



COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 27th January, 2016

7.30 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Publication date: 19 January 2016

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.

ACCESS

The Council Chamber's Public Gallery is situated at the rear of the Town Hall between the main building and the side entrance to the Colosseum. Access is via the visitors' and Members' car parks.

Visitors may park in the staff car park after 4.00 p.m. and before 7.00 a.m. This is a Pay and Display car park; the current charge is £1.50 per visit.

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

Induction loops are available in the Council Chamber.

TOILETS (including disabled)

Toilets are situated on the first floor, near the Committee Rooms.

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- Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so.

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An audio recording may be taken at this meeting for administrative purposes only.

19 January 2016

Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Borough of Watford to be held on Wednesday, 27th January, 2016 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 14 October 2015 and the Extraordinary Council meeting of 23 November 2015 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 7 - 10)
6. **DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES 2016/2019**

Report of Cabinet 18 January 2016 (to follow)

Please note that this report has been printed separately for Budget Panel on 13 January, Cabinet on 18 January and Council on 27 January. Members are reminded to bring their copy to this meeting.

7. **PROPERTY INVESTMENT STRATEGY, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Report of Cabinet 18 January 2016 (to follow)

8. **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.0**
9. **PETITIONS PRESENTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12.0**
10. **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.**

11. MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13.0

1. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Sharpe and seconded by Councillor Taylor:

“This council notes that

- *Hertfordshire County Council is proposing further significant cuts to bus services across the county as part of its budget for 2016–17.*
- *This is part of £20 million cuts envisaged in the county council’s budget proposals, alongside a 3.99% (maximum possible) council tax rise.*
- *Among the proposals is a possible axing of the £390,000 grant to Transport for London for routes that cross the boundary between Hertfordshire and Greater London, which could threaten the popular 142 and 258 routes from Watford to Brent Cross and Harrow.*
- *This follows a £1.5 million cut in funding for bus routes by the county council last year.*

This council believes that

- *These routes provide an essential service to students attending the Bushey schools, as well as to passengers travelling to destinations in North London, including accessing the Underground network.*
- *The financial settlement from the Conservative government is forcing drastic cuts on local communities, the county council should make every effort to protect vital public transport routes, such as the 142 and 258.*

This council calls on Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that any arrangement with Transport for London maintains the current level of service on the 142 and 258 routes.”

2. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Haley and seconded by Councillor Dhindsa

“This council notes the massive disruption caused by the poorly planned road works on Wiggshall Road that had been continuous for the last two weeks and is ongoing.

This disruption is creating havoc for local residents, particularly in Watford Fields and West Watford, with short journeys across Watford taking hours. Workers are finding it difficult to get to work on time, and students are being late for school.

The disruption is also having a detrimental effect on the local economy as shoppers avoid coming into town, and local businesses are being hit.

The ill planned works have created a rat-run through Watford Fields, as forewarned by the Watford Fields Residents Association, past a popular local school.

The mayor promised that disruption would be kept to "a minimum" but the everyday gridlock caused by this poorly planned road closure demonstrates the

incompetency of this fading and tired regime.

Council is called upon to take immediate action and work with Herts County Council to reduce the detrimental impact of the road works, and that for any future large scale road closures that Watford Council consults and engages with residents who would be directly affected when plans are being formulated and not when they are about to be implemented.”

3. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Rogers and seconded by Councillor Mehta

“Warner Brothers Studio Expansion.

Council notes the continued success of the Warner Brothers Studios and Harry Potter Tours, as well as the significant benefits these have brought to the area, including the positive manner in which they communicate with local residents. Additionally, Council welcomes the positive manner in which the local residents in Woodside regard the Studios and their operations.

Council welcomes the application of Warner Brothers Studios for further expansion of the Leavesden Studios filming facilities and Tours and notes the confidence this shows in our local area. The Council looks forward to working with Warner Brothers and Three Rivers District Council on their future plans which bring so much pleasure to so many.

Council therefore requests that the Mayor writes to Warner Brothers with this message.”

