



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**



COUNCIL MEETING

16 March 2023

7.30 pm

3rd floor, Town Hall Annexe, Watford

Contact

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8 March 2023

Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Borough of Watford to be held on Thursday, 16 March 2023 starting at 7.30 pm at the 3rd floor, Town Hall Annexe, 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 31 January 2023 to be submitted and signed.

4. **Official Announcements**
5. **Mayor's Report (Pages 10 - 14)**
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**

A petition has been received in the terms set out below. At the time of agenda publication the petition contains 101 signatures of Watford residents.

“Lights and CCTV at Cassiobury Park Watford

We the undersigned petition the council to We, the undersigned, are concerned about the lack of proper lighting and CCTV in Cassiobury Park. We believe that the addition of lighting in key areas of the park would greatly improve the safety of the community. We have been made aware that there have been several incidents of assault happening in the park, which highlights the urgent need for increased security measures. Darkness presents a number of hazards, including the potential for crime and accidents. the undersigned members are concerned after a recent victim of an attack and assault in the park that resulted in serious head injuries, injuries to the body and hospitalisation. More people shared their fears and similar experiences if not worst.

We call on Watford Council to take immediate action to install lighting in the park, specifically in the following areas:

Entrance Cassiobury park by tennis courts , path from entrance to top of the park alongside cricket club, outdoor gym and various benches leading up to town as it is used daily during commuting hours by Watford residents. We would be grateful for more lighting and CCTV cameras across the park. The police was unable in the past to track the offenders due to lack of resources and CCTV. The victims were unable to identify their attackers due to lack of lighting and darkness. We believe that this small investment in the park will have a big impact on the safety and enjoyment of the community. We urge you to take action and make Cassiobury Park a safer and more accessible space for all.”

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. Council Pay Policy Statement 2023 (Pages 15 - 56)

11. Motions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 13.0

1. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Ezeifedi and seconded by Councillor Khan:

“Selling Vaping Product to Children and Young people in Watford

In the past few years, vaping among adolescents has risen sharply, both nationally and internationally. Action on Smoking Health (ASH) data shows that 8.6% of 11- to 18-year-olds in England vaped in 2022, compared with 4% in 2021. The charity also reported that among those who tried vaping, 40.1% had never smoked before.

Recent Chartered Trading Standards Institute research found that 60% of local trading standards services report high street shops selling vapes or vaping products to children. Trading standards teams reported a significant rise in underage vape sales last year, with more than a fifth of youngsters buying vaping products from newsagents while 16.3% buying them from a supermarket. Watford seems to mirror this trend with most secondary schools seizing vaping products in school premises as well as a high number of shops selling these products to underage.

The effects of e-cigarettes and vaping are still not yet fully understood - which is especially important in the context of young people, as their lungs are still developing. There is growing evidence that e-cigarettes can help people manage their nicotine cravings – but this isn’t without risk. While research has shown vaping poses a small fraction of the risks of smoking, it is

deeply worrying that more and more children – who have never smoked – are starting vaping.

The LGA has called on its members to step up enforcement to deal with growing numbers of shops selling vapes to children despite the 18 age limit, with many “especially concerned” by child-friendly marketing, including colourful packages.

This council agrees the following: that the Mayor should

Write to the Secretary of state for tighter regulations on the marketing of vape products, including a ban on brightly-coloured packaging and a review of the flavours vape companies use which are likely to appeal to children.

Call for harsher punishments for companies which flout advertising rules to promote their products on social media, and for more licensing powers to allow local authorities to ban the sale of e-cigarettes in shops near schools.

Also resolves that the Mayor to write to the County Council Trading standards to:

- Carry out regular test purchases and have seized products and issued fixed penalty notices when a business has been found to be in breach of the law.
- Implement mandatory age-of-sale signage on vaping products.
- Implement sanctions for breaching these rules should also be the same as penalties handed out under tobacco display regulations.”

2. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Turmaine and seconded by Councillor Bell:

“Support for Passivhaus standards.

This council notes that:

Watford Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. It has also set a goal of being carbon neutral by 2030.

The council has a partnership with Watford Community Housing to deliver homes, including those for social rent and affordable rent.

This council recognises that:

Passivhaus homes are very energy efficient and can reduce energy bills by huge margins. The Passivhaus approach to building homes, retro-fitting

homes and designing office space is sustainable and growing in popularity.

The cost-of-living crisis and the climate crisis are both emergencies that Watford Borough Council can have a direct impact on through its policies and activities.

Local authorities are using Passivhaus properties to provide housing that is more environmentally sustainable and reduces the costs of energy for their tenants.

This council resolves to:

Initiate conversations with its housing partners and developers to explore the use of a Passivhaus approach to its buildings for the future.

To propose a review of its existing buildings, together with its partner housing providers, with regard to retro-fitting to Passivhaus standards.”

3. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Stotesbury and seconded by Mayor Taylor:

“Tackling the climate emergency

Council notes

- On 29th March 2023, the Climate Change Committee, created as a result of the Climate Change Act 2008, will present its biennial Adaptation Progress Report to parliament. This will outline what progress has been made in preparing the UK for the consequences of climate change and set out what the government should do to tackle the climate emergency.
- Thanks to Liberal Democrat policies in government between 2010 and 2015, the UK made major strides in cutting emissions from power generation, with wind power is now the cheapest form of electricity generation. However, little progress has been made since.
- Last year’s heatwave demonstrated that the UK already faces significant challenges from the changing climate; these will intensify as warming continues. The ongoing war in Ukraine and its impact on fuel costs has also highlighted the need to move to renewable energy sources. So far, the Government has been too slow to react to the issue of clean energy and energy security.
- That Watford Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and an

ecological emergency in 2020.

