

COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2015

NOTICE OF MOTION

This Council recognises that cleanliness of the borough's streets is clearly a top concern for people across Merton, according to the latest Annual Residents' Survey. Over a third of residents now cite litter and dirt in the streets as their primary concern, which is a 10% increase over the last 2 years and the highest level for a decade.

This Council therefore welcomes the various clean up events arranged in the borough - both by the council and other community organisations and representatives - including as part of the recent Community Clear Up Day 2015, and pays tribute to the on going efforts of local campaigning groups, including Sustainable Merton and Merton Matters, which - together with many other local residents – are working to assist the council in addressing the problem of street cleanliness in the borough.

This Council is however concerned that:

- Since October last year, there have been reductions made to the level of Sunday street cleaning service in Merton's town centres;
- The overall number of street cleaners employed in Merton has reduced from 112 in 2010 to 103 today. Yet, over the same period there has been a significant increase in the number of traffic wardens employed.
- A further 7 street cleaning staff are due to be cut in 2016-17 as part of the Business Plan 2015-19;
- Dog waste bins are also set to be removed across the borough in 2016-17 despite the fact that fewer than half the residents asked in the latest Annual Residents' Survey were satisfied with the way in which Merton Council deals with dog fouling;
- According to a recent Freedom of Information request, 21,700 people felt it necessary to contact the Council about street scene and waste issues last year alone; and
- Concerns are consistently being raised with councillors that the Council's stated policy to 'sweep every road once a week, twice if required' whilst 'town centres and main shopping parades should be swept daily Monday to Saturday' is visibly not being adhered to in practice, despite the increase in littering being experienced across the country.

Furthermore, this Council believes that missed waste collections are also a factor contributing to the problem, since not only do additional resources have to be deployed to rectify the service failures reported, but this uncollected waste further adds to the detritus on Merton's streets.

This Council therefore resolves to call on Cabinet to:

- a) Reverse its previous decision and reintroduce street sweeping immediately after refuse collections;
- b) Reverse its previous decision and reintroduce a full Sunday street cleaning service in Merton's town centres;
- c) Seek to identify replacement efficiency savings over the coming months that would protect Merton's street cleaning service from the further cuts planned for 2016-17 e.g. by encouraging greater use of the 'Love Clean Streets' smartphone App;
- d) Conduct a full review of the training and monitoring systems in place for frontline street cleaning staff to ensure that the Council's stated policies and agreed service levels are actually delivered on the

- e) Join a borough-wide, cross party anti-litter campaign as proposed by the Merton Matters campaign group;
- f) Strenuously enforce fixed penalty notices for the minority of people who litter our streets; and
- g) Ensure that road gutters/gullies, which residents frequently complain remain filled with litter and dead leaves, are cleared on a regular basis.

Cllr Michael Bull

Cllr John Bowcott

Cllr David Dean

Cllr Daniel Holden

Cllr Abdul Latif

Cllr Jill West