

## **From Councillor Rebecca Lanning to the Cabinet Member for Education**

Can the Cabinet Member explain what support there is for schools to encourage active lifestyles as part of the fight against childhood obesity?

### **Reply**

There are a number of initiatives in place to support schools, children and families to increase their levels of physical activity. The *Child Healthy Weight Action Plan for Merton (2016-18)*<sup>1</sup> aims to deliver a co-ordinated and system-wide approach to tackling childhood obesity in Merton. The Action Plan has four key themes, one of which focuses on increasing levels of physical activity, particularly in schools.

Key actions include supporting the 'Daily Mile'. This is a free initiative being promoted in Merton schools that sees children run or jog for 15 minutes every day in their primary and nursery schools. Currently 20 schools across the borough are delivering the Daily Mile.

To tie into the Daily Mile, in 2018 Merton will be implementing a 'Merton Mile' which will mark out a 1 mile path in a local park in the east of the borough to promote daily physical activity. Children will be encouraged to replicate the Daily Mile they undertake in schools with their families/friends outside of the school day.

Merton School Sports Partnership, funded through its Merton School partners, deliver a number of initiatives promoting physical activity in schools, including supporting schools to sign up to the Merton School Sports Mark awards. Public Health further fund MSSP to support schools to achieve awards through the Healthy Schools London programme (HSL).

Merton Public Health have recently supported the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) to pilot a structured physical activity programme for early year's class teachers. The pilot was delivered with 25 schools with Public Health evaluating the pilot. This showed that there had been a positive increase in both physical activity among children and that staff felt supported and more confident to deliver this. The programme will now be offered to all Merton Nursery and Reception class teachers and a longer term in-depth evaluation will be conducted through an academic institution.

In the 2017/18 academic year, training has been offered for school staff to support them to have conversations with children and families about weight and healthy lifestyles, including the importance of physical activity. 300 primary school teaching staff from 15 schools have benefitted from training. The training raises awareness increases confidence to talk about the subject, deliver consistent messages around healthy weight and improve their ability to signpost to support.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www2.merton.gov.uk/childhood\\_healthy\\_weight\\_action\\_plan\\_summary\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://www2.merton.gov.uk/childhood_healthy_weight_action_plan_summary_for_web.pdf)

**From Councillor Janice Howard to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness**

What is the cabinet members approach to decision making within parks and leisure facilities?

**Reply (From the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture)**

Decision making in parks and leisure facilities follows the council's standing orders and financial regulations with many decisions devolved to officers to make for operational efficiency.

The Cabinet Member has regular, fortnightly, meetings with relevant officers where current key issues within the parks & leisure services are raised, discussed and analysed. The Cabinet Member also attends and inputs to some relevant project working and steering groups as required: the Mitcham Carnival organising committee, for example.

Over and above this, strategic issues within the service are considered and agreed through the appropriate corporate governance arrangements, including Council, Cabinet and the Leader's Strategy Group and such key corporate business plans such as the Target Operating Model and Service Plan that the Cabinet Member has input to.

**From Councillor Dave Ward to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport:**

Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the development of the new AFC Wimbledon stadium on Plough Lane?

**Reply**

Demolition has started on site for planning permission 14/P4361 (which includes the new AFC Wimbledon Stadium, +600 homes, shops, public realm and other matters). Demolition and underground drainage works will continue until autumn 2018. Once the demolition and drainage diversion works are complete the main works will start on-site. The new stadium is expected to be completed late 2019. AFC Wimbledon, Catalyst, Galliard are working together to co-ordinate their community outreach work. The scheme has a dedicated public liaison officer, who will deal with all public enquiries for both the residential and the stadium sites. They can be contacted on [Public.Liaison@galliardhomes.com](mailto:Public.Liaison@galliardhomes.com) or 0208 418 3641.

**From Councillor Daniel Holden to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture:**

Does the Cabinet Member think Merton has sufficient 'family-friendly' leisure centres for families who want to do activities together in an accessible manner?

**Reply**

All of the council's leisure centres are 'family friendly' in that families can take part in a range of activities in the same building at the same time, and if they should choose to, and the activity on offer allows, they could take part together.

All of the borough's leisure centres comply with the Disability and Equality Act and are therefore accessible to all.

**From Councillor Carl Quilliam to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture:**

Could the Cabinet Member detail the decision-making process that led to the removal and reintroduction of a "Changing Places" toilet in plans for the new Morden Leisure Centre, confirming both that this followed a standard process, and the administration's policy on funding Changing Places toilets in public buildings going forward?

**Reply**

The decision to remove the changing places was made by the project team during the development of the design of the project as they were trying to put as many of the requirements as possible into a land constrained site. In making this change the project team ensured that the new facility was still compliant with Disability and Equality Act 2010.

Once the council was alerted to the consequence of this change the project team were instructed to use their best endeavours to re-instate it. This took a period of time to resolve but this has been done successfully.

**From Councillor Billy Christie to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture:**

With the introduction of the new Leisure Centre in Morden, can the Cabinet Member detail how many gyms and leisure facilities there are in Merton supported by the Council, and the spread across the borough?

The council operates 3 Indoor Gyms at the three leisure centres – Canons LC in Mitcham; Morden Park Pools and Wimbledon LC. The council also has 12 Outdoor Gyms in public parks at Canons Recreation Ground; Donnelly Green; Dundonald Recreation Ground; Figges Marsh; King George's Park; Morden Park; Morden Recreation Ground; Mostyn Gardens; Oakleigh Way; Pollards Hill Recreation

Ground; Ravensbury Park and Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Ground. There is also a Trim Trail at Brenley Playing Fields.

