

# Agenda Council

**You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, to be held on Tuesday, 12 April 2022 at 6.10 pm for the purpose of transacting the following business:-**

**The Mayor of Sandwell, Councillor Mushtaq Hussain, in the Chair**

- |          |  |                |
|----------|--|----------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b>   | <b>13 - 14</b> |
|          | To receive apologies for absence (if any).   |                |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Declarations of Interest</b>  | <b>15 - 16</b> |
|          | Members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.                |                |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Minutes</b>   | <b>17 - 36</b> |
|          | To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 1 March 2022 as a correct record. |                |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Urgent Business</b>   | <b>37 - 38</b> |
|          | To consider any urgent business (with prior approval by the Mayor).                        |                |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Mayor's Announcements</b>   | <b>39 - 40</b> |
|          | To receive announcements from the Mayor.   |                |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Petitions</b>   | <b>41 - 42</b> |



To receive petitions under Standing Order No. 5.

**7 Written Questions**

43 - 44

To consider written questions under Standing Order No. 6 to:-

- (a) the Mayor;
- (b) the Leader of the Council;
- (c) any other member of the Cabinet;
- (d) any person appointed to preside at a committee, sub-committee or panel;
- (e) the members of the Council nominated pursuant to Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985, on the discharge of the functions of the following Joint Authorities:-
  - (i) West Midlands Combined Authority (the Leader);
  - (ii) West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority (Councillor C Padda);
  - (iii) Transport for the West Midlands (Councillor Akhter);
- (f) a nominated member appointed by the Council to the Board of Sandwell Leisure Trust;
- (g) a member of the Council who is, as a result of action taken by or on behalf of the Council, a member or director of any company.

8	<b>A Performance Management Framework for the Council</b>	45 - 66
	To approve the proposals for the adoption of a corporate performance management framework.	
9	<b>Adoption of the Reviewed Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles</b>	67 - 152
	To approve the revised Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles.	
10	<b>Proposed Departures from the Development Plan</b>	153 - 176
	(a) To consider a proposed departure from the development plan on land at Brandon Way, West Bromwich – DC/21/66365;	
	(b) To consider a proposed departure from the development plan on land at Brandon Way, West Bromwich – DC/22/66482;	
	(c) To consider a proposed departure from the development plan on land at Providence Place/Sandwell Road, West Bromwich – DC/22/66501;	
	(d) To consider a proposed departure from the development plan on land at Tinsley Street, Tipton – DC/22/66538.	
11	<b>Annual Report of the Planning Committee 2021</b>	177 - 190
	To receive the annual report of the Planning Committee.	
12	<b>Annual Report of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee 2021-2022</b>	191 - 216
	To receive the annual report of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee.	

- 13 **To receive the minutes and recommendations of Cabinet** 217 - 294

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23 February and 23 March 2022 and to consider the recommendations arising:-

- (a) Opposition member appointment to Climate Change Working Group

- 14 **To receive the minutes of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board** 295 - 304

To receive the minutes of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board held on 10 and 16 March 2022.

- 15 **To receive the minutes of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee** 305 - 308

To receive the minutes of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee held on 31 March 2022 and to consider the recommendations arising:-

- (a) Nominations for the Offices of Mayor/Chair of Council and Deputy Mayor/Vice Chair of Council of Sandwell for the 2022/23 Municipal Year

- 16 **To receive the minutes of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee** 309 - 364

To receive the minutes of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee held on 22 February and 22 March 2022 and to consider the recommendations arising:-

- (a) Review of the Members' Code of Conduct  
(b) DBS Checks for Elected Members  
(c) Review of the Social Media Policy for Elected Members

## 17 **Notice of Motions**

To consider the following motions received under Standing Order No. 7:-

### 17.1 **Cost of Living Crisis**

**Proposer: Councillor Carmichael**

**Seconder: Councillor Luke Giles**

Rising inflation, surging energy prices and the increase in national insurance contributions will have a real impact in lowering the standard of living for Sandwell residents.

Our Families and households face an average loss of a staggering £1,200 in income – a huge amount of money for those who already live close to, or below, the bread line. They will also see a rise in energy costs and taxes and at the very same time inflation is at a high 6% and forecast to be in excess of 8%.

We are concerned that even more Sandwell residents will be forced to choose between heating or eating, not a modern day decision that any of our residents should have to take. Heating bills are increasing massively, prices in shops for basic foods is rising to a level that some of our residents cannot afford now afford to shop and are relying on food banks for the first time. They have also had to contend with the reduction in universal credit so our families in Sandwell are on the brink of absolute poverty.

The removal of the triple-lock on pension increases means pensioners will lose out, and any savings they have are being eroded by inflation. There was nothing in the Chancellor's Spring statement for pensioners.

