



COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 28th January, 2015

7.30 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Publication date: 20 January 2015

CONTACT

If you require further information or you would like a copy of this agenda in another format, e.g. large print, please contact Caroline Harris on 01923 278372 or by email – legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk .

Welcome to this meeting. We hope you find these notes useful.

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The Council Chamber is on the mezzanine floor of the Town Hall and a lift is available.

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20 January 2015

Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Borough of Watford to be held on Wednesday, 28th January, 2015 starting at 7.30 pm at the Town Hall, Watford to take into consideration and determine upon the following subjects, namely: -

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**
3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2014 to be submitted and signed.

Copies of the minutes of this meeting are usually available seven working days following the meeting.

(All minutes are available on the Council's [website](#).)

4. **OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**
5. **MAYOR'S REPORT** (Pages 1 - 8)
6. **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.0**
7. **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.0**
8. **PETITIONS PRESENTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12.0**

An e-petition and paper petition in the following terms has been received. At the time of agenda publication the petitions contained 105 signatures from Watford residents.

Statement:

We the undersigned petition the council to: The brand new Watford Market has a 1st floor food court which brings existing and new traders to provide a wide range of excellent food. The first floor food court has a designated public seating area which is located next to the Exchange road flyover. As the food court public seating area only has a roof but has no side panel/walls to shield the visiting public from the wind/rain/low temperature, we petition the council to provide additional heating/side panels in the public seating area.

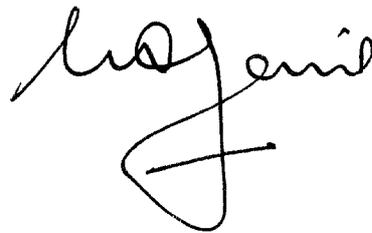
9. **BUSINESS ESPECIALLY BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.**
10. **MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13.0**
11. **FINANCIAL PLANNING - DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES 2015-18 AND THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015-18 - RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 19 JANUARY 2015**

Report of Cabinet – 19 January 2015 (to follow)

Please note that this report has been printed separately for Budget Panel on 15th January, Cabinet on 19th January and Council on 28th January. Members are reminded to bring their copy to this meeting.

12. **BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW** (Pages 9 - 16)

A report from Head of Democracy and Governance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manny Lewis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Manny Lewis, Managing Director

Mayor's Report - January 2015

Here is my report on information, news and updates relating to the town and my activities as Elected Mayor.

Town Centre

Town Centre Anti-Social Behaviour

Watford Town Centre had a quiet Christmas period in terms of anti-social behaviour, with no major incidents. Anti-social behaviour went down by 7% or 45 fewer incidents than in the same period last year.

The local authority now has the power to define an area as being under special protection from listed activities that are deemed persistent anti-social or negative to the wider community. This can include naming individuals or all members of the public from engaging in specified activities within the defined area by the order (an example would be creating an area in which it is an offence to consume alcohol). The area around Sainsbury's car park in the town centre has been given one such order keeping the roads clear so that people can disperse more easily at the end of the night.

Big Skate: The First Ever Outdoor Rink in Watford

The ice rink was a tremendous success. We could have had a few more people on the ice but we have not had a bad Christmas. It was a popular addition to our Big Events programme, with thousands of visitors and several of the sessions sold out. The start of the event was hampered by several days of unseasonably warm weather.

We've had some great feedback about how to make it even better should we run it again - people have suggested more music and transparent barriers so that spectators could watch. There was also a demand for more of the orange skating aids for young children to use.

Keep Safe Watford Re-launch

I helped to re-launch 'Keep Safe', a community safety scheme aimed at vulnerable people that enables them to obtain help and support when out and about in our town. Any premises displaying the 'Keep Safe' sticker will offer them a refuge from which they can make a phone call to any of the

Emergency Services, a support service or to a parent or carer if they need help.

Vulnerable members of the community who are involved in the scheme will carry a 'Keep Safe' card or key ring with their name and emergency contact telephone numbers on it. They may also have a small Keep Safe sticker on a personal contact card or on a mobile phone.

Many local shops have already stepped up and are displaying the orange sticker in their window. Staff from intu Watford and the library have also received training about the scheme. This is essential part of making sure that our town is a welcoming and safe place for everyone to enjoy. It was clear from the vulnerable residents present that the scheme helped them to feel safer.

