

RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM
6 DECEMBER 2018

(7.15 pm - 9.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillors (in the Chair), Councillor Nick McLean

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held in Raynes Park Library Hall, and chaired by Councillor Nick McLean, with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association (RPA). More than 30 residents attended, as well as three other Merton Councillors, and officers from the council and its partners.

2 OPEN FORUM (Agenda Item 2)

Morley Park

Jane Barnes spoke on behalf of Friends of Morley Park about the continued closure of Morley Park.

“In September 2017 the Council signed a Certificate of Completion for all the works Berkeley Homes were required to do in Morley Park before transferring the freehold to the Council. The works required included the eradication of Japanese Knotweed. We do not understand why the certificate was signed when the works weren't complete. Berkeley Homes were obliged to complete these works before selling homes on their hospital development, so, by signing the Certificate, the Council lost leverage to ensure the park was transferred to them with all works done and in a timely way. 15 months later the park is still closed and owned by Berkeley Homes who are using parts of it to facilitate construction on their Wolfson development site. We have consistently been told that the delay is due to negotiations with Berkeley Homes about the ongoing liability for Japanese Knotweed but clearly Berkeley Homes are finding continued ownership of the park useful.

The planning consent that created Morley Park required the freehold to be transferred to the Council. Friends of Morley Park were thus very surprised by an update on Morley Park that the cabinet member responsible for parks gave at the Wimbledon Community Forum two days ago. He said that

1. Instead of the Council taking the freehold of the park it would take it on a 22-year lease from Berkeley Homes
2. Berkeley Homes would then retain the responsibility for the treatment and liability for the spread of knotweed beyond the park during that period
3. At the end of the 22 years the freehold of the park would transfer to the Council

He also said that the lease might be agreed by the end of this year. This raises lots of questions and concerns.

- What guarantee would there be that the freehold would transfer to the Council after 22 years? What hold would the Council have on Berkeley Homes to make sure it happened?
- Why 22 years? Is it based on the time required to deal with the Japanese Knotweed or to ensure the lease meets the criteria to give the tenants the rights of a long term leaseholder?
- What would the terms of the lease be, for example on the park boundary, the obligation to provide public access, the dowry to be paid to the Council, maintenance etc?
- Would the terms of the lease be consistent in every way, other than ownership, with the requirements in the planning consent that created Morley Park?
- Under what terms will the Council eventually acquire the freehold and in particular will the public access obligations still apply?

To be of use this information is needed before any agreement is signed.”

Cllrs Crowe and Kenny offered to raise these questions with the Cabinet Member, Cllr Draper.

Waste Collection

A number of residents raised issues about the new waste collection service and Chris Larkman said the Raynes Park Association had written to the Council to raise these concerns. Issues with the new service include assisted collections not being transferred over, bins not being returned to resident’s properties, the new textile and battery collection not being available, the large Veolia yellow bins being left in the area, new bins not being used by residents on Durham Road and left in the street to attract litter, and the flats above the shops on Kingston Road still leaving rubbish out weekly but it was only being collected fortnightly. Residents had also had problems reporting issues with Amity Grove and other roads in SW20 not being recognised by the Council website. Residents also said the build-up of fallen leaves on Ridgeway and Cottenham Park Road was particularly bad and becoming dangerous.

Residents also raised the re-introduction of charges for bulky waste collection. Cllr Kenny said the evidence from previous changes and elsewhere showed that charges do not lead to any increase in fly-tipping.

Residents also asked about the hoardings next to the former Chinese restaurant on Coombe Lane and the derelict flats on Lambton Road.

3 THAMES WATER (Agenda Item 3)

Carl Leadbeater from Thames Water provided an update on work to address flooding in the Abbott Avenue area. The slideshow can be found in appendix 1 of this report. Extensive CCTV and cleaning of the surface water sewer network had found a blockage in a pipe on Crescent Road which had resulted in water backing up and overwhelming the pumping station in Abbott Avenue. Thames Water has removed 20 tonnes of rubble from the pipe and are confident this should resolve the issue in Abbott Avenue. As they now know this is a problem area it will be added to their list of sites for regular monitoring and cleaning. Carl said it would appear the rubble had built up over a long period of time rather than being from a single incident.

