

Merton Council

Council

20 November 2013

3rd Supplementary agenda

Tabled amendments to motions

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AMENDMENT TO MOTION AGENDA ITEM 7c COUNCIL MEETING 20 NOVEMBER 2013

Councillor Oonagh Moulton will move and Councillor Linda Taylor will second that the words underlined in the amended Motion below be inserted and the words struck through be deleted.

Agenda Item 7c – Notices of Motion

UKIP Motion

This Council recognises that demand for secondary school places will start to increase in 2014/15 and that there will be considerable pressure on secondary school places by 2015/16. Council further recognises it will have to build a new secondary school in the borough to meet demand and fulfil its responsibilities under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996.

At their peak in 1964, there were 1298 Grammar schools in the UK. Today there are just 164 despite:

- A 2010 ICM poll for the National Grammar Schools Association in which 76% of adults and 85% of 18-24 years olds said they supported the introduction of new state grammar schools, especially in urban areas where there currently are none.
- A YouGov poll of Greater London residents in June 2013 concluding 66% of Conservative and 62% of Ukip voters agreed the government should encourage more schools to select by academic ability and build more grammar schools, and more Labour and Liberal Democrat voters wanted to either maintain or expand Grammar schools than didn't.

Changes to the law were introduced last year by Michael Gove allowing any existing Grammar schools to be expanded and this is already being progressed in Kent with the proposed expansion of a successful Grammar school on a satellite site in Sevenoaks. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, has voiced his support for Grammar schools, saying academic selection is right for some pupils at some point in their education. Likewise, Welsh Conservatives are seeking to incorporate the most successful elements of grammar schools into the modern Welsh education system by proposing a system where children are educated in either academic or vocational streams from the age of 14. The former Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Woodhead has expressed his view that "grammar schools have contributed more to social mobility than any other institution this country has ever known."

In neighbouring Sutton, Liberal Democrat MP Paul Burstow has said he believes that the five Grammar schools in his constituency should be able to take in more pupils. Just over 1,600 pupils sat the initial entrance test for a place at Sutton Grammar School for Boys this year, for instance, more than 13 for each available place.

At present, just 5% of secondary school pupils nationwide are now educated at Grammar schools, and 50% of those who pass Grammar entrance exams are unable to secure a place. Parents in Merton often express dismay to Councillors of all political parties that they have to send their children out of the borough to get the quality Grammar school education they want for their children.

This Council wants to see high quality educational opportunities for young people from different backgrounds right across the borough and believes it should encourage some

selection by ability, so pupils from low-income families can escape poverty and gain a high standard of education. It is not fair that bright students whose parents cannot afford to send them to fee-paying schools or buy houses close to good or outstanding schools should be held back.

This Council believes that Grammar schools should not be the preserve of the lucky few who happen to live in areas where they exist currently but should be available wherever residents want them.

Council therefore requires Cabinet to:

1. Follow up on the direct approach made by Conservative councillors to the Secretary of State for Education asking him to consider a new satellite in Merton of one of the successful Grammar schools in Kingston and Sutton as part of a commitment to increasing school choice and diversity;
2. Open a public consultation on whether Merton should have Grammar Schools for girls and boys as part of a wider engagement with Merton's parents, teachers and governors on academies and free schools;
3. Continue with the talks already instigated by Conservative councillors with neighbouring Grammar Academies in the boroughs of Kingston and Sutton to explore options for opening satellite Grammar Academies in Merton and;
4. If the outcome of the public consultation is in favour of Grammar schools for Merton, to implement the most appropriate options identified under 1 and 3, above, as soon as possible.

The amended Motion would then read:

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This Council recognises that demand for secondary school places will start to increase in 2014/15 and that there will be considerable pressure on secondary school places by 2015/16. Council further recognises it will have to build a new secondary school in the borough to meet demand and fulfil its responsibilities under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996.