Watford Museum's Bronze Age Bowl

A Bronze Age bowl from Watford Museum has sparked international interest after the discovery that it could be worth up to £100,000. The piece was passed into the care of Watford Museum after being discovered with a hoard of Bronze Age items including arrows and axe heads in 1968. The discovery came from an archaeological excavation during the construction of Watford Industrial Estate in the Holywell area.

The bowl, thought to date from the Bronze Age, has been flown to a museum in Mainz, Germany, for in-depth analysis. It is thought that the piece of crockery could be a really early example of international trading between Europe and other continents.

We often forget that there have been settlements around Watford for thousands of years. We tend to think of Watford as a product of the Victorian era, but there was clearly a Bronze Age settlement here.

Archaeologists and experts at the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum (RGZM) in Mainz will now undertake a full analysis and attempt to recreate the bowl using methods and materials dating back thousands of years. The replica and the bowl itself will then return to Watford Museum so that local residents can view it again.

Health Campus

Samantha Jones is to stand down as Chief Executive of West Hertfordshire NHS Hospitals Trust, to be replaced with interim chief executive Jacqueline

Kelly. I am pleased for Sam but disappointed for Watford, as she had a firm hand on the tiller and was steering us in the right direction – so I'm not surprised she has been headhunted for this prestigious role.

I have been assured of continuity with Jac Kelly and by the summer the hospital should have a clearer strategy – it can't come soon enough. It is a crucial time with the Health Campus project and we want to make sure there is a smooth transition. I look forward to working with Jac to ensure that Watford continues to get much needed investment and that local residents continue to get the health care they deserve.

Local Economy and Jobs

Watford Workshop Big Breakfast with Watford Chamber of Commerce

I was delighted to attend the Watford Workshop Big Breakfast with Watford Chamber of Commerce.

Watford Workshop provides invaluable work experience, skills, training and employment for disabled people. This helps them to achieve greater independence, become more integrated into the community and where possible move them on to mainstream employment.

Watford Workshop is available to hire for a large variety of customer requirements. Projects vary from complex mechanical/electrical assembly to simple packing for organisations of all sizes. Please go to www.watfordworkshop.co.uk/services for more information.

It was also a pleasure to meet again with Paralympian Derek Derenalagi who gave a very motivating speech about his life story.

Aspire Achieve Advance (3aaa) Apprenticeships

It was inspirational to meet with the 3aaa team following their recently awarded Grade 1 outstanding Ofsted rating from their first ever Ofsted inspection. 3aaa recruit and train young people who join some of the most innovative technology companies in the country as well as companies who know that exploiting technology will help their businesses grow.

Young people in Watford who are passionate about technology have the opportunity to receive excellent technical training IT, Accounting and Social Media, giving them the tools they need to succeed in the modern

workplace, and the skills that Watford needs to stay a competitive place for business.

Skills Show Experience Event

The Skills Show Experience Event which aimed to promote options and careers to young people was a great success. It inspired young people to think about careers and areas they haven't considered and looking at what they need to achieve this. There were employer and educational exhibitions, "have-a-go" sessions, workshops and seminars in a range of sectors including engineering, mechanics, hospitality and catering, health and social care and construction. Young people could learn about apprenticeships and starting their own businesses as well as about interview techniques and what employers are looking for.

We have good employment rates in Watford, but we need to work hard to ensure that every young person without exception has the skills and opportunities they need to flourish. There was tremendous support for this event from local employers who have shown that they are willing to invest in the next generation.

Sports and Parks

Watford Boxing Club

I am delighted that we have been able to find Watford Boxing Club new premises after its 10-year lease ran out and they were not able to renew it. The club's new home is in an old council-owned storage facility in Woodside Depot, which has been massively renovated.

It's fantastic that we have been able to save a boxing club that was struggling to find a new home and great that so many different people – including Council officer Caroline Roche, Veolia and the community – have come together to make this happen. I hope Watford Boxing Club has a successful future. Possibly we could even see another future Olympian rising up through their ranks!

Watford Boxing Club runs boxing classes for all ages and abilities from 6pm to 7.30pm on Sundays. The club hosts all-ability sessions for 10- to 16-year-olds from 6.30pm to 7.30pm and for those aged 17 and older from 7.30pm to 9pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. It is run by unpaid volunteer coaches, who are now trying to raise money to buy new equipment for the gym.