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 2016

Watford Police Station

Following the closure of the Custody Suite at Watford Police Station I met with Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner David Lloyd to discuss policing in our town.

Police budgets are very tight, and the Home Secretary made a statement in December that every police force in the country will need to make spending cuts every year for the next four years. On top of this Mr Lloyd has promised cuts in the police council tax precept.

However, I made it very clear to the Commissioner that we still need a proper police presence in Watford, and that I had serious misgivings about closing the custody suite.

I am grateful that in the meeting Mr Lloyd assured me that the new custody arrangements will be monitored to make sure that officers aren't taken away from frontline policing. There will be reviews in February and May.

I hope that the new system works as intended, but if it doesn't I shall demand that the Watford custody suite opens again - and I know lots of local residents will join the campaign.

Crime has gone down in recent years, but we shouldn't get complacent. Watford is the largest town in the county, and so near to London. There will always be some crime, and we will always need Police Officers in our town centre and in our community.

Anti Social Behaviour has fallen again for the sixth year running in Watford.

Last year reports of ASB fell by 8% - that means that ASB in the borough has now halved since 2009. We are not complacent, though, and we will continue to work with professionals and residents to stop all ASB in our town.

There will always be some random nuisance and anti social behaviour caused by those who don't care about the quality of life of others, but it is reassuring to see that while the town continues to flourish and grow such incidents of ASB across the borough have fallen dramatically.

The Council continues to encourage residents to report any incidents to the police non-emergency number 101 as they occur. This makes it easier to spot trends and tackle any potential problem areas.

Watford Markets

This year the High Street hosted Watford's first German Christmas Market. It was a new experience for the town, and looked great. We are currently evaluating its success and whether we should host a German Christmas Market next year, and if so, what format it should have.

The windscreen covering Watford New Market is currently under construction. The scaffolding is in place for the steel work and panels to be put in place.

A new Marketing Manager who will have responsibility for Watford Market has started at Town and Country Markets. Over the coming weeks TCM will be finalising their marketing and events plans in consultation with the traders. These will be shared with the Markets Board in February.

Free WiFi Launched in Town Centre

Free town centre WiFi was unveiled in time for Christmas shoppers. The new WiFi network provides seamless, 'always on' connectivity for users out and about in the town, at no cost and without time or bandwidth limitations. Over 2,500 people are already using the fast, free WiFi in Watford. This is a partnership with intechologyWiFi meaning that the network will operate at no cost to the taxpayer.

Wiggenhall Road Lane Closure

Hertfordshire County Council's closure of the southbound lane on Wiggenhall Road has caused significant delays for many residents. There was a publicity campaign including newspaper, radio and social media stories in the weeks running up to the closure and 10,000 residents were sent letters.

Unfortunately, it is always the case that roadworks on an arterial road in Watford will cause delays – especially in the early days when motorists are not used to the official diversions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank officers and County Councillor Stephen Giles Medhurst who have been working tirelessly to minimise disruption.

Car Parks Refurbishment Ahead of Schedule

I'd like to thank residents for putting up with the inconvenience of the refurbishment of our town centre car parks. I'm confident that everyone will agree that the upgrades will make the car parks cleaner, brighter and nicer to use.

The good news is that the works are ahead of schedule. All the spaces are

open to the public in Gade and Church car parks, and Sutton is well on its way.

Mayor's Christmas Card

The Mayor's Christmas card raised £3,850 for New Hope, who help over 500 homeless people every year in Watford. Thank you to the sponsors: Warner Brothers Studios Leavesden, Watford FC, intu Watford, Camelot, Sigma Pharmaceuticals, West Herts Golf Club and Humphreys Data Management.

W3RT's Pancake Race

Finally, I urge you all to have some flipping fun and sign up for Watford's first pancake race. It's a fundraiser for the W3RT Community Fund which works at a grass-roots level providing vital services to disadvantaged or vulnerable people and families. You can sign up at

www.goldengiving.com/event/WatfordPancakeRace2016