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- A 2010 ICM poll for the National Grammar Schools Association in which 76% of adults and 85% of 18-24 years olds said they supported the introduction of new state grammar schools, especially in urban areas where there currently are none.
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academic selection is right for some pupils at some point in their education. Likewise, Welsh Conservatives are seeking to incorporate the most successful elements of grammar schools into the modern Welsh education system by proposing a system where children are educated in either academic or vocational streams from the age of 14.

The former Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Woodhead has expressed his view that “grammar schools have contributed more to social mobility than any other institution this country has ever known.”

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This Council wants to see high quality educational opportunities for young people from different backgrounds right across the borough and believes it should encourage some selection by ability, so pupils from low-income families can escape poverty and gain a high standard of education. It is not fair that bright students whose parents cannot afford to send them to fee-paying schools or buy houses close to good or outstanding schools should be held back.

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Liberal Democrat amendment to agenda item 7d – Conservative strategic theme motion on education

Delete action points b) and c), replacing with;

b) “Initiate and lead a comprehensive, pupil-focussed strategy involving parents, teachers and governors which considers local provision and need. This should include, but not be limited to, such aspects as faith and secular schools, mixed ability and streamed teaching, availability of sufficient playing space, and maximising the educational and life opportunities of each child. By not constraining public engagement to a narrower focus on buildings, such an approach would recognise the agenda set by national Government, whilst also being mindful of what the Council can and cannot influence”

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Agenda Item 7

Labour Amendment to Motion 2 - Conservative Motion on the Strategic Theme

In the second paragraph, replace “the Government’s” with “successive Governments”

Insert new third paragraph as follows:

“Council congratulates all our young people on their achievements and particularly welcomes the hard work of our Governors, Headteachers, Teachers, Teaching Assistants and other school staff. Teaching Assistants in particular are often the unsung heroes of our schools’ success, supporting pupils with particular individual needs and working as partners with teachers in the shared goal of improving student achievement particularly in relation to literacy and numeracy.”

In the existing third paragraph, after “academies” insert “and in accordance with the wishes of parents,”. Delete “and potentially a satellite grammar school” and insert “led by parents in areas of school places shortages employing properly qualified teachers and with proper systems of financial accountability and transparency”.

At the end of the fourth paragraph add “and welcomes Cabinet’s adoption of a secondary schools expansion policy on 11 November which agreed a phased approach subject to regular reviews of supply and demand”.

Delete action points b) and c), replacing with;

b) “Initiate and lead a comprehensive, pupil-focussed strategy involving parents, teachers and governors which considers local provision and need. This should include, but not be limited to, such aspects as faith and secular schools, mixed ability and streamed teaching, availability of sufficient playing space, and maximising the educational and life opportunities of each child. By not constraining public engagement to a narrower focus on buildings, such an approach would recognise the agenda set by national Government, whilst also being mindful of what the Council can and cannot influence. Such an approach to be led by Scrutiny , with the ability to include relevant stakeholders such as for example governors, teachers and parents, and to explore all options including parent-led financially accountable and transparent schools with properly qualified teachers in areas of need, to ensure quality and choice are at the heart of Merton’s secondary school provision”

Add new action point C) as follows:

“C) Continue to support the work of the Merton Education Partnership in developing links and pooling resources between all schools in the borough, irrespective of

status, and to ensure that any decisions about the future direction of Merton's schools are accountable through the Council's scrutiny process."

Motion now to read:

This Council welcomes the positive educational changes that have been achieved here in Merton over recent years through close partnership with the borough's schools, pupils, staff, parents and governors, and which have included:

- Providing sixth forms in all those secondary schools which didn't previously have them;
- Building a new Special Educational Needs Centre of Excellence at Perseid School in Morden; and
- Improving school buildings across the Borough and investing in enhanced facilities at Merton's schools.

In conjunction with successive Governments' clear focus on raising standards and the new, more rigorous OFSTED regime, Merton has seen a sustained improvement in results since 2006, and particularly in levels of attainment at GCSE.

Council congratulates all our young people on their achievements and particularly welcomes the hard work of our Governors, Headteachers, Teachers, Teaching Assistants and other school staff. Teaching Assistants in particular are often the unsung heroes of our schools' success, supporting pupils with particular individual needs and working as partners with teachers in the shared goal of improving student achievement particularly in relation to literacy and numeracy. However, this Council recognises that there is much more to do in order to ensure we provide world class opportunities for Merton's young people. Given the on going pressures facing the borough in meeting rising demand for both primary and secondary school places, this Council believes an ambitious plan is needed to expand our secondary schools and encourage other providers to set up outstanding schools in Merton, including academies and in accordance with the wishes of parents, free schools led by parents in areas of school places shortages employing properly qualified teachers and with proper systems of financial accountability and transparency .

This Council welcomes the innovative work of the recent Scrutiny Task Group on the Provision of Secondary School Places, which has recently published its wide ranging recommendations including on funding and maximising the use of assets and welcomes Cabinet's adoption of a secondary schools expansion policy on 11 November which agreed a phased approach subject to regular reviews of supply and demand.

In order to achieve the borough's twin goals of driving up educational standards whilst also increasing the number of school places available for families in Merton, this Council calls on Cabinet to:

- a) Accelerate any actions contained within the Action Plan for the Secondary School Places report which can potentially be implemented straightaway;

Initiate and lead a comprehensive, pupil-focussed strategy involving parents, teachers and governors which considers local provision and need. This should include, but not be limited to, such aspects as faith and secular schools, mixed ability and streamed teaching, availability of sufficient playing space, and maximising the educational and life opportunities of each child. By not constraining public engagement to a narrower focus on buildings, such an approach would recognise the agenda set by national Government, whilst also being mindful of what the Council can and cannot influence. Such an approach to be led by Scrutiny , with the ability to include relevant stakeholders such as for example governors, teachers and parents, and to explore all options including parent-led financially accountable and transparent schools with properly qualified teachers in areas of need, to ensure quality and choice are at the heart of Merton's secondary school provision; and

- b) Continue to support the work of the Merton Education Partnership in developing links and pooling resources between all schools in the borough, irrespective of status, and to ensure that any decisions about the future direction of Merton's schools are accountable through the Council's scrutiny process.

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Agenda Item 7

Labour Amendment to Motion 3 - Conservative/Lib Dem Strategic Theme Motion

In the first paragraph, at the end of the fifth bullet point, insert:

“However, the expansion of the school will mean less actual building footprint on the Rec than at present as both the single storey pavilion building and a storage shed would be removed and returned to open space; most of the land will remain in use by local residents, including the Pavilion and the multi use games area (MUGA)/ tennis courts which will have a formal legal agreement allowing public access to the courts outside school hours and at set times during the school day; and only 579m² of former open space will revert to exclusive use by the school, just 1% of the total area of the Rec.

- The expansion will ensure improved public access to open space and will allow delivery of new facilities for community use including a new replacement pavilion social space, toilets and changing rooms for those using the Rec’s facilities, a larger children’s public playground, an outside green gym, an increase from two to three tennis courts, and school hall facilities available in the evening and weekends. The council is providing a Unilateral Undertaking to ensure sufficient public use of the tennis courts/multi-use sports area and the pavilion.
- The London Borough of Merton has a legal obligation to provide school places for all the children needing education and the latest demographic information from the Greater London Authority, based on the 2011 census, confirms that there is a continued increase in demand for school places in the Wimbledon area.”

In the first paragraph, at the end of the existing sixth bullet point, insert:

“Nonetheless, demand still outstrips supply and Dundonald school is the most oversubscribed school in the borough, with the most total number of preference applications of any primary school in the borough last year (435) and the most first preferences per available place. Non-sibling places are only able to be offered to a very small area - in the last two years this has been between only 105 and 217 metres.

