opening general reserve of no less than £16.64m, as set out in the S151 Officer Section 25 statement in **Annex 12** of the Budget Plan.

d) The final levies below for outside bodies:

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy	11,182,889
Environment Agency	83,781

e) The following statutory determinations (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 as amended), and subject to any final changes arising from receipt of final specific grant allocations, and technical/legislative guidance:

VI. **£660,041,370** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act.

VII. **£527,495,589** being the aggregate income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.

VIII. **£132,545,781** 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 Act, as its council tax requirement for the year.

IX. **£1,871.87** being the amount at (e) (III) above, divided by the council tax base of 70,809.41, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average council tax at band D).

X. 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.

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2,287.84	2,703.81	3,119.78	3,743.73

h) The final precepts from the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner, 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:

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
	A	B	C	D
Police And	118.37	138.09	157.82	177.55
	E	F	G	H

Crime	217.01	256.46	295.92	355.10
Fire & Rescue	A	B	C	D
	42.02	49.03	56.03	63.04
	E	F	G	H
	77.04	91.05	105.06	126.07

- i) 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 2021/22 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

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- 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 “Express and Star” newspaper circulating in the Authority’s area.
- i) That the S151 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, billing, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.
- j) That the S151 Officer **be given delegated authority** to make transfers to and from reserves in order to ensure that reserves are maintained as necessary and in particular, adjusted when reserves are no longer required, or need to be replenished.
- k) That, pursuant to Section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the relevant basic amount of council tax for the Council is not excessive in relation to determining whether a referendum is required.

3.3.2 Capital

- a) The allocation of capital expenditure plans as set out in **Section B - Part 1** “The Revenue and Capital Budget Plan” and that the capital and leasing programme as set out in **Annex 9 be approved** bearing in mind the principle that unless affordable from within current resources, specific projects funded by 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) That the S151 Officer **be given delegated authority** to determine how each source of finance is used to fund the overall capital programme and to alter the overall mix of financing as necessary, to maximise the flexibility of capital resources used and minimise the ongoing costs of borrowing to the council.

- c) That the S151 Officer, after consultation with the Leader (portfolio holder for finance), be **given delegated authority** to release capital resources held back for any contingent items that may arise (earmarked capital receipts for essential or emergency spend), and also for any match funding requirements that may be required of the Council in order to secure additional external capital funding (e.g. bids for government or other funding).
- d) The Capital Strategy set out in **Annex 8** of the Budget Plan **be approved**.
- f) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy set out in **Annex 11** of the Budget Plan be approved.

3.3.3 Treasury Management

- e) **Section B – Part 2A** – The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2021/22 onwards, including the council’s borrowing requirement, borrowing limits, and the adoption of the prudential indicators, **be approved**.
- f) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.
- g) That decisions to use capital receipts or borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators **be delegated** to the S151 Officer.
- h) **Section B – Part 2B** – Treasury Management Policies, **be approved**.

127. **Recommendation of Personnel Committee - Pay policy statement and living wage 2021/22**

The report to Personnel Committee on 8th February, 2021 was submitted.

Councillor Bird moved the approval of the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Andrew.

The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of members and subsequently declared carried and it was:

Resolved

- 1) That the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/2022 be approved; and
- 2) That the continuation of the living wage be approved.

128. **Appointment of Independent Persons**

A report was submitted.

It was **moved** by Councillor Rasab, seconded by Councillor Andrew and:

Resolved

That:-

- (1) Sureya Ajaz be appointed as an independent person on the Council's Audit and Standards Committee for a period of 4 years;
- (2) Deborah Mardner be appointed as an independent person on the Council's Standards Committee for a period of 4 years;
- (3) Carl Magness be appointed as an independent person on the Council's Standards Committee for a period of 4 years; and
- (4) Council notes that Independent Persons (Standards) shall be paid an allowance of £750.00 per annum

129. Independent Remuneration Panel

A report was submitted.

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

Resolved

That:

1. The Basic Allowance be increased from £11,146 to £11,938;
2. The Special Responsibility Allowances be increased as per option 3 as set out within the Independent Remuneration Report as follows:-

	Option 3
Council Leader	£33,325
Deputy Leader	£20,614
Cabinet Member	£16,787
Opposition Leader	£11,158
Chair of Scrutiny	£10,821
Chair of Planning	£11,006
Chair of Licensing	£10,478
Chair of Audit	£8,551
Chair of Standards	£5,348
Chair other Cttes	£5,348

3. Where an Special Responsibility Allowance is allocated to the second deputy leader, then his or her Special Responsibility Allowance should be the same as that of the first deputy leader, as set out in the table in recommendation 2 above;
4. In the same circumstances, the Special Responsibility Allowance allocated to the opposition leader should be Option 3 - £12,581;

5. It be noted that some of the expenditure in the above table may not be claimed, in cases where members hold two positions eligible for SRAs; and
6. That it be noted that the figures for expenditure on members' allowances in the above table may need to be adjusted to allow for national insurance payments.

130. **Membership of Committees.**

It was duly noted that that Councillor Nawaz had replaced Councillor Jeavons for the remainder of the municipal year on Corporate Parenting Board and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting terminated at 8.10 p.m.