

Council meeting

6 April 2016

18 Supplementary Agenda - Non Priority Councillor Questions

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Note on declarations of interest

Members are advised to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting. If a pecuniary interest is declared they should withdraw from the meeting room during the whole of the consideration of that matter and must not participate in any vote on that matter. If members consider they should not participate because of a non-pecuniary interest which may give rise to a perception of bias, they should declare this, withdraw and not participate in consideration of the item. For further advice please speak with the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance.

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COUNCIL 6 APRIL 2016

Non Priority Questions From Councillors and Cabinet Member Responses

1) Councillor Suzanne Grocott to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Cleanliness and Parking:

In the paper on the "Wheeled Bin Pilot waste and Street Cleansing Service" discussed by Cabinet on Monday 7 March 2016, it is stated in 4.1 of the report that "it is anticipated that a joint procurement could generate savings of at least 15% on the costs of collection through economies of scale and measures to improve recycling".

Please would the Cabinet Member advise the following?

- a) The annual revenue costs (including MRP) of the current waste collection service
- b) The "theoretical annual revenue costs (including MRP)" of a Borough wide wheeled bin waste collection on the same collection frequency as the current waste collection service
- c) The anticipated annual revenue costs (including MRP) of any procured waste collection service
- d) The figures that were used as evidence that 15% savings could be achieved.

Please also advise of any changes to expected collection frequencies under a procured service and whether any changes to frequencies will be a prerequisite to agreement of joint procurement.

Reply

A) The annual net direct budget for the collection of recycling and refuse is £3,763,590. This excludes commercial services, garden waste and food waste which would not be impacted by the implementation of wheelie bins

B) As no decision has been made in regards to the implementation of a borough wide wheelie bin service no detailed relevant modelling of rounds or detailed analysis of the required increase in the number of refuse collection rounds / additional vehicles and crews has been undertaken.

In addition to this no detailed waste flow analysis has been completed to estimate the potential savings achieved by diverting additional waste from landfill along with any associated savings achieved in Street Cleansing.

C) As part of the South London Waste Partnership, Merton Council is currently in the process of jointly procuring a range of environmental services including waste collection. Recommendations of preferred bidder along with their operational methodology for waste collection are due to be presented to Cabinet for consideration in July 2016.

D) This information is commercially sensitive. As part of the procurement process waste services have been regularly engaging in commercial dialogue with the bidders. Interim financial data supplied by the bidders has indicated savings in

the region of 15%. Final submissions were received on the 1st April, following this we are undertaking a full financial analysis and moderation exercise throughout April and May.

No decisions have been made with regards to the future waste collection service. The South London Waste Partnership is still in a procurement exercise with a number of potential suppliers. Until such time as a decision is made the solutions being proposed by bidders remain commercially sensitive.

2) Councillor David Williams to the Leader of the Council:

Would the Leader please list the meetings and correspondence he has had since the last ordinary meeting of the Council on 3rd February 2016 to save St Helier Hospital?

Reply

I again thank the Councillor for giving me the opportunity to let the council know how we continue to fight for our local hospital. Since my last response to his question, I have:

- Worked with Siobhain McDoagh MP to encourage local residents to attend the Estates Engagement Event at St Helier hospital on 19 March so that NHS bosses could see the continued depth of feeling about our local hospital and I'm pleased to report there was a great turn out from residents.
- Attended the first meeting of a new initiative on sub-regional collaboration on Health and Social Care in South West London. In attendance were the South West London Council leaders and officers and CCG Chairs and officers. This initiative will establish a new sub regional partnership and will allow closer working between the council and the NHS, allowing us to make clear to the NHS and to our partner boroughs the continued importance of maintaining services at St Helier hospital.

3) Councillor Daniel Holden to the Cabinet Member for Finance:

Will the Cabinet Member clarify what financial contribution is expected from Merton Council for the proposed tram link extension to Sutton and what other council spending would have to be forgone to pay for this?