- All alternative schools that could be expanded in the local area have already been expanded and the Capita report on site searches did not show a viable alternative option in the local area.
- The Department for Education recognised the benefit of expanding Dundonald School in providing a specific grant to the school’s expansion, prioritising it from bids across the country to provide additional high quality school places where they are needed.
- On 17 January 2013 Merton Planning Applications Committee approved the application to expand Dundonald Primary School with linked works to the recreation ground. The Greater London Authority and the Secretary of State have both agreed they do not wish to intervene with this decision.

- On 25 June 2013 the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) has agreed Merton's application to modify the restrictive covenant for a small area of Dundonald Rec to allow the expansion of Dundonald Primary School.
- The appropriation of land has not yet been considered by Cabinet. Consultation took place in the autumn and officers are currently analysing the results. When this has been completed a report will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.”

In the second paragraph, final bullet point, delete “would be detrimental to the above” and insert:

“could be detrimental to the above if this was not undertaken in a way that guaranteed improved facilities for residents.

- The statutory requirement to provide a quality education to our children and young people must always be balanced with the needs of residents and the current scheme does this by providing additional places for local children at an outstanding school while at the same time ensuring enhanced recreation facilities for local people.”

In the final paragraph, first bullet point, delete “to reconsider” and insert “to take into account the results of the consultation when considering”.

Motion now to read:

This Council notes that:

- Merton's open spaces are constantly under pressure from development;
- Dundonald and the wards of Central Wimbledon (Hillside, Abbey and Trinity) have far less green space than other wards: only 10% of the land in Dundonald ward is green space, compared to the borough average of 35%.
- Dundonald ward's percentage of green space is less than any Inner London borough apart from the City of London
- Dundonald Rec is the only public access green space in Dundonald Ward. It is the most popular Rec in the borough with a quarter of a million visitors a year
- The appropriation of 2,578m² for the expansion of Dundonald Primary School amounts to over 5% of the public open space of Dundonald Rec. However, the expansion of the school will mean less actual building footprint on the Rec than at present as both the single storey pavilion building and a storage shed would be removed and returned to open space; most of the land will remain in use by local residents, including the Pavilion and the multi use games area (MUGA)/ tennis courts which will have a formal legal agreement allowing public access to the courts outside school hours and at set times during the school day; and only 579m² of former open space will revert to exclusive use by the school, just 1% of the total area of the Rec.
- The expansion will ensure improved public access to open space and will allow delivery of new facilities for community use including a new replacement pavilion social space, toilets and changing rooms for those using the Rec's facilities, a larger children's public playground, an outside green gym, an

increase from two to three tennis courts, and school hall facilities available in the evening and weekends. The council is providing a Unilateral Undertaking to ensure sufficient public use of the tennis courts/multi-use sports area and the pavilion.

- The London Borough of Merton has a legal obligation to provide school places for all the children needing education and the latest demographic information from the Greater London Authority, based on the 2011 census, confirms that there is a continued increase in demand for school places in the Wimbledon area.
- Since 2007 there has been a 50% increase in reception class places in schools within one mile of Dundonald, compared to a 30% increase in the number of four year olds. Nonetheless, demand still outstrips supply and Dundonald school is the most oversubscribed school in the borough, with the most total number of preference applications of any primary school in the borough last year (435) and the most first preferences per available place. Non-sibling places are only able to be offered to a very small area - in the last two years this has been between only 105 and 217 metres.
- All alternative schools that could be expanded in the local area have already been expanded and the Capita report on site searches did not show a viable alternative option in the local area.
- The Department for Education recognised the benefit of expanding Dundonald School in providing a specific grant to the school's expansion, prioritising it from bids across the country to provide additional high quality school places where they are needed.
- On 17 January 2013 Merton Planning Applications Committee approved the application to expand Dundonald Primary School with linked works to the recreation ground. The Greater London Authority and the Secretary of State have both agreed they do not wish to intervene with this decision.
- On 25 June 2013 the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) has agreed Merton's application to modify the restrictive covenant for a small area of Dundonald Rec to allow the expansion of Dundonald Primary School.
- The appropriation of land has not yet been considered by Cabinet. Consultation took place in the autumn and officers are currently analysing the results. When this has been completed a report will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