For more information on Watford Boxing Club, visit www.watfordboxingclub.co.uk

Watford's New Green Gym

Residents who want to burn calories and learn helpful gardening and conservation techniques will benefit from a new Green Gym that was recently launched in Cassiobury Park. The free, weekly sessions will be run by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), who have already had great success with a Green Gym in Colne River Park. The project is supported by Watford Council.

Over the course of the next three years those residents who volunteer to work out with the Cassiobury Park Green Gym will develop a wildlife friendly orchard, sow wildflower meadows, and create new wildlife habitats.

The Green Gym project has really taken off in Watford - I know the volunteers at Colne River Park have done some great work. I am sure it will do just as well in Cassiobury Park. Already you can see the results here - the insect wall is a brilliant idea and looks fantastic!

The free sessions take place every Wednesday between 10am and 1pm. They are open to all regardless of experience, ability or fitness, and run by an experienced leader; giving volunteers the chance to help transform the Cassiobury Park, learn new skills and improve their health and fitness. Contact GG-watford@tcv.org.uk or visit <http://www.tcv.org.uk/watford>

Christmas and Festivals

Christmas Spirit

I was pleased to join in a half-century tradition of the Toy Service at Stanborough Park Church as the congregation donated hundreds of new toys for needy children in the Watford area. The toys are collected from the church at the Annual Toy Service and distributed to needy families by social workers who know where the toys will find good homes.

Volunteers with Christians Across Watford also donated their time and money for the organisation's annual Operation Rudolph hamper pack. I visited them as they assembled 350 boxes of food and Christmas treats at Soul Survivor, and it was great to see such Christmas cheer. These

were delivered to people and families facing a difficult time over the festive period.

Mayor's Charity Christmas Card

I continued the tradition of contacting local businesses asking them to sponsor my Mayor's charity Christmas card in order to raise money for a local charity. This year the cards were designed by Angelica Sullano of Francis Combe School and raised £2,600 for the charity DEMAND.

DEMAND is dedicated to helping people with disabilities by providing bespoke equipment to make their daily lives easier and more enjoyable. DEMAND is a wonderful charity and I am really pleased to be able to help them in this small way. Their work - designing, manufacturing and modifying equipment - transforms the lives of people of all ages and with all types of disability.

Thank you to Humphrey's International Removals and Storage, Warner Bros Studios Leavesden, Watford FC, intu Watford, Sigma Pharmaceuticals, West Herts Golf Club, The Langley Banqueting and Conference Suites, and West Herts Golf Club for their generous support which will make a big difference to DEMAND.

Milad un Nabi - Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad

On 11th January Muslim residents held a process to celebrate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. It was a well run and enjoyable event. I was proud to see that our town hosts diverse festivals to celebrate the beliefs of all Watford residents.

Schools

Ascot Road School Topping Out

I joined head teacher Helen Lockham and pupil Ali Hanif at the topping out ceremony for the new Ascot Road School building next to Morrisons. We're all looking forward to the school building opening in May, especially the school's 60 new pupils started at the Lanchester building, on the West Herts College site.

School Visits

I was pleased to join Westfield Academy in honouring their past and present students' achievements at their prize evening. It was

especially enjoyable to talk with the young people about their successes and their plans for the future. It's great to showcase good things when all too often we only hear the bad.

I also had the privilege of addressing morning assembly at the Grove Academy, and celebrate an Art Mark Award win with Kingsway Infant School.

Billy's Wish

It was a pleasure to attend the launch of Billy's Wish education programme at Kingsway Junior School. The charity was set up following the death of a victim of knife crime and offers age specific films tackling the dangers of knife crime. There are three films, aimed at Year 6s, Year 7s and Year 8s. The aim is to reach children before they reach the age that they would realistically consider carrying a knife. We have a good record on crime in Watford, and Billy's Wish education programme will work with young people to help ensure this continues.

Around the Community

I've enjoyed getting out to meet as many groups and residents as possible, including visiting the Al-Zahra stall that was in the town centre and several churches.

I was particularly thrilled to attend the My Watford Local Heroes Awards, where hundreds of people gathered to celebrate some inspirational local residents while raising money for Peace Hospice Care and DRUM, a local disabilities charity. We have people of such incredible talent, kindness and perseverance in Watford and the surrounding areas. I'm very grateful for their contributions, and for the hard work of the organisers of the Local Heroes Awards who gave us an opportunity to pause for a moment to honour them.

