

# Agenda Item 8

MITCHAM COMMUNITY FORUM  
27 FEBRUARY 2019

(7.15 pm - 9.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillors (in the Chair), Councillor David Chung

## 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held at Pollards Hill Library, and chaired by Councillor David Chung. 10 residents attended, as well as five other Councillors, and officers of the council and its partners. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 2 LONDON ASSEMBLY UPDATE (Agenda Item 2)

Leonie Cooper, Assembly Member for Merton and Wandsworth provided an update on issues being dealt with by the Mayor of London. Leonie said that since being elected in 2016 to scrutinise the new Mayor of London the first year had seen a lot of consultation on new plans/strategies, the second year had seen those policies began to be implemented and now the Assembly is mainly focused on monitoring performance against those strategies. The Mayor has a £18bn budget covering the Met Police, London Fire Brigade, Transport for London as well as issues like housing, environment, health and regeneration.

The Mayors 2019/20 budget was agreed this week, and for the first time with a majority of votes after the Green members abstained. The budget included extra provision to tackle air quality including £48 million for a diesel scrappage scheme aimed at micro-businesses, charities and residents on low incomes. Information on the scrappage scheme can be found at <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/ultra-low-emission-zone/scrappage-scheme>. This comes on top of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone that begins on 8 April and will charge additional fees for the most polluting vehicles going into the Congestion Charge Zone. To find out if your vehicle would be subject to the additional charge go to <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/ultra-low-emission-zone/vrm-checker-ulez>

After more than £1bn has been removed from the Policing funding from Government the Mayor is increasing the precept to try and maintain police numbers. There will also be additional funding going to the Fire Brigade with work on building inspection a priority following the Grenfell tragedy. Some of TfL's larger projects will be delayed, partly due to the delay in the completion of Crossrail and partly due to reduced Government support. However, cleaning up the bus fleet remains a priority and

where this has been done, such as Putney High Street we've seen a 99% decrease in particulates.

A resident asked where the revenue raised from the ULEZ would be spent. Leonie said this would be spent on schemes to reduce pollution such as cleaner buses and a scrappage scheme for taxis. However, the scheme is designed to be a deterrent that changes behaviour rather than revenue raising. Leonie said that the most polluted routes were being targeted first for the Low Emission Bus Zone whilst there was a much larger programme of refitting older buses with new exhaust systems that scrub the emissions. Details on this programme can be found at <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/buses/improving-buses?intcmp=42923c>. Information on Air Quality monitoring can be found at <https://www.londonair.org.uk>.

Asked about Mitcham Police Station Leonie said the Deputy Mayor is still considering their response to the Judicial Review brought on the closure of Wimbledon station but hopefully an outcome will be announced shortly.

### 3 WILSON HOSPITAL AND SOCIAL PRESCRIBING UPDATE (Agenda Item 3)

Dr Doug Hing from Merton Clinical Commissioning Group explained that the CCG is responsible for improving delivery of healthcare across the borough including access and quality of services. There has long been a plan to build a health centre in the east of Merton in order to improve access to diagnostic and clinical services and the Wilson has been identified for this site. Services would include X-rays, blood tests, ultra-sound and clinics on complex issues. Currently the CCG is waiting for financial confirmation and then they will begin the process of co-creating design plans with the local community. At the moment the plan is still to open the new facility by the end of 2022.

However, it was also critical to do more to address the social healthcare issues as well to ensure health and well-being promoted. Social prescribing helps patients address issues which affect their health but cannot be addressed by healthcare services. Working alongside GP surgeries in the East of Merton the social prescribers are experts on accessing a range of other services in the community, such as training, employment, benefits advice, volunteering opportunities and activities that reduce isolation.

In response to a question about closing down the GP and Walk-in services at the Wilson Dr Hing said one aspect regarding this involved an analysis which showed much of the use of the walk-in were for minor ailments which would be better off managed elsewhere, also capacity in other local GPs had been increased. As a result, the closure had not seen any increase in A&E attendance. Nationally, walk-in centres are expected to turn into Urgent Treatment Centres or be closed down.

Furthermore, without access to patient records, they are not able to provide continuity of care unlike extended hours GP surgeries.

In response to questions about the Wilson, Dr Hing said there are no plans from the CCG for social housing on the site (as it is not in the CCG's remit), and that as the centre is designed to address well-being a café and facilities to make it welcome for children and families on site was important, and this had been a high priority for residents in the earlier consultations. The CCG will be responsible for commissioning the clinical services on site but will work with local community organisations to support provision of well-being services.

