

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON</b>	
	<b><u>NOTES OF MEETING</u></b>
	<b>Subject: Morden Community Forum</b>
	<b>Date: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016</b> <b>Time: 19.15</b>
<b>Action Needed By:</b>	
	<p>1. <b><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></b></p> <p>1.1 Cllr. Philip Jones welcomed everybody to the meeting.</p> <p>1.2 Approximately 17 residents attended, as well as 10 councillors, and officers from the council and its partners.</p>
	<p>2. <b><u>Morden Leisure Centre update</u></b></p> <p>2.1 Christine Parsloe, Leisure &amp; Culture Development Manager at the council, updated residents on the plans for a new leisure centre in Morden Park.</p> <p>2.2 Work is currently being undertaken with Natural England on the protection of Great Crested Newts located in one of the park's ponds. It is estimated there are about 70 newts in total and a due process is required in order to ensure their protection.</p> <p>2.3 Meetings continue to take place with the Community Trust and with Morden Park Playing Fields Association to keep them involved in the development plans.</p> <p>2.4 Pellikaan Construction Ltd has been appointed for the build of the project and will work with the existing consultant team of architects and contractors on the project.</p> <p>2.5 Planning permission has been granted for a sports hall within the new leisure centre; however the budget for the development would not cover the cost of a hall, so fundraising would be required to pay for it.</p> <p>2.6 The intention is that Greenwich Leisure will continue to run the leisure centre once the new development is complete, including the cafe. Upon completion of the new build, the various membership fees will not go up any higher than originally planned by Greenwich Leisure.</p> <p>2.7 A second pool with a moving floor is cheaper than providing multiple pools would have been and also allows for more varied activities, therefore greater revenues. Additionally, the footprint of the land would not have allowed for multiple pools. The second smaller pool will be able to accommodate greater numbers of school children for swimming lessons.</p>

	<p>3. <b>Waste collection changes</b></p> <p>3.1 Cormac Stokes, Head of Street Scene and Waste at the council, gave a presentation on planned changes to waste collection in the borough, which will save the council approximately £2million a year. The presentation can be viewed at <a href="http://www.merton.gov.uk/morden_community_forum_waste_presentation_2016.pdf">http://www.merton.gov.uk/morden_community_forum_waste_presentation_2016.pdf</a>.</p> <p>3.2 Consultation is being carried out with stakeholders such as Age UK in order to establish the requirements for assisted collections. Alternative arrangements will also be made for properties where it would be inappropriate to have wheelie bins, for example, those without front gardens and properties with communal bin storage. Residents should email the council if they feel where they live is inappropriate for wheelie bins, so that the council can investigate.</p> <p>3.3 Residents concerned about blocked drains were asked to report the problems to the council, which has a drainage service and a contractor to deal with key areas. Cormac noted that Tudor Drive and Lower Morden Lane seem to be particularly problematic.</p> <p>3.4 The Waste team understands that putting the bins back in place is a key issue and this has been made clear to the preferred bidder for the waste contract. The matter has been included in Merton's performance delivery framework, therefore will be inspected on a regular basis, but the council will also be relying on residents to report if their bins are not being put back properly post-collection.</p> <p>3.5 Waste collection, Litter and street cleaning will be dealt with by a different contractor to that which will be managing our parks, open spaces and grass verges. Client Neighbourhood Officers will ensure that the separate contractors work together to ensure a seamless service. The officers will also be visiting the Community Forums in due course.</p> <p>3.6 A local resident voiced several concerns about wheelie bins with regard to health, specifically: asking that waste collection be kept to weekly to avoid it becoming toxic and smelly; expressing concerns about the practicality of wheelie bins in terms of space and cost; and asking that a different colour bin be considered that might be more sympathetic to surroundings, e.g. stone coloured bins.</p> <p>3.7 Responding to a query, Cormac confirmed that the council's food waste is treated by anaerobic digestion. He also explained that the changes to waste collection are a decision taken by Merton in order to save money and make environmental improvements.</p>
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	<p>3.8 If wheelie bins are used by fly-tippers for dumping waste, the council will still empty them and will then take measures to advise residents on how to avoid the problem. Engagement with residents on such issues will take place first and foremost.</p> <p>3.9 Merton's recycling centres have high targets, therefore the centres should be recycling as much waste deposited as possible; however, some materials cannot be recycled, despite being labelled as such. Cormac agreed to speak to staff at the recycling centres to ensure as much waste is directed towards recycling as possible and to ensure that they help residents who might struggle with the steps up to the waste bins.</p> <p>3.10 Councillor Jones explained that the decision to introduce wheelie bins had been a political one. In some areas residents are in favour in others they aren't, but the driving factor for the decision was cost-saving.</p> <p>3.11 The council will no longer be providing food waste liners because 50% of the borough was not using them and was throwing them away. Residents will be able to buy the liners from supermarkets; it is hoped that weekly food waste collection will encourage more people to use the service.</p> <p>3.12 Refuse collectors are expected to clean up any waste they spill during collections. Any other waste on the streets should be reported to the council.</p>
	<p>4. <b><u>Update on Merton Adult Education</u></b></p> <p>4.1 Jill Iliffe, the Service Manager for Adult Learning in Merton, updated residents on the new adult education provision in the borough.</p> <p>4.2 Courses will be delivered by a variety of providers and most will take place at the South Thames College campus in Morden. The aim is to provide more vocational, family learning and employability courses in addition to the usual courses on subjects such as arts and crafts. Adult apprenticeships have not yet been commissioned; the council is in talks with providers for this area at the moment.</p> <p>4.3 Education for people with learning disabilities has not been commissioned out, and instead will continue to be provided by the council.</p> <p>4.4 Enrolment numbers for courses at South Thames College are not as high as they were for courses last year, but they are steadily increasing. There is an expectation that some students may wish to try out the new courses and facilities before signing up fully. Previous learners are being contacted to encourage them to rejoin.</p>