Staff Excellence Awards

I was proud to give out excellence awards to a number of Watford Council employees and that their hard work has been recognised. They make a real difference to our town. A good time was had by all!

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PART A

Report to: Council
Date of meeting: 28 January 2014
Report of: Head of Democracy and Governance
Title: Recommendation to Local Government Boundary Commission on Council Size

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting of the 19 November 2014 Council agreed to set up a Boundary Review Group following notification from the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) that they intended to carry out a review of Watford's ward boundaries during 2015.
- 1.2 The Group has met twice, on 15 December 2014 and 14 January 2015. The LGBC also met with the Group on 15 December and subsequently gave a presentation to which all councillors were invited.
- 1.3 The Group was asked to provide a recommendation to Council on the optimum council size for Council to put forward to the LGBC.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council recommends that the size of Watford Borough Council remains at 36 councillors.
- 2.2 That the draft submission attached as appendix 1 be approved for submission to the LGBC to support the Council's recommendation

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Carol Chen Head of Democracy and Governance
telephone extension: 8350 email: carol.chen@watford.gov.uk

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The Boundary Review Group has met on 15 December 2014 where it heard from the lead officer from the LGBC Tim Bowden and Professor Colin Mellors a Commissioner. They also subsequently gave a presentation on the boundary review process to which all councillors were invited. The LGBC reminded councillors that any submissions made to them had to be evidenced based.
- 3.2 The LGBC advised that they required a view from Council on council size, as this would then determine how many wards the council would require, on the premise that as Watford elects by thirds each ward would still have 3 members.
- 3.3 This was considered by the Group at their meeting on 14 January 2015. Officers had prepared and circulated some statistics of what the council would look like based on a range of size from 39 down to 30 members. Information from the census and current electoral registration figures, together with the figure projected by Hertfordshire County Council for Watford for their recent boundary review was also available. The Group also referred to the self assessments most councillors had completed which were reported to annual Council and evidence that had been submitted to the Remuneration Panel which gave an indication of the amount of time councillors spent on council related business.
- 3.4 The Group also considered guidance from the LGBC on how they come to a determination on council size.

LGBC make it clear they have no preconceptions about the right number of councillors to represent an authority. They do not compare authorities directly with each other and they have no targets or thresholds for council size. Their aim is to recommend a size that allows a council to take decisions effectively, manage the business and responsibilities of the council successfully, and provide community leadership and representation.

They will specifically look at three areas:

- The councils governance arrangements
- The councils scrutiny functions
- The representational role of councillors in the local community.

- 3.5 Having considered all the information that was before them and also considering the view of the 2 non grouped councillors the Group unanimously came to the view that in order to carry out effective decision making, manage the business successfully and provide effective community leadership that the current number of councillors at 36 was the optimum to recommend to the LGBC.
- 3.6 Attached at appendix 1 is a draft submission for approval to support the recommendation

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that keeping the same number of councillors as at present will have no budgetary implications

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that this is the first step in the boundary review process. The Local Government Boundary Commission has the ultimate decision making power over the size of the Council.

Appendices

1. Draft Submission – *to follow*
2. Draft Minutes of Boundary Review Group 14 January 2015

Background Papers

Reports to Boundary Review Group 15 December 2014 and 14 January 2015

File Reference

None

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Public Document Pack

BOUNDARY REVIEW GROUP

14 JANUARY 2015

Present: Councillor I Sharpe (Chair)

Councillors N Bell, S Johnson, A Khan and D Scudder

Also present: Councillor B Mehta

Officers: Electoral Services Manager
Head of Democracy and Governance
Democratic Services Manager

5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None were received

6 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST (IF ANY)

There were no disclosures of interest

7 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th December were submitted and signed.

8 COUNCIL SIZE

At the first meeting of the Group on 15 December 2014 Members agreed to speak to their respective groups and report back on views on recommendations to Council for the optimum size of the Council.

The Head of Democracy and Governance presented the report and drew the Group's attention to the statement from Councillor Ian Brandon, the Green Party Member, which had been received. Councillor Binita Mehta from the Conservative Party attended the Group meeting to present her views.

The Head of Democracy and Governance commented that figures had been provided for the Group in the report to give them an indication of different sizes which the Council could look at i.e., with 30, 33 or 39 Councillors. She reminded the Group that any choices made must be evidence based. It was highlighted that the Boundary Commission requested evidence of the Councillors' constituency work to take into their considerations.