Residents asked if the dumping of rubble was illegal and if it could be reported. Carl explained that Thames Water and the Environment Agency can prosecute depending on the impact of the incident and residents can report incidents via the Thames Water helpline 0800 316 9800. Thames Water do not generally promote this reporting tool but will do in problem areas.

Carl also explained that in London there is a huge mix of connections from properties to the network and for some newer properties the rain water will go to a soakaway rather than the sewer network. Planning rules have been changed to restrict the impact of front gardens being turned into driveways and Thames Water works closely with Councils around highways issues.

4 TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENTS & RAILWAY (Agenda Item 4)

Chris Larkman, Raynes Park Association, provided updates
Raynes Park station: the RPA is now speaking with the head of communications at Network Rail and they have promised to get rid of the encroaching shrub and damaged fence by platform 1. Still waiting for legal approval from NR to make improvements and transfer land to Merton Council. There is no news on the proposed Kiss and Drop.

Work has started on the New Malden to Raynes Park cycle and walking route alongside the railway.

The parking space outside the former Mans Restaurant is dangerous and the RPA has asked the Council to remove it.

20 minutes free parking is available on the south side of Raynes Park and the RPA has requested this be considered for the north side.

Still pressurising Merton to remove the bins on north side of skew arch.

They are looking to install temporary seating on the Astroturf area for the summer.

A resident asked about improving accessibility in the station but Chris said this was unlikely to happen with uncertainty over Crossrail 2. Another resident said that the train service had continued to deteriorate under the new franchisee and asked if the RPA could raise this issue.

Jerry Cuthbert said that the owner of the site at 265 West Barnes Lane has been working with Red Row Homes to develop plans for building more than 400 flats in seven blocks up to 14 stories high. They have held two exhibitions and had pre-application discussions with Merton Council planners.

5 RAYNES PARK PLANNING MATTERS (Agenda Item 5)

Neil Milligan had provided update on planning issues that was shared by Chris Larkman.

557 Kingston Road – Dundonald Church (17/P0763): New church with flats above. After putting pressure on the applicant to finalise the S106, Legal Services have this week confirmed it's been signed. The decision letter should be issued in the next day or two.

559-589 Kingston Road – Manoplastics and land to the west
16/P1208: S106 signed and planning permission for 99 flats plus B1 floorspace issued.

17/P2529: Appeal against non-determination for 103 flats and B1 now withdrawn.

18/P3927: Pre-app for redevelopment of same site but with more flats. This essentially reverts to the first iteration of the earlier application.

(Tim Lipscomb - case officer).

South side of Wyke Road (17/P0609): Construction of three apartment blocks, two three storey blocks and one four storey block containing 10 x 1 bedroom flats. Issues have arisen regarding kerbside parking, footway access and accuracy of plans. Further amendments have been tabled deleting one of the blocks so as to try and provide more parking.

Rainbow Industrial Estate - Non material amendment applications to add/amend conditions so as to enable phased development – 18/P0258 and 18/P0259. Various conditions partly signed off relating to phase 1 (commercial part of development). Otherwise no news.

Land rear of 2A Amity Grove (18/P4148): Development of open land by erecting 3 x 2 storey dwellings. Application has been subject of a pre-application advice.

40A Lambton Road (17/P2023): Erection of 3 x 1 bedroom dwellings. Refused by Planning Application Committee. Appeal lodged and decision awaited.

27-35 West Barnes Lane (18/P1058): Alterations and extensions to shop units and an extra floor above to create 9 flats in remodelled and extended block. Permission granted 19th October 2018.

80-86 Bushey Road (16/P1317): Major retail/food and drink development. Unoccupied buildings demolished – Pets at Home retained. No obvious building activity. Unclear as to how the approved scheme might progress for the time being. No new pre-application.

32-34 Bushey Road (18/P2619): Scheme amended from 34 to 32 flats. Approved by Planning Committee 15 November - subject to a S106 for affordable housing and permit free units.

6 FEEDBACK, REMINDERS & UPDATES (Agenda Item 6)

A reminder that the Christmas Fair will take place on Friday 7 December in the Waitrose Car Park.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor McLean thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting

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