

Notes of the Raynes Park Community Forum – 6 December 2012

The Meeting was chaired by Chris Larkman, Chair of the Raynes Park Association, as Cllr Iain Dysart was unable to attend because of sickness.

1) Police. PC Lee Abberton gave a brief presentation. He said there had been card identify thefts from Barclays Bank in Raynes Park by people attaching a 'holder', called a "Lebanese loop", which catches cards when they are inserted in the cash machine. Crime has otherwise been low in the area.

He also warned against leaving notes for parcel deliverers on front doors, as they advertise that the householder is not at home.

2) Health. Dr Howard Freeman said that the Raynes Park Medical Centre will open on 28 January. Kingston Hospital will begin their activities soon after. St Anthony's, who will also be using part of the building, will start a little later. Dr Freeman detailed the two year re-building of the Nelson Hospital and said that, among other things, two doctors' surgeries will work from the new hospital. He also spoke about 'Better Services Better Value' and the complications about the future hospital configuration in the SW London area, and, in particular, the future alignment of St Helier Hospital. The consultation process is delayed because of complications over Epsom Hospital.

3) LB Merton's Review of Adult Skills and Employability. Cllr Ray Tindle and Rebecca Redman from LBM had been due to give a presentation. However they failed to turn up and no apologies had been received.

4) Merton's Community Plan. Revd Andrew Wakefield spoke about the Community Plan on which he is leading. He asked people to respond to the questionnaire, emphasising the importance to hear from as many people as possible.

5) Raynes Park Station & Embankments. Chris Larkman said that Stephen Hammond MP met with someone senior in Network Rail who has agreed to do some external decoration to the station to include the bridge and the parapets. They had promised to clear the embankment between the station and the Skew Arch on the north side in October, but this still has not happened.

6) 'Kiss & Ride'. Chris Larkman said he has now understood that Network Rail have let go of their demands to hold on to 4 parking places in front of Station House and that they will now submit a planning application minus the parking spaces. This will protect the plans for the Kiss & Ride at that point.

7) Rainbow Estate. Tony Edwards (Plan, Design & Planning) gave an update on plans for the Rainbow Estate. No formal application has yet been submitted. However, a local consultation group has been set up and is on-going. There remain concerns among local people about the viability of residential units on the estate, given the limited access road.

8) Raynes Park Enhancement Plan. Tony Edards & Chris Larkman said that they are working with the Council to implement more of the plan. They are particularly interested in achieving some small improvements by ridding the town centre of unwanted street furniture, bollards etc. There is also some work to be completed near Wetherspoons and the re-designing of the area to the south of the Skew Arch.

9) Planning Matters. Chris Larkman said that there is a public meeting at Southey Bowls Club at 8pm on 10 December when they will talk about their proposals. The Emma Hamilton planning application has been turned down a second time. The developers are appealing.

10) Parking. Concern was expressed at the pressure of parking spaces in the now reduced number of roads outside a CPZ. There was also concern for local businesses who find it either a) very difficult to park or b) too expensive. Pat Erricker submitted a paper with a request that the points he raised should be put to the Council on behalf of the Forum. 1) Alternative parking regimes instead of CPZs 2) More sensible rules for people with dropped kerbs 3) More flexible use of residential spaces for business use when available 4) Consider the CPZs operation for less than the full day.

There was near unanimous agreement that the Council should be requested to undertake a consultation on reducing the hours of the CPZ from the current whole day. Many wanted a one hour restriction, thus causing minimal disruption. (If the purpose of the CPZ is to prevent commuter parking the one hour restriction would serve the purpose.) However, one resident living near the station preferred to maintain the full day arrangement.

11) Open Forum and Other Business.

a) Plaque. Chris Larkman said he understands Raynes Park will be given a plaque to commemorate its rating as the 'Best Performing Town Centre in the London Suburbs'. It was suggested the best place for it may be on the surrounds of the tree in the Bellmouth.

b) Postal Collections. Chris Larkman said that there have been negotiations with the Post Office to provide some 17.30 collections in SW20 where the usual last collection takes place at 16.00. They have agreed a total of 7 later collections.

c) Street Cleaners. Chris Larkman said he'd met with Street Cleaner Managers. They are looking at ways of clearing the mess on the wobbly surface opposite Wetherspoons.

d) Waitrose. Rhys Edwards, deputy manager, thanked people for the enormously generous donation of food for their collection for people in need. The Food Bank, organised by the Tressell Trust, is based at the Elim Church on the High Path Estate.

The next Raynes Park Community Forum is at 7.15pm at the Library on 7 March 2013.