

MOTIONS FOR DEBATE FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

To consider the following Motions of which notice has been given in accordance with Standing Order 4(1)

A. Councillors Jon Hunt and Roger Harmer have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

“Council notes with concern the pressures on neighbourhood policing and high levels of public dissatisfaction with community policing presence and with the 101 phone service.

Council further notes with concern the increase in youth offending reported in the recent Youth Justice Strategic Plan, a 13.7% increase in first-time offenders over 12 months.

Council recalls that the concept and practice of community policing was pioneered in the Handsworth district of our city in the last century.

Council believes that a strong and positive police presence in our communities and neighbourhoods is vital for prevention of crime of all kinds, for maintaining the safety and wellbeing of the city and for the cohesion of our diverse city.

Council regrets the continuing decline in officer numbers in West Midlands Police (a reduction of 2.7% in the last year) and commends its officers for their perseverance at a time when there are major pressures, which are both financial and arising from significant threats to public safety.

Council therefore resolves:-

1. to take all opportunities to lobby Government for support, financial and practical, for enhanced neighbourhood policing;
2. to convey its concerns to the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner and the Mayor of the West Midlands;
3. to request the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel to conduct an investigation into how neighbourhood policing can be sustained, with particular reference to:-
 - a) the potential for enhancing the role of PCSOs in engaging neighbourhoods;
 - b) the question of the public accessibility of the police; and
 - c) the role of the 101 service in handling public inquiries."

B. Councillors Paulette Hamilton and Jayne Francis have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

"Birmingham City Council notes that:

- There are growing concerns about the harassment of women attending the Marie Stopes Birmingham Centre on Arthur Road, Edgbaston.
- Women seeking pregnancy terminations are being targeted by pro-life protestors and this street harassment is a form of sexism against women.
- Independent research for the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) has shown that the intimidation and distress felt by the women is also linked to women's broader experiences in public spaces.
- While the distress caused is clear, the efficacy of such protests is not. The number of women who decide to continue their pregnancy after contacting an abortion clinic does not change whether or not there are anti-abortion activists outside.

The council acknowledges that those with deeply held beliefs will continue to campaign against abortion. However it is inappropriate to further this debate by targeting women outside healthcare providers.

Women in Birmingham have a right to make healthcare decisions privately and should be able to access pregnancy termination services without hindrance.

The right to protest must be balanced with the right of pregnant women to choose and to obtain advice and treatment in confidence and free from intimidation.

Furthermore, staff at all women's health clinics should be protected from bullying and intimidation at their place of work.

Those who wish to campaign to restrict women's reproductive choices have plenty of opportunities and locations in which to do so. The area outside a clinic need not and should not be one of them.

The council therefore resolves to:

- Uphold the right of women to seek advice from health services and make difficult decisions on pregnancy terminations free from intimidation and harassment.
- Work with other local authorities dealing with this issue to fully explore all options to prevent protestors from intimidating and harassing women outside women's health clinics in the city.
- Take steps to protect the privacy of staff, patients and nearby residents."