	<p>4.5 Fewer modern foreign languages courses are taking place because there is not enough demand for them.</p> <p>4.6 Responding to concerns that courses for students with learning disabilities are spread across three different venues and the safeguarding issues around this, Jill explained that extra support has been put in place for certain classes in specific areas in order to increase the safeguarding and wellbeing of learners.</p> <p>4.7 Whatley Avenue will continue to be used for educational purposes, as an interim school.</p>
	<p>5. <b><u>Council update – Councillor Stephen Alambritis</u></b></p> <p>5.1 Merton has been named by the Child Poverty Action Group as one of the top boroughs in terms of looking after low-paid families and children living in poverty.</p> <p>5.2 In line with statutory duty, over the last six years schools in the borough have been expanded to provide an extra 4,000 primary school places. The Leader expressed delight that adult education continues to be provided in the borough and also noted that Merton has a rolling programme to place solar panels on the roofs of schools.</p> <p>5.3 The regeneration programme for Morden Town Centre, More Morden, has launched. Further details can be found at <a href="http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/regeneration/moremorden.htm">http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/regeneration/moremorden.htm</a>.</p> <p>5.4 AFC Wimbledon will be returning to the borough, it is hoped sometime between August 2018 and August 2019. All councillors in Merton have welcomed the decision. An application for a dog track on the grounds was not received.</p> <p>5.5 The Boundary Commission has announced changes for Merton which would mean the borough would have five MPs instead of the existing two. Many wards would also be lost to neighbouring boroughs. Councillor Alambritis is working with the Conservative group leader, Councillor Moulton to express concerns to the commission about the proposed changes. Residents can also express concerns by visiting the Boundary Commission’s website.</p> <p>5.6 A resident expressed concern about bed-blocking in hospitals and asked if funding is available to help with the issue. Councillor Alambritis agreed that it is a concern and explained that through the South London Partnership, a working group on Health and Care is looking at addressing bed-blocking. Merton CCG is also aware of the problem.</p>

SA	<p>5.7 Asked if there were any plans to pedestrianise Morden, the Leader said he would like to see some kind of piazza area with buses moved a little further away from the tube station. However, nothing has been decided yet. Residents can have their say on such issues during the consultation. Councillor Sargeant added that Future Merton has secured funding to reconfigure the roads, so this is being considered. Traffic calming measures will also be taken into account as part of the More Morden project.</p> <p>5.8 Councillor Alambritis agreed to put forward to Future Merton a resident's suggestion that a level be built above the tube platforms where buses could be parked. He also agreed to ask officers about whether an underground car park could be built below the civic centre.</p> <p>5.9 Responding to concerns about rogue landlords who are letting properties to greater numbers of tenants than is appropriate for the property, Councillor Alambritis said that a register of landlords across London is currently being considered, but in the meantime, the council will keep an eye on any landlords that come to its attention and that allow overcrowding.</p> <p>5.10 Councillor Alambritis confirmed that Central Government funding for local authorities will cease in approximately four years' time. To replace the grants, councils will be able to keep some of the business rates they collect.</p> <p>5.11 A consultation on council tax in Merton is currently taking place. Residents are encouraged to take part by visiting <a href="http://www.merton.gov.uk/consultation">www.merton.gov.uk/consultation</a>.</p> <p>5.12 Councillor Alambritis said that the council is mindful of parking difficulties in the borough and an increasing number of CPZs being implemented as a result. Parking places in the borough have been removed to encourage people to use their cars less, and there is a possibility that no-car contracts could be used with residents of new properties built in the More Morden scheme, but a variety of parking solutions will be discussed and considered.</p>
	<p>6. <b><u>Soapbox</u></b></p> <p>6.1 A local resident asked for greater inter-departmental communication at the council, noting that some council officers had known about the Great Crested Newts in Morden Park but that this had not been communicated until later with regards to the new leisure centre build.</p>

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