The government ranks Sandwell as an area of high deprivation but instead of a proper funding settlement for local services have to apply for 'beauty contest' grants that do not cover the value

that we use for our vulnerable residents who are caught up in this cost of living crisis. Our children are suffering, watching their parents struggle, being hungry and cold in their own homes – these are our future and we need to look after them.

This council resolves to call upon the four Sandwell Members of Parliament to urge the Government to take immediate steps to:

1. Apply pressure to energy companies to reduce energy metre payments so that they fall in line with those who pay by direct debit;
2. Take VAT off fuel bills in the short term to alleviate costs to our residents
3. Provide a proper fair funding strategy which recognises areas of high deprivation and not a series of grant application bids.
4. Protect pensioners from rising prices, including the 1.5 million low income people on pension credit, by uprating pensions in line with the Bank of England's inflation forecast of 6%.
5. Reinstate the £1,000 boost to Universal Credit, to ensure that the most vulnerable households get proper support.
6. Double the Winter Fuel Allowance payment paid to all pensioners for this year
7. Introduce a one off windfall tax on the record profits of gas producers and traders, to help fund the doubling of the Warm Home Discount and Winter Fuel Allowance

## 17.2 Hybrid Meetings

**Proposer: Councillor Chambers**

**Seconder: Councillor Akpoteni**

The Government issued a call for evidence on 21 March 2021 in relation to remote meetings. The Council, through the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee submitted a response in support of retaining the option to facilitate formal meetings on the basis that the period of lockdown showed that remote meetings brought so many benefits to local democracy and residents.

The Government have yet to respond to the large number of submissions from local authorities, relevant organisations and the public.

“This Council supports the petition launched by the Association of Democratic Services Officers and Lawyers in Local Government on 5 January 2022 with regard to remote and hybrid meetings. This Council resolves for the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities calling on the Government to change the law to allow councils the flexibility to hold such meetings when they deem appropriate within agreed rules and procedures.”

## 17.3 National Landlord Register

**Proposer: Councillor Ahmed**

**Seconder: Councillor Piper**

This Council notes:

The private rented sector plays an important part in providing accommodation in Sandwell. The sector has grown from 5% in 2001, to 15% in 2011 through to an estimated 26% (34,386) units of accommodation in the borough for 2018. There are numerous high-quality landlords and letting agents providing a range of property types

throughout the borough to meet a broad range of housing needs.

However, as councillors we too often hear from renters having to put up with unsafe conditions, harassment and violence, scared to complain in case this leads to a Section 21 'no fault' eviction – putting them at risk of losing their home.

That's why private renting needs a serious overhaul. The government has recognised a change is badly needed with its planned Renters' Reform Bill – with a promise to scrap Section 21 evictions.

But the government must go further. England is the only UK country without an official scheme that registers landlords, and they should use this opportunity to include a National Landlord Register which would keep a central record of every landlord and make it a legal requirement for landlords to declare essential safety information about their properties.

This would help to make the sector more professional and give renters the power to challenge poor standards and illegal acts.

This Council resolves to call on the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities urging him to include a National Landlord Register in the Renters' Reform Bill.



## 17.4 **Divestment from fossil fuels and industrial livestock**

**Proposer: Councillor Rollins**

**Secunder: Councillor Owen**

This council is extremely concerned that The West Midlands Pension Fund, administered by Wolverhampton Council still invests 6.9% of equities in fossil fuels. This is being used to fund new oil, gas and coal infrastructure which is driving climate breakdown.

If we are to keep to the internationally agreed aim of preferably 1.5°C of warming, most known reserves of coal, oil and gas will need to remain in the ground. The companies that are still looking for new reserves of fossil fuels now represent a risky long term investment. If humanity succeeds in averting catastrophic climate change then they will be left with stranded assets in the form of vast amounts of fossil fuels that can never be burned. This will be reflected in share prices.

Birmingham City Council and Dudley MBC have already voted for divestment.

In addition, the Fund holds around £39m of investment in industrial livestock. The world's biggest five industrial livestock companies together emit more greenhouse gases than ExxonMobil. If current growth trends continue, the global livestock industry will be using up almost half the world's 1.5°C emissions budget by 2030.

Industrial livestock companies drive global deforestation, human rights abuses and inhumane factory farm systems.

This council believes that the Fund should officially take a stance of divestment from fossil fuels and industrial livestock and urgently produce a plan for reinvestment locally to support transition to a low carbon future.

This council will write to Wolverhampton Council, as the administrator, and to the West Midlands Pension Fund expressing the above.

#### 17.5 **Call to Remove the Leader from Office**

**Proposer: Councillor Williams**

**Seconder: Councillor William Gill**

“This council has no confidence in the Executive's ability to tackle the 'deep-seated culture of poor governance and leadership' in the council and resolves to remove the leader from office and calls on the cabinet to resign.”



**Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL**  
**Managing Director Commissioner**  
Sandwell Council House  
Freeth Street  
Oldbury  
West Midlands

#### **Distribution**

All Members of the Council

Contact: [democratic\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)

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