

Merton Council Council

3 February 2016

Supplementary agenda

25 Non Priority Questions

1 - 4

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Non Priority Ordinary Questions by Directorate 3 February 2016

Environment and Regeneration:

43. From Councillor Charlie Chirico to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration:

What is the Council planning to do to better publicise future consultations on Crossrail 2 proposals impacting our borough in order to ensure affected residents are fully engaged with the process?

Reply

The recent Crossrail 2 consultation (October 2015 – January 2016) was publicised by the Council via our website, community forums, twitter as well as partnership events (Merton Chamber, Love Wimbledon, Raynes Park Association) and local ward meetings at the request of councillors.

We have, in our cross-party response to Crossrail, highlighted the inadequacies of their consultation. Going forward, the council will publicise future consultations on Crossrail 2 via the channels mentioned earlier as well as My Merton (subject to publication lead-in times).

We are also now in contact with local groups, including the new Wimbledontowncentre.com group, with whom we'll publicise any consultations.

Separately, the Council will embark on a master planning process, which will be the process in which residents can engage with the council through 2016 to shape ideas and proposals for Wimbledon. For Raynes Park, Weir Road and West Barnes, we will keep councillors updates and publicise any consultations via the Community Forums or Business Forums in the areas.

44. From Councillor Janice Howard to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Cleanliness and Parking:

Can the Cabinet Member update me on the success or otherwise of the Christmas tree collection across the Borough, as I know in Wimbledon Park Ward the collection has been patchy and some roads still have not had their trees collected? How do collection rates compare with last year's performance?

Reply

Despite government cuts to local services, Merton has kept its free Christmas tree collection service. We ask residents to put their tree out by 10 January to guarantee collection. This is because we work across the borough street by street on a schedule. If residents put their tree out after 10 January we may already have covered their road and we don't have the resources to go back for people who were late. However in such cases residents can bring their tree to the Garth Road depot.

This year's service was a success and we collected over 10,000 trees despite having to undertake unplanned winter gritting during the same period, due to a sudden cold snap. Collection rates were broadly in line with last year – actual numbers tend to

vary from year to year and this year we were slightly down on numbers but there was an increase in tonnage.

45. From **Councillor Daniel Holden** to the **Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration**:

What discussions has the Council had with TfL and what measures is it putting in place to ensure that Merton is ready for the implementation and effects of the Night Tube when it goes 'live' later this year, including with regard to street cleaning and noise nuisance?

Response:

ANSWERED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANLINESS AND PARKING

In respect of street cleaning we will monitor the situation once the night time tube has been introduced.

In general the use of an operational railway is somewhat outside the nuisance powers of local authority officers but TFL are aware of the potential for complaints and have made the following commitment:

"Noise and disturbance

We are sensitive to the potential of additional noise and disturbance created by the Night Tube. We are carrying out a thorough assessment of noise issues alongside local authority Environmental Health Officers before the service.

Once the Night Tube is operational, we will continue to work with residents to investigate any issues regarding noise. We will also ensure that any station announcements do not cause excessive noise levels.

We will continue to deliver upgrade and maintenance work, and when possible we plan to do this overnight between Sunday and Thursday on the Night Tube lines."

Chief Executive/Corporate Services

40. From **Councillor David Williams** to the **Cabinet Member for Finance**:

Further to Councillor Allison's response to my question about Stouthall at the 18 November 2015 Council meeting (including supplementary exchanges), could the Cabinet Member please outline the extent of the involvement of ILEA in the purchase and operation of the leases?

Reply

I am sorry to say that some of the information contained in my answer of 18 November was inaccurate. I was incorrectly advised by officers in advance of the

November council meeting that Stouthall was originally the property of the old Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) and was transferred to the council's ownership when the then Conservative government then shut down the ILEA. Although I referred to this in passing (and in parenthesis) in my written response, it appears that this was not in fact the case and I apologise if this inaccuracy has caused him any distress. I am afraid I was probably still in short trousers at the time this was supposed to have happened, so I had to rely on officers to provide the information.

Nevertheless, I am happy to confirm that the substance of my response remains the case. Cllr Williams was Leader of the Council from 2006-2010 when he failed to make any income at all from Stouthall. I had by this stage transferred to long trousers!

I am also happy to confirm that I was correct in saying that, thankfully, this current administration has managed to sub-let the property, and this is going some way towards re-couping our costs.

41. From **Councillor David Williams** to the **Leader of the Council**:

Would the Leader please list the meetings and correspondence he has had since the last ordinary meeting of the Council on 18th November 2015 to save St Helier Hospital?

Reply

I again thank the Member for ensuring residents are informed about the work I continue to do in relation to safeguarding the future of St Helier hospital. Since the last meeting I have undertaken the following:

- I publicly welcomed LB Sutton's decision to progress with the new London Cancer Hub at the former Sutton hospital site, which demolishes the case for moving St Helier hospital to this site. I have had a number of previous discussions with the Leader of LB Sutton on this issue and we gave a joint presentation to the London Enterprise Partnership, under the auspices of the South London Partnership, to garner support for this important initiative which has now come to fruition and helps to safeguard St Helier on its current site.
- Both myself and the Chief Executive of Merton CCG were speakers at the Merton Partnership Conference (which I chair) and I again pressed the case for St Helier with Mr Coyle.

Community and Housing

42. From **Councillor David Simpson** to the **Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities**

What steps has this administration taken over the last 12 months to encourage and incentivise Merton residents to play their part in the wider safety of the community in which they live by volunteering to become special constables? How many more Merton residents have done so over the past year?

Reply

The Met Police carry out London-wide recruitment for volunteer special constables. Volunteers are asked to choose 5 boroughs where they would like to work. We do not have data on how many special constables are Merton residents as recruitment is organised centrally by the Met Police and is not borough specific.

Children, Schools and Families:

NONE