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# **Merton Council**

## **Council**

**17 November 2021**

### **Supplementary Agenda**

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COUNCIL 17 NOVEMBER 2021

## NOTICE OF MOTION – STRATEGIC THEME MOTION

### **Planning Enforcement**

Council recognises the importance of good town planning and understands that local residents want planning applications that are approved to be adhered to and properly enforced.

Council notes that the building development control function has for a quite a long time struggled to properly undertake planning enforcement with the latest statistics showing that the number of planning enforcement cases closed each month are at 46% of their target.

Residents demand and expect that all development in Merton is in accordance with sound planning principles and planning law.

Therefore, council requests that the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate emergency in conjunction with the Director of Environment and Regeneration put in place measures to improve planning enforcement and report on progress to council in 6 months' time, and to each meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Council expects the following aspects to be included:

- Online portal for planning enforcement cases which councillors and residents can see;
- Easier reporting of planning breaches on the council website;
- Action plan to tackle the backlog in planning enforcement cases;
- Better communication between the Planning Dept and the public and councillors;
- Clearer outcomes on planning enforcement with stronger measures taken;
- Stronger enforcement of existing planning laws against individuals and developers who break planning rules;
- Council to use public communications to highlight enforcement breaches (with an emphasis on those who fell trees);
- Senior Planning officers to review the outcome of development following completion to ensure that greening measures have been implemented, especially tree planting;
- Stronger protection of existing trees via greater use of Tree Protection Orders.

Cllr Daniel Holden

Cllr David Dean

Cllr Ed Gretton

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Council 17 November 2021

Agenda Item 7b: Strategic Theme Main Report

Liberal Democrat Group amendment to recommendations within the main Strategic theme report - Sustainable Communities - Enforcement:

To add the following Recommendation B:

“Council believes that the existing Cabinet Member portfolio ‘housing, regeneration and the climate emergency’ is too wide to allow a genuine and effective focus on each of those areas. Therefore, to bring a greater level of active leadership on housing enforcement in both the private rented and social housing sectors, the Council requests the Leader of the Council to change the allocation of portfolios in order to appoint as part of his administration, a Cabinet Member with only (or mainly) responsibility for Housing”

So that the report now reads:

Recommendations:

- A. The Council review and consider the content of the report; and
- B. Council believes that the existing Cabinet Member portfolio ‘housing, regeneration and the climate emergency’ is too wide to allow a genuine and effective focus on each of those areas. Therefore, to bring a greater level of active leadership on housing enforcement in both the private rented and social housing sectors, the Council requests the Leader of the Council to change the allocation of portfolios in order to appoint as part of his administration, a Cabinet Member with only (or mainly) responsibility for Housing

Cllr Anthony Fairclough

Cllr Eloise Bailey

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