The Chair commented that the amount of time which a Councillor spent on their Council work varied significantly between Councillors.

Councillor Khan had submitted that he spent 26 hours per week on Council work. This had been calculated using his calendar for the year and then averaged as some periods were busier than others. He had excluded the months leading up to the election where time was spent more on political campaigning. However, during the year door knocking and leaflet production could be tools to connect with the local community and get their views on an issue.

The Chair and Councillor Scudder commented on the figures in the pack which had been provided to the Independent Members Remuneration Panel. It was felt that these would not have significantly changed since they were produced in 2013.

Councillor Khan suggested also including in the Council's submission, evidence gathered from the Councillors' individual self assessments which documented their community activities.

The Chair said it would be hard to justify the case for having an increased number of councillors and commented that the size of the Council could not be reduced for the reason of making financial savings.

The Head of Democracy and Governance responded that when the Council had tried to do this previously it was on the basis of reducing the number of Councillors in each ward. This present review was brought about from the Boundary Commission due to different numbers of electors in each ward. Therefore, the Council needed to consider if the number of Councillors was reduced by three what effect would this have on their ability to serve the electorate.

The Chair considered that a decrease in the number of Councillors would affect the Council, particularly with regards to the Licensing Committee. The Licensing Sub Committees put pressure on those Councillors who are available during the day. If the Council reduced its size to 30 Councillors then half would have to be on the Licensing Committee. Those Councillors would also need to be available during the day. Again with scrutiny committees, if the Mayor was part of a minority group then it would leave few members available to sit on scrutiny once the Mayor had set up their Cabinet. Scrutiny was particularly important in a Mayoral authority. The workload for the Development Control Committee had reduced but sufficient Councillors were required to be able to sit on the committee and also to have trained Councillors to act as substitutes when needed. He concluded that he could not see a case for increasing Councillor numbers nor would it be helpful to decrease them and that therefore the Council should propose 36 members to the commission.

Councillor Bell commented that from looking at reports and census information it would be hard to justify an increase in Councillor numbers. A reduction to 30

would put pressure on licensing and scrutiny committees so 36 Councillors was about right.

Councillor Mehta said that she had come to the same conclusion but thought that 25 hours per week for Councillor work was an understatement. Having three Councillors in a ward helped to balance the work. Councillor Mehta commented that there should not be a situation where having a day job prevented people from being a Councillor in order to attract and retain young people as Councillors. This was in response to earlier comments regarding the need for Councillors to be available during the day to be on Licensing Sub Committees. She felt that 36 was an appropriate size for the Council.

The Chair drew the Group's attention to the comments received from Councillor Ian Brandon. However, the proposal was not acceptable as the final number had to be divisible by three.

Councillor Khan commented that Watford was the most densely populated, cosmopolitan Borough outside London with a wide variety of casework for Councillors. Councillor Khan questioned the difference between figures given by the Boundary Commission for the number of registered voters and the Council's figures.

The Elections Manager responded that this was due to Individual Electoral Registration as 2000 voters had not registered under the new system.

Councillor Khan drew the Group's attention to some statistical research he had undertaken. Out of all councils in England (352) Watford ranked 146/352 for the number of electorate represented by each Councillor. If County Council's were removed from the total then Watford was 146/325. Finally if only two-tier districts were left then Watford ranked 137/201. This demonstrated that Watford's Councillors represent a larger number of electors than many other similar Councils. He commented that scrutiny was particularly important and needed to be sharp and effective due to the increased amount of outsourcing.

The Head of Democracy and Governance explained that following the Group's meeting the Council would put forward its case for 36 Councillors, however, the final decision was with the Boundary Commission. In response to questions she commented that the Boundary Commission's decision was final. Once the outcome was known from the Boundary Commission on the Council's size then the Group would reconvene to discuss ward boundaries. The result from the Commission could possibly not be known until May. GIS would be available to help plot wards.

ACTION – Electoral Services Manager to find out when the online tool regarding ward boundaries would become available to Councillors.

ACTION – Democratic Services Manager to contact Partnerships and Performance Section Head regarding missing population information for Callowland ward.

RESOLVED

That the Group recommends to Council that a proposed size remaining at 36 Councillors is put forward to the Local Government Boundary Commission.

Chair

The Meeting started at 6.30 pm
and finished at 7.15 pm