

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT	
	<u>NOTES OF MEETING</u>
	Subject: Wimbledon Community Forum
	Date: 23rd September 2014 Time: 19.15
In attendance	<p>Councillor James Holmes – Chair; John Hill (Head of Public Protection) – Lead officer; Rana Bhutta – Consultation and Community Engagement Officer; Ian Callaghan – Strategic Data Analyst, Safer Merton (LBM); Richard Lancaster – Future Merton Programme Manager (LBM); Tara Butler – Programme Manager - Strategic Policy and Research (LBM); Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Councillor Abigail Jones, Councillor Peter Walker, Councillor Najib Latif, Councillor John Bowcott; Councillor Linda Taylor Helen Clark-Bell (Love Wimbledon); 17 local residents</p>
Action Needed By:	<p>1. <u>Welcome/Introductions</u></p> <p>1.1 Cllr. Homes welcomed all to the meeting at the Wimbledon Guild's Drake House.</p> <p>1.2 Each of the councillors in attendance introduced themselves and the ward they represent.</p>
	<p>2. <u>Minutes of last meeting/Update – John Hill (JH)</u></p> <p>2.1 Manhole covers on Kingston Road in South Wimbledon have been repaired. If residents notice any others, they should inform JH.</p> <p>2.2 Vibrations on Hartfield Road were identified to have been coming from a damaged sewer, which has now been repaired. The council will continue to monitor the situation.</p> <p>2.3 Residents had previously voiced concerns about uplighters and planters outside Wimbledon Station. The council has been unable to pinpoint a fault in the lights so is looking to replace them entirely and is currently in negotiations with Philips (the lighting provider).</p> <p>2.4 Following concerns that were raised about benches and trees on Wimbledon Way being in poor condition, a small amount of S.106 monies have been identified that could be used toward the cost of carrying out improvements. Whilst this is a low priority for Council officers, they will progress this and update accordingly.</p>
	3. <u>Safer Merton Consultation – Ian Callaghan (IC)</u>

	<p>3.1 Safer Merton is carrying out its annual Strategic Assessment which looks at all community safety issues in the borough. The survey will run until the end of October; anyone living and/or working in the borough is encouraged to fill it in at https://consult.merton.gov.uk/KMS/elab.aspx?noip=1&CampaignId=492&SessionId=H8SUWY5GDX</p>
SA/JH	<p>4. <u>Merton Council Budget – Stephen Alambritis (SA)</u></p> <p>4.1 SA gave an overview of the council’s budget, explaining that spending this year is the equivalent to income, therefore the budget is balanced and the council is financially sound. Additionally, the General Purposes Committee, which scrutinises the council’s budget, has given it a clean bill of health.</p> <p>4.2 Council Tax was frozen for the last four years and will continue to be frozen for the next four. Cuts in Council Tax Support have also been absorbed by the council so that those on benefits are not affected. The council’s figures were examined with the Financial Director and the Cabinet Member for Finance to ensure that the council was in a position to be able to continue the freeze.</p> <p>4.3 Budgets have been cut since 2010. The council has had to save £44m since then and needs to save another £32m in the run-up to 2018/19, therefore is working in a challenging environment.</p> <p>4.4 SA explained that the council has £18m in reserves, which is in line with other councils. There is another £49m in allocated reserves which covers things such as school expansions and PFIs. £10m was allocated for the new Morden Park Pool which the council said it would deliver.</p> <p>4.5 Whilst discretionary funding from Central Government has decreased, locally raised funding is around £75m and has stayed at this level. Figures relating to the Council’s accounts can be seen at http://democracy.merton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=1965&Ver=4. Some money is also coming in from developers.</p> <p>4.6 SA and JH both agreed to look into whether any trees on Shelton Road had been missed out during the recent works undertaken in the road as part of the council’s rolling programme of pruning trees.</p>
	<p>5. <u>Tramlink – Richard Lancaster (RL)</u></p> <p>5.1 RL gave a presentation on the consultation carried out on proposals to extend the Tramlink from Wimbledon to Sutton via Morden</p>