**From Councillor Hayley Ormrod to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

What is the council's policy on plots of land it owns in Merton with regard to their disposal?

**Reply (From the Cabinet Member for Finance)**

The Council follows the approach set out in the Asset Management Plan and the rules as set out in the constitution and Standing Orders.

The Council would comply with its statutory obligation under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable.

However, the General Disposals Consent (England) 2003 provides local authorities with the power to sell at less than best consideration reasonably obtainable provided the authority considers such a disposal will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. This power is conditional upon the undervalue not exceeding £2,000,000.

**From Councillor Marsie Skeete to the Cabinet member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities:**

On the 70th anniversary of the arrival of the Windrush, can the Cabinet Member detail the work being done to engage with Merton's diverse cultures and communities?

**Reply**

The borough has numerous consultative mechanisms to engage with the voluntary and community sector, including faith groups, many of who represent minority communities. These include:

- Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minorities
- Faith and Belief Forum
- Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender Forum

Officers are working with the LGBT Forum committee members to take forward the key issues for the community. The Forum celebrated LGBT History Month (in February) by putting on an exhibition in the civic centre and local libraries and a Sunday Brunch to round off the month.

The Faith and Belief Forum continues to promote community cohesion and integration in the borough. Faith representatives came together to deliver events in

Inter Faith Week and also work with the council to put together the programme for Holocaust Memorial Day.

The council supported the development of Black, Asian and Minority Voice to provide a strategic voice for the borough's BAME community. BAME Voice representatives are also members of the JCC and work with officers to ensure that service development and commissioning decisions actively consider BAME issues and concerns.

The council also supports a range of community events that support integration and celebrate diversity, for example Merton Walk for Peace, the Merton Commonwealth Big Lunch and Armed Forces Day.

**From Councillor Nick McLean to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture:**

Will the council confirm when the new Morden Leisure centre in Cannon Hill ward will be opened?

The actual opening date to the public for use is not yet finalised, although we do expect it to be at the end of October / beginning of November. Construction is progressing well and is still set to complete by 21 September. Following that there will be a period of time, approximately 4 weeks, for the operators, Greenwich Leisure Limited, to install all of their equipment and to carry out staff training before opening to the public.

**From Councillor Mark Kenny to the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Regeneration and Housing:**

What measures have been taken to improve cycling infrastructure in the borough?

In recent years we have introduced a number of cycle infrastructure – some examples include

1. Cycle parking throughout the borough
2. Cycle lanes / shared surface e.g. Croydon Road and Beddington Lane
3. Improved permeability e.g removal of obstructions e.g. Fleming Mead Barrier removal linking Quietway link to/from Colliers Wood and Tooting
4. Improving cycling permeability on the Railway path between Raynes Park and Wimbledon by widening pinch points and removing vegetation.
5. **Clapham Common to Wimbledon Quietway** - Elements include:
  - Providing lighting columns on Wandle Trail between Plough Lane and Borough Boundary with Wandsworth.
  - Construction of shared-use path on the Wandle Meadow and Garfield recreation Ground including lighting.
  - Widening of footbridge across the Wandle Meadow leading to Garfield Recreation Ground.

- Providing a parallel crossing for cyclist across Haydons Road at junction with South Park Road.
- Provide lighting on the bridge underpass at Wandle Meadow
- Creating a Shared-Use Path with lighting between Green Lane Riding Stables and Arthur Road.
- Improving safety for cyclists at roundabout of Carshalton Road/Croydon Road by widening the path and converting it to shared space around roundabout
- Construction of speed table with refuge island on Croydon Road opposite Ravensbury pub to assist provide safer crossing for cyclists.
- Provide shared use path on Commonside West at railway bridge in both directions.

**Proposed schemes for this financial year 2018-19 include:**

- Pedestrian/cycle phase at the junctions of Croydon Road and Windmill Road.
- Constructing a segregated cycle path between New Malden and Raynes Park alongside railway embankment in partnership with Kingston Council.
- Providing a segregated cycle path on West Barnes Lane between Camberley Avenue and junction with Coombe Lane to provide a safer route into Raynes Park.
- Morden to Sutton Quietway (awaiting scheme approval from TfL)
- Improving capacity of Civic Centre Cycle Parking to help encourage more staff to cycle to work
- Improving Watneys Road to make it more welcoming for cyclists and Pedestrians.
- Providing a short section of cycle track on Ravensbury Park and remove obstructive barrier. Currently there is conflict with pedestrians on the shared path.
- Provide a cycle path with lighting in Morden Park to provide a Quietway link and improve on existing path network within the park.
- Provide secure cycle parking for residents.
- Making improvements on the West bound path of Bushy road in what currently is inadequate for cyclists.
- Making improvements to cyclists/pedestrians on Station Road and Wandle Bank.

Apart from introducing and improving infra structure we also offer Cycle training

Merton provides ongoing programme of road safety projects for schools which is also part of our cycling programme. We provide training for Key Stage 1 children. We also offer Scooter Training, road safety presentations on how to stay safe on road, Kerbcraft, a practical child pedestrian training programme and promote Transport for London's Children's Traffic Club. In 2016-2017. We worked with 27 schools, Brownie and Beaver groups on road safety programmes and training, and trained more than 1,700 school-aged children across Key Stages 1 and 2. We also do transitional work with children in their last year of primary school (year 6) to help them prepare for walking and cycling safely on their own before secondary school. Our road safety programme also includes adult cycle training and advice to HGV drivers on cycle safety on the road.