



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 **MONDAY the ELEVENTH day of JANUARY, 2010 at 6.00 p.m.** at the Council House, Walsall.

Dated this 31st day of December, 2009.

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 9th November, 2009.
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 Phillips – (Councillor Bird)**

“What has been the cost (including legal costs) to this Council as the accountable body, and what has been the loss to the wider community in terms of public, regeneration and lottery funds (including the Green Rivers Community Association), so far in the ongoing disputes over the various developments on the Abbott Street land?”

(2) **Councillor Young – External solicitors (Councillor Towe)**

“What has been the cost of outsourcing legal work to external solicitors in the last 12 months split into costs relating to planning, employment and other issues?”

(3) **Councillor Sarohi – Supporting people grant (Councillor McCracken)**

“I am sure you appreciate the welcome money allocated to this borough by our Labour Government of £7 million in the form of the Supporting People Grant. How much of this grant was initially mis-allocated by Walsall Council this last year, to which organisations and programmes - and what programmes were therefore subsequently cancelled as a result of these errors ?”

(4) **Councillor Barton – Looked after children (Councillor Walker)**

“What are the outcome figures over the past five years for looked after children in Walsall in comparison to borough-wide outcomes:

- number who achieve the Government target of 5 A to C grades at GCSE, including English and Maths?
- number who achieve the Government target of 5 A to C grades at GCSE, excluding English and Maths?
- how many achieved only one GCSE, and how many left school with no GCSEs at all?
- how many miss more than 25 days schooling in a year?
- numbers who leave our care at 19 who are NEET (not in employment or training)?
- how many go to University?
- how many are assessed as having a mental health disorder?
- how many aged 10 or over were cautioned or convicted for an offence and how many have received a custodial sentence?
- how many within our care have become teenage parents?”

(5) **Councillor Creaney – Potholes and other highway defects
(Councillor Ansell)**

“How many complaints and what costs paid out and how many claims are pending, as a result of liability to damage both to people and vehicles from potholes and other highway defects both on pavements and roads over the borough in the last 12 months and can this be split into wards?”

8. Mayoralty 2010/2011. Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 2(vi) to name the Mayor-Elect and Deputy Mayor-Elect for 2010/2011 in accordance with the powers contained in Sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

9. Freedom of the Borough. That consideration be given, in principle, to conferring the honour of Freedom of the Borough on citizens of the Borough.

10. To confirm the following recommendations of the **Cabinet**:

(1) **Black Country Core Strategy**

That the Black Country Joint Core Strategy be approved and submitted to the Secretary of State.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 18th November 2009, reproduced in the report booklet for this meeting.)

(2) **Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education**

That the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education be approved for implementation in Walsall from 1 September 2010.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 16th December 2009, reproduced in the report booklet for this meeting.)

(3) **Housing Renewal Assistance Policy**

That the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy 2009-2011 as contained in Appendix A of this report, be approved and published with the commencement dates as listed in the policy document.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 16th December 2009, reproduced in the report booklet for this meeting.)

(4) **Public Rights of Way Gating Orders policy**

That the Public Rights of Way Gating Order Policy be approved.

(Note: Report to Cabinet on 16th December 2009, reproduced in the report booklet for this meeting.)

11. To confirm the following recommendation of the **Community Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel**:

That Councillor E.F. Hughes be appointed a non voting co-opted member on the Crime and Disorder Panel for the remainder of the municipal year.

12. **Local Admission Forum.** Report reproduced in the reports booklet for this meeting.

13. **Appointment on Walsall Community Transport**

- (a) To report to resignation of Councillor Towe.
- (b) To appoint a member to the Board of Trustees for the remainder of the municipal year.

14. To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given by **Councillors Robertson, Oliver, Wilkes, Sarohi, Chambers and Young**

This Council recognises:

- The enormously valuable work done in the Borough since 1992 by the Walsall Domestic Violence Forum (WDVF) working with those caught up in violence between partners or within families with 4826 people accessing this service in the last 12 months.
- Recognises that over 10,000 volunteer hours were contributed to this service during 2007/8 year.
- Acknowledges the considerable contribution made by WDVF to this Council by assisting us to exceed our stretch targets. An example is highlighted in the Crisis Intervention Service where repeat incidents in this year were reduced by an additional 12%.

Council expresses concern that the Forum has been subject to a £77k funding cut this year and has been notified of even greater cuts next year. Council resolves to work closely with the WDVF to enable full restoration of that funding and an expansion of this vital service in Walsall.

(Note: Report to follow.)

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

This Council condemns the Labour Government's policy of "floor damping" when allocating the formula grant which has seen this Council's grant funding slashed by the following amounts:

2008/9	£7.30 million
2009/10	£6.13 million
2010/11	£5.03 million

This equates reduction in grant to a total of £18.46 million over the three year period.

This Council calls upon this Government, and any incoming Government, to review this policy with a view to abolishing this unfair tax on the citizens of Walsall at the earliest possible date.