This Council believes:

- Merton Council is committed to improving the quality of life for people who live in the borough, and to do so, takes an active role in maintaining Merton's open spaces and improving their quality for users;
- In maximising public access to a network of open spaces in the borough that are sustainable, safe and clean, and that enhance quality of life through promoting active and healthy living.
- Given the lack of public open space in central Wimbledon, that the appropriation of land for the expansion of Dundonald Primary could be detrimental to the above if this was not undertaken in a way that guaranteed improved facilities for residents.

- The statutory requirement to provide a quality education to our children and young people must always be balanced with the needs of residents and the current scheme does this by providing additional places for local children at an outstanding school while at the same time ensuring enhanced recreation facilities for local people.

This Council therefore resolves:

- To call on Cabinet to take into account the results of the consultation when considering the plans for the appropriation of any public open space in Dundonald Rec. for the expansion of Dundonald Primary, particularly in the light of evidence of alternative options for providing increased school places.

Agenda Item 9

Labour Amendment to Motion 1 - Conservative Motion on Notice

In the first paragraph, after the first bullet point insert “However that amount represented only part of the cost of the proposal, which also required additional private sector funding”; at the end of the second bullet point insert “, as council has sought to control costs in a challenging economic climate and private sector funding has been unavailable;”; in the third bullet point after “2015-16” insert “, which will allow sufficient time for consultation with residents before the contract goes through the necessary tender process”; and at the end of the final bullet point insert “and Cabinet rejected proposals drawn up by Officers to close the pool”.

In the second paragraph delete all after “health in the borough, and” and insert “therefore welcomes the administration’s proposal to rebuild the pool based on a more cost effective scheme which will provide family friendly facilities for local residents. Council recognises that a business-like approach to the council’s finances has put Merton on a more secure economic footing and has made it possible to commit to this project at this time.”

In the third paragraph delete all after “which is why” and insert “we call on all political groups on Merton Council to support this important project”.

In the final paragraph delete “therefore calls on the current Cabinet also to make a” and insert “welcomes the current Cabinet’s”. Insert new final sentence: “Council also resolves that plans for the new leisure centre are fully consulted on with local residents. “

Motion now to read:

This Council notes that:

- Merton’s previous Conservative administration allocated over £10million for a new Morden Park Pool in the budget agreed by Full Council back in March 2010. However that amount represented only part of the cost of the proposal, which also required additional private sector funding;
- Three and a half years on, there has been no progress made in rebuilding this local leisure centre despite its ever worsening state of repair, as council has sought to control costs in a challenging economic climate and private sector funding has been unavailable;
- The original capital funding has been pushed back year on year so that, according to the proposed 2014-18 Capital Programme, the bulk of the funding (£10million) for this important project will not now be spent until 2015-16, which will allow sufficient time for consultation with residents before the contract goes through the necessary tender process; and

- In 2011, the Sustainable Communities scrutiny panel clearly supported the principle of retaining three leisure centres in the Borough and Cabinet rejected proposals drawn up by Officers to close the pool.

This Council recognises the importance of easy access to leisure facilities for local communities in Merton and the benefits this can have for public health in the borough, and therefore welcomes the administration's proposal to rebuild the pool based on a more cost effective scheme which will provide family friendly facilities for local residents. Council recognises that a business-like approach to the council's finances has put Merton on a more secure economic footing and has made it possible to commit to this project at this time.

This Council believes that building a new Morden Park Pool will encourage and help deliver a healthier future both for local residents and visitors to Morden Park, which is why we call on all political groups on Merton Council to support this important project.

This Council welcomes the current Cabinet's clear commitment to invest in the future and build a new leisure centre for Morden so that residents can take comfort from the fact that everyone is united on this matter. Council also resolves that plans for the new leisure centre are fully consulted on with local residents.