Reply

The cost of a tram link extension between Sutton and Wimbledon is estimated at just over £300m. The funding model proposed by TfL is that one third of this should come from the Local Authorities directly benefiting – Sutton and Merton. However, there is little if any development generated in Merton as a consequence of any such extension and thus little if any financial benefit accruing from this growth. Thus we have identified that the Council could contribute circa £8.8million as a mixture of capital and S106 funds. However, no specific budgets have been set aside in the capital programme since the scheme is yet to be agreed. Sutton have identified over £40m so at present the scheme is not financially affordable. We will await further discussions on this matter once the new London Mayor has been elected.

4) Councillor Janice Howard to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture:

What percentage of LEAF monies in Merton have not been taken up/used by CHMP in each of the last 6 years and what has the Cabinet Member himself done to ensure that the use of this funding has been maximised?

Reply

The Large Estates Allocation Fund, known as LEAF, was one of the promises made by CHMP to encourage tenants to become involved in identifying areas of improvement on their estates. CHMP have a budget of £211,000 available each year which started in 2011/12.

CHMP have explained that as not all the Resident Associations were in place in 2011/12, the resident led budgets were managed directly by them to deliver £1.25m of estate based improvements within the first two years.

They report that the process of generating resident-led proposals, conducting feasibility studies and consultation, combined with ensuring compliance with financial regulations can be complex.

CHMP data shows that the first year of resident-led expenditure in 2012/13 was oversubscribed and projects exceeded the planned budget by almost £26,000.

Since then CHMP report that the spend has been £32,000 in 2013/14, £70,000 in 2014/15 and £150,000 in 2015/16. The amount spent has increased each year since 2013/14. Overall, 66% of the budget has been spent.

As part of regular performance reviews with CHMP, I discussed LEAF last month and CHMP have agreed to carry forward any unspent money for projects that have been approved and have stated that they remain committed to improving the environment for residents on all estates.

5) Councillor Linda Taylor to the Cabinet Member for Education:

How many of our secondary schools are offering the London Ambitions programme to ensure Merton's young people have the skills to make the most of further study and work opportunities?

Reply

Following the pilot of the London Ambitions Programme, all bar one of Merton's secondary schools have so far signed up for the London Ambitions programme. The one remaining school (Raynes Park High School) is expected to join as well in the near future.

6) Councillor Jill West to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration:

What consideration has the Council given to the possibility of a 20mph speed limit on the one way system in Raynes Park? Residents have raised with me numerous cases of speeding there once the drivers have passed the traffic lights. Drivers are also turning right instead of left from the side roads (Tolverne Road and Trewince Road). The 'turn left' signs painted on the roads concerned have had little impact and I fear a major accident could be imminent

Reply

With regards to a 20mph speed limit, It is acknowledged that this continues to be a very topical issue. The Sustainable Communities and Scrutiny Panel meeting in November 2014 received a lengthy report on the cost / benefits of 20 mph zones and speed limits. You may wish to take a look at this report for more detailed information and evidence drawn from Merton and across London, <http://democracy.merton.gov.uk/documents/s5967/20%20Mph%20Zones%20and%200limits.pdf>

Essentially this concluded that 20 mph limits [i.e. 20 mph signs] have very limited impact on speed reduction and only where physical interventions [Zones with humps, chicanes etc] are implemented does driver behaviour change significantly.

In the absence of any speed data for this location it is difficult to reach any conclusions based on evidence, however, excess speed is enforced by the Police and we work closely with them to identify those locations where evidence supports the need for intervention. There have been no regular or major instances of excessive speed reported to us for this location.

Road safety and the reduction of personal injury accidents is a priority and our scarce resources are applied to those locations where we identify the greatest opportunity to reduce accidents. As part of our Borough wide Local Safety Programme, this area will be monitored along with the rest of the borough and the appropriate action will be taken if and when necessary.

Regarding the southern ends of Tolverne and Trewince Roads, the issue of cars turning right (the wrong way into the one-way section of Worple Rd), this was reported to us via a site visit with the Raynes Park Association in autumn 2015. There is already sufficient 'one-way' signage at these locations on Worple Road. The Council added additional 'turn-left' arrows on the road surface to alert drivers exiting Tolverne and Trewince Roads in November 2015. We will continue to monitor the situation. We will consider this as a location for enforcement of moving traffic offences and use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology.