

From Councillor Abigail Jones to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Can the Cabinet Member give an update on day centre services in the borough?

Reply

Merton provides four in-house day centres; High Path, the JMC, which both cater for people with a learning disability, All Saints, which provides services for people with a learning disability and people with physical disabilities, and Eastway, which supports older people.

Our learning disability services have seen changes in the past two years, with some staffing reductions leading to a focus on the services providing safe and secure day time respite. Numbers attending the services have remained constant, which has led to some community activities being reduced. In the past few months we have worked closely with MVSC to recruit volunteers to work in our services, and now have eleven volunteers across the centres. Staff work hard to provide arrange of stimulating activities in the centres, and many are also involved with collecting people from home to help reduce transport costs.

The Healthier Communities and Older People's Scrutiny panel are currently looking at these services, and will report in February.

At Eastway the staff team is supporting a group of people who have much more complex support needs than we have worked with in the past but the team has responded well to this challenge and continues to provide a good service. All Saints continues to provide a valued day time service to people with a physical disability.

From Councillor Suzanne Grocott to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing

Given that the council has an on-going responsibility to represent all Circle Housing tenants, leaseholders and freeholders, can the Cabinet Member tell me what the council is doing to publicise and contribute to the current consultation on the proposed changes to Circle Housing Merton Priory and the collapse of the Circle group structure?

Reply

As cabinet member I have expressed concerns about the proposed changes to Circle Merton as it's important that tenants, leaseholders and freeholders voice is heard loud and clearly in any new governance arrangements. We remain in continuing dialogue with Circle over the implications of these changes as it's essential that local accountability remains a key part of any new structure. The consultation ends in December, following which the next meeting of the Council on 1 February will be asked to take a view, as a shareholder, on these changes, including the measures designed to ensure ongoing local engagement and accountability.

From Councillor Pauline Cowper to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing

Can he update me on the consultation process for Crossrail 2?

Reply

The latest Crossrail2 consultation, originally scheduled for this month, has been postponed until at least the second quarter of 2017. A summary of the +20,000 views that Crossrail2 received at the most recent consultation (January 2016) are available on Crossrail2's website <http://crossrail2.co.uk/consultation/>

Merton Council is continuing to work closely with Crossrail2 to secure the best outcome for the borough with minimal impact from construction. In the meantime the council will go ahead with developing its own masterplan for Wimbledon town centre with residents which will start in advance of Crossrail2's consultation. This will help identify the most beneficial ways of planning for how Crossrail2 would best fit in with Wimbledon town centre and we will actively work with residents and businesses on developing the masterplan.

There is cross-party support in Merton for Crossrail2, but we have we have been clear that it does not come at any cost. The proposals published last year were unacceptable in terms of its impact on business and retail in the town centre. Our cross-party position is available at www.merton.gov.uk/crossrail2

From Councillor Gilli Lewis-Lavender to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking

How many of Merton's residents (in numerical terms and as a percentage) do not currently recycle on a regular basis?

Reply

Current information indicates that only 20.4% of households do NOT participate in the kerbside recycling service. This equates to 16,827 properties based on a total of 82,490 households.

In addition to the dry recycling, 48% of residents do NOT participate in the kerbside food waste service which equates to 39,595 households.

We expect the new waste collection service will help increase recycling in the borough.

From Councillor John Dehaney to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking

Could he outline his approach to people who fly tip in our borough?

Reply

Merton council have a zero tolerance towards anyone that fly tips in the borough. We come down heavily on all perpetrators who irresponsibly dump their waste. Our enforcement team will investigate with a view to gaining any evidence of the person/s who may have dumped the waste, we are able to issue £400 fixed penalty notices due to new legislation that was introduced in May this year and this is aimed for the smaller fly tips along with taking people to court for prosecution of the more

larger fly tips. We have recently carried out an awareness campaign in the borough working with a number of agencies to combat this type of behaviour, we have:

- Placed an Advert in My Merton for residents to be aware of who they give their waste to, for disposal
- J C Deaux advertising our campaign poster re Fly tipping
- Posters on the side of our cage vehicles who collect the fly tipped waste.
- We have issued 12 fixed penalties notices of £400 for fly tipping since the change of legislation in May 2016, (3,835 Fixed Penalties of £80 have been issued for littering offences since April 2016 to present date),
- ANPR (Auto number plate recognition) exercise with the police stopping all vehicles carrying waste and asking for their waste carrier licences along with all proof of where their waste on board is to be dumped
- Working alongside RPs (Registered Providers) e.g. Merton Priory Homes
- Communicating with residents re the presentation of household waste for collection
- Publicising offenders who have been caught fly tipping in the local guardian

From Councillor Michael Bull to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking

Detailed arrangements for larger families and households in the borough do not seem to have been factored into the 'one size fits all' bins being proposed by the administration. In the summer months would the council consider doing weekly collections from families to avoid decaying and foul smells from overflowing bins on public health grounds?

Reply

There are currently no plans to increase the level of frequency during the summer months. It is important to note that the smelly food waste will continue to be collected weekly from all households and so should not need to be disposed of in the residual waste bin. This method of collection proposed is the optimal method for improving recycling and reducing cost.

The proposed service is not a "one size fits all" service. Our preferred bidder acknowledges that they may need to provide larger or additional bins for larger families of 6 or more people or for families with two or more small children in nappies.

From Councillor Dennis Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing

Can he update us on the merger between Circle Housing and Affinity Sutton?

Reply

Circle report that information has been provided to, and consultation on merger has taken place with, all Circle and Affinity Sutton residents. The consultation was carried out in accordance with HCA guidelines.

The HCA have approved the merger in principle and Circle continue to discuss final stages with lenders. At this stage, a date for final merger is not known but is likely to be before year end.

The new Group will be called Clarion and the commercial arm, which will focus on development, growth and social value will be called Latimer.

From Councillor John Sargeant to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture

The opening of Crown House Creative in Morden Town Centre, utilising vacant retail space and providing a temporary venue for the arts, music and social events of many kinds is a very welcome innovation. Beyond its press release on the subject, what publicity has Merton council issued to promote the venue? What further publicity is planned and what opportunities does the member foresee the venue providing in the coming months?

Reply

Following the successful launch on October 26th, the Crown House Creative will provide a monthly bulletin, sent to all staff via the Intranet. This bulletin will also be promoted via the Merton Council website, the official Merton Council social media platforms, and forwarded to the local newspaper. The bulletin will also be sent to all Third Sector (voluntary) providers in the borough and local businesses (via the Merton Chamber of Commerce), as we seek to maximise the usage of the space, inviting local stakeholders to utilise the space to deliver activities.

The following programme takes place throughout November and December:

African Street Style Fashion Shoot (took place Sat 12th Nov)

Beat Motel – DJ collective who use artistic spaces (Thursday 17th Nov)

Self-Organise – Exhibition of works, talks, debates and workshops, highlighting the current and critical discourse on community, space and participation. The exhibition will explore how modes of self-organisation and communitarianism operate within public space, collectives and communities. (From Thurs 24th November)

Objects – Installation from student of University of Strasbourg (From Friday 25th November)

Light Up Morden – An evening of entertainment, to compliment the Christmas lights in Morden (Thurs 1st Dec)

Small Business Saturday – Saturday 3rd December

BFI Screening: Saturday 3rd December

BFI Screening: Saturday 10th December

We are also working with local businesses, providing free public surgeries re Dental care, and improving health and well-being, through Yoga and Shiatsu classes throughout November and December.

From Councillor Daniel Holden to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking

Given the clear strength of feeling among many residents around the borough, why does the Cabinet Member like multiple wheelie bins so much more than standard dustbins and is this why the council won't even create a discreet bin store at its own civic centre?

Reply

Prior to undertaking the procurement for a new waste collection service there was no preference put forward by the council for or against wheelie bins. In effect the procurement was solution-neutral .

The proposed bidder's solution represents their optimal solution and was not designed by the council. This has been determined by the market and waste management experts. This has been a competitive process and a robust evaluation was undertaken prior to appointing the preferred bidder status to Veolia.

Wheelie bins have a distinct advantage over standard dustbins in that they can be wheeled and mechanically lifted onto the back of the waste trucks in the collection / disposal process. This has been proven to reduce injuries and sickness amongst waste staff.

The Civic centre uses Eurobins for storage which can be stored outside without the need for a bin store.

From Councillor Greg Udeh to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking

Could he outline his response to residents who request a controlled parking zone in their area to deal with the issue of commuter parking?

Reply

For a CPZ to be considered a petition must be collated and presented to the Council to show support for such a change. An informal consultation with residents then takes place and, if there is majority support to proceed, the next step is a statutory consultation.

My cabinet role is primarily in then enforcing controlled parking zones once they have been agreed and implemented. We take a firm but fair approach, using our parking charter which is available online, and our main aims are to make our roads safe and to ensure residents who have paid for a parking permit are not impeded from parking on their street by motorists parking without a permit.

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