Residents asked about funding for the community services that the Social Prescribers refer people too. Dr Hing explained that MVSC manage the Social Prescribers and understand the pressures on local voluntary organisations. If they identify pressures on a particular service they can distribute patients to other organisations, and if they identify gaps they can feed this back to the CCG. Naomi Martin from Commonsense Trust says that the pilot has seen additional pressures on some local groups and they have raised this issue with the CCG.

#### 4 WARM AND WELL IN WINTER CAMPAIGN (Agenda Item 4)

Catherine Kiernan, Winter Warmth Engagement Officer at Wimbledon Guild and Dominic Regan, Adviser at Age UK Merton gave a presentation on the new Warm and Well in Merton programme. Their presentation slides are attached. The programme is partnership between Merton Council, Wimbledon Guild, Age UK Merton and Thinking Works and will run from January 2019 to March 2020. The project will involve providing advice and support to residents initially in Cricket Green, Pollards Hill and Figges Marsh to help them stay warm through winter. This includes Welfare Grants of £40-200 available via Wimbledon Guild, information and advice from AgeUK and energy saving advice from Thinking Works. The project is looking for local organisations and community centres to host talks and advice clinics.

In response to questions Catherine and Dominic explained that Thinking Works was already working in several London boroughs including Merton, but is now working with the Winter Warmth Campaign. They understand that switching energy suppliers can be daunting but Thinking Works has had success in saving residents money and in accessing grants for new boilers. Referral can be from another organisation or direct from residents. Age UK is also able to provide a benefits check for residents and so far Wimbledon Guild has issued 27 grants.

Catherine and Dominic agreed to provide an update to a future meeting.

#### 5 COMMONSIDE TRUST UPDATE (Agenda Item 5)

Naomi Martin from Commonsense Trust said that they have been running the New Horizon Centre for 10 years and they hold a huge range of activities. Best known are the Lunch Club, markets, Avanti Club for those with Mental Health issues and Playgroup but they also have a range of exercise, faith, health and social groups. For more on what activities are taking place please see <http://www.commonside.net/whats-on/>

Naomi also highlighted a number of important partnerships that the Trust is involved with:

- MVSC: working together to identify how smaller groups can make better use of community centres
- Merton Council: working together on how to improve the lunch club
- Better Mitcham: staff from the Canons Leisure Centre looking to provide taster sessions at New Horizon
- Merton CCG: Evidence so far is that the CCG has saved around £9m so far through social prescribing and Expert Patient Programme, so we want to see how the CCG can support the 45 patients referred each quarter to Commonsense
- Local business: working with local companies, including a football coaching company and providing space for start-ups including an accountant, beautician, and media.
- Pollards Hill Safer Neighbourhood Team: regular contact with the Met Police SNT who engage with residents, especially young people. The SNT run football coaching sessions in conjunction with Fulham Foundation at Harris every Monday evening for young people identified as at risk by the police or Youth Offending Team. The Under 15 team has made the final of their competition.

Councillor Joan Henry congratulated Naomi on how well the Trust has developed and become a rock for the local community.

## 6 OPEN FORUM (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor Brenda Fraser said that the Safer Neighbourhood Panels for Pollards Hill and Longthornton have been involved in Speedwatch, monitoring speeding on key roads.

Cllrs Fraser and Henry had met with Wideway Medical Practice and would be arranging for Councillor Surgeries to take place there.

Cllr Henry said that Idverde had given over two plots at New Bourne Allotment for a community garden. Volunteers have cleared the land but more are needed to help with planting organic food. To find out more please email [Joan.Henry@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Joan.Henry@merton.gov.uk), or [CouncillorBrenda.Fraser@merton.gov.uk](mailto:CouncillorBrenda.Fraser@merton.gov.uk)

Residents expressed concerns about the reintroduction of charges for bulky waste collection and about changes to refuse collection on the Pollards Hill estate.

A resident asked about the Burn Bulloch and another explained that the owners, Phoenix, are in negotiations with the Cricket Club over the ownership of the Pavilion.

A resident asked about electric charging points, Councillor Martin Whelton replied that Blue City have been installing new points across the borough and these would be promoted when they were finished.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 7)

Thursday 10 October 2019 at 7.15pm, Vestry Hall  
Thursday 27 February 2019 at 7.15pm, Vestry Hall

Councillor Chung thanked residents for attending and closed the meeting

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