	<p>http://www.merton.gov.uk/tramlink_wimbledon_community_form_presentation_sept_2014.pdf</p> <p>5.2 Should the proposals develop further, additional consultation on them will be carried out.</p> <p>5.3 Any effect that new tram lines might have on the ambulance route to St Helier hospital would need to be looked at carefully, although generally trams can run along the same routes as other modes of transport.</p>
	<p>6. Neighbourhood Plans / Planning issues – JH and Tara Butler (TB)</p> <p>6.1 An application for the Greyhound Stadium is likely to be submitted in October-November 2014. If submitted, a three-week consultation will follow on the planning application.</p> <p>6.2 Proposals for Court Number 1's roof at the AELTC have been registered as a live application, therefore consultation will be carried out on them.</p> <p>6.3 A decision has not yet been made on the Wimbledon Bridge House application as issues surrounding it are still being discussed - primarily about the façade extending shop fronts from the ground to the first floor.</p> <p>6.4 A replacement application for a six-storey building at 41-47 Wimbledon Hill Road was recently refused planning permission on grounds of poor design, unacceptable proposed living conditions and lack of any evidence of the current use of the premises being commercially marketed.</p> <p>6.5 There has been no movement on the Henry J Beans hotel development, which was granted permission on appeal earlier in 2014.</p> <p>6.6 TB gave a presentation on Neighbourhood Plans, a scheme whereby residents can get involved in designing a development plan for their area, which would help decide planning applications http://www.merton.gov.uk/neighbourhood_plans_presentation_to_wimbledon_forum_sept_2014.pdf. If agreed, the plan is valid for five years.</p> <p>6.7 Should disagreement occur over specific areas e.g. multiple plans for the same area, the council would consult on the matter. Groups with conflicting plans would also be asked to aim to resolve matters between themselves.</p> <p>6.8 Independent assessors examine the plans. These assessors</p>

	<p>are either from the Planning Inspectorate, or from one of four independent organisations that can also provide experts for mediation.</p> <p>6.9 Groups have to consult on their plans and report on the results of the consultation. If there are objections to a plan, the independent assessor would decide if said objections are valid.</p> <p>6.10 Helen Clark-Bell from LoveWimbledon said she would be proposing to her organisation's board that they consider neighbourhood planning for the BID area.</p>
	<p>7. <u>Soapbox</u></p> <p>7.1 The piazza outside Morrison's is privately owned by pensions company F&C Reit. LoveWimbledon is in continuous communications with the company about how to use and improve the space, but it is a big decision for F&C Reit to make.</p> <p>7.2 The council has been working with the Mayor's office for the last six months to figure out what funding Merton will receive as a result of its Mini-Hollands bid. The work is still on-going, therefore it is not yet clear how much Merton will get.</p> <p>7.3 Cllr. Bowcott raised the issue of noise disturbance generated by emergency vehicles and referred to several complaints that he had received from his constituents regarding this matter. John Hill advised that such noise would be difficult to prove as detrimental to amenity, but asked that Cllr. Bowcott forward him the details of the particular complaints so that further investigation could be undertaken by environmental health officers.</p> <p>7.4 Noise from out-of-hours construction is normally a matter that would be dealt with through Planning as a result of a developer breaching any Hours of Construction condition imposed on a relevant planning permission. However, in some instances, noise can be generated from building works that do not require planning permission. In such circumstances the Council's Env. Health team can investigate source of disturbance. John Hill reminded residents that whilst every endeavour is made to follow up complaints promptly, complainants need to be aware that the Council has limited planning enforcement resources with just four officers covering the whole of the borough.</p> <p>7.5 The council has a rolling programme for cleaning street gutters. If there are particular problem areas, they can be reported to John Hill, who will liaise with officers in Street Scene & Waste .</p> <p>7.6 Approximately 60 submissions were received for the Future Wimbledon ideas competition. A shortlist will be announced at</p>

Bookfest in October, which the public will then be able to vote on.

7.7 The Council has engaged Kingdon to provide enforcement of littering offences in Wimbledon Town Centre. The cost of a fixed penalty notice is £75.

7.8 An online discussion board has been launched as part of the Wimbledon Community Forum, allowing residents, businesses and stakeholders to have more input in the topics discussed at the meetings and to participate virtually if they are unable to attend the meetings. The discussion boards can be found at www.merton.gov.uk/consultation.

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