Council welcomes:

- The recent creation of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, reversing the Conservative government's short-sighted and damaging decision to disband the Department for Energy and Climate Change in 2016.
- The decarbonisation works on the Town Hall which will reduce the council's carbon footprint and reduce running costs, saving local taxpayers £300,000 per year.
- The work by Watford Borough Council to create its new environmental strategy. This includes undertaking a wide-ranging consultation on a draft strategy and creation of a final strategy and delivery plan to become a net zero carbon town by 2030.
- The significant capital investment in sustainability and biodiversity improvements agreed as part of the 2023/4 budget, including:
 - Funding for our green spaces strategy - £150,000
 - Continuation of our tree planting programme - £50,000
 - River Colne restoration works - £250,000
 - Cassiobury Park Wetlands project - £75,000
 - Shrub replacement in open spaces - £25,000
 - Supporting sustainable transport through our Transforming Travel in Watford Strategy - £100,000
 - electric vehicle charging programme - £100,000
- The further funding through the council's revenue budget, including £500,000 to implement the Environmental Strategy Delivery Plan and £421,000 as part of the sustainability reserve.

Council calls for:

- Funding from the government to be increased and made available to enable councils including Watford, to reach zero carbon town by 2030.
 - The Mayor to write to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero to outline the work Watford is already doing and lobby for more support for local councils so they can achieve their net zero carbon objectives."
4. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Stotesbury and seconded by Councillor Feldman:

“Bus services in Watford

Council notes:

- Bus services in Watford and across Hertfordshire are causing significant distress to residents. The Mayor and ward Councillors regularly receive complaints from residents who are frustrated that buses are being cancelled, are irregular and are not well maintained.
- Since 2020 the number of miles covered annually by buses have decreased by one third and even before the COVID pandemic was static or falling over a period of a decade. Despite recovery of passenger numbers since the pandemic, services are not increasing in line with this.
- Many residents who had previously using bus services in Watford are being forced to use their cars and alternative methods such as taxis. For some this is increasing their monthly outgoings at a time of a cost-of-living emergency.
- Watford Council have been proactive in supporting bus services in Watford through the Arriva Click demand-responsive bus service but wider changes are necessary to provide the level of bus service they deserve.

Council believes:

- A cheap and reliable bus service is vital to support modal shift from polluting private vehicles to more sustainable forms of transport.
- For many people, including the elderly and young people going to school, buses provide independence and freedom for individuals who otherwise would not have that opportunity.
- The TfL model of transport delivery allows for more regular services that are tailored to the needs of residents, not shareholders and is preferable to the system used in Hertfordshire and most parts of the country.
- The unfair imposition of ULEZ by the Labour Mayor of London, which will have knock-on effects locally, underlines the importance of fixing public transport.

Council calls for:

- The Mayor to write a letter to the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council and demand better services for Watford.

- The Mayor to write to Ministers at the Department for Transport to ask what is being done to improve bus services nationally and what plans they have to allow other areas to apply a TfL model for bus services across the UK.”
5. The following motion has been proposed by Councillor Pattinson and seconded by Councillor Trebar:

“Watford Borough Council notes that:

- i. 51 per cent of the UK population will directly experience the menopause during their lifetime;
- ii. Over 13 million women in the UK are either menopausal or perimenopausal at any time;
- iii. 4.5 million of those 13 million women are in the workplace;
- iv. Three out of four women experience menopause-related symptoms with one in four experiencing serious symptoms;
- v. 1.6 million working days are lost to menopause symptoms annually as a result.

Menopause can see women experiencing a wide range of symptoms including hot flushes, fatigue, anxiety, disturbed sleep, heavy and erratic periods, mood swings, rage, heart palpitations, and itchiness.

The intensity and combination of some of these symptoms can be unsettling. In particular, when oestrogen levels decrease in the lead up to menopause, cognition suffers. Women may struggle with memory, word retrieval, and other cognitive activities. For some, the change in cognitive function is so pronounced they fear they are developing dementia or Alzheimer’s. These changes can also reduce their confidence to manage their work, home and social life.

Hormone levels may exacerbate existing conditions such as ADHD, and medication and strategies for managing those conditions may not work as effectively as they once did.

Many menopausal women are finding it difficult to obtain Hormone Replacement Therapy medicines due to increased demand and supply chain issues, adding to their anxiety.

Support for women with menopausal symptoms in the workplace is variable and understanding by managers and other employees is often limited. In some cases, understanding and empathy is so poor that women receive insults and rude comments from colleagues and managers. As a result, many women end up leaving their workplace as they feel unable to continue in


their role.

Watford Borough Council welcomes steps taken by the Council's HR department in developing and implementing menopause support for its staff.

Watford Borough Council asks its partner organisations, to review their People Management policies to ensure that their staff and WBC retained staff going through the menopause have the understanding and support they need.

The Council also commits to:

- i. Campaign for menopause support to form a central part of the next national Women's Health Strategy;
- ii. Working with Hertfordshire County Council and other local health organisations to ensure that support for those experiencing menopause is a central part of the next Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing strategy;
- iii. Supporting the #MakeMenopauseMatter campaign which is calling for:
 - a) Mandatory menopause training for all GPs and menopause to be taught as part of every medical school curriculum,
 - b) Menopause guidance and support in every workplace,
 - c) Menopause to be added to the Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum for schools throughout the UK."

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Donna Nolan', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Donna Nolan, Chief Executive