

1. From: David Reeves

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Has Merton Council been asked by the Home Office (or other Government agency) to provide data on rough sleepers in the Borough pursuant to the Rough Sleeper Support Service or any other government scheme? If so, has Merton Council taken steps to provide any such data?

Reply

The Council has not been asked by the Home Office (or other Government Agency) to provide data of rough sleepers.

2. From: Louise Cole

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration Housing and Transport

To address the severe decline in UK swift numbers, will Merton Council follow other London boroughs, and policy guidelines: 2019 NPPF Section 15, NPPG Natural Environment, and The Mayor's draft London Plan Clause G6 (B4), and include artificial nest sites for swifts in planning conditions and its new housing stock?

Reply

The Council recognises the importance of nature conservation and has adopted policies to ensure wildlife is considered when making planning decisions. Each planning application is determined on its merits and each application may offer different ways to encourage wildlife and nature conservation and mitigate any harm. Swift boxes may well be appropriate for many such cases given the decline demonstrated in recent years. This may not be appropriate in every case but will be encouraged accordingly.

3. From: Kevin Clarke

To the Cabinet Member for Schools and Adult Education

Is council confident there will be enough secondary school places for 2021 entry such that no child will be expected to take a place in a religious school against their will?

Reply

The council has been careful to ensure that there are enough secondary school places in the borough without creating too many spare places and therefore impacting adversely on the finances of existing Good and Outstanding schools. In

recent years we have therefore expanded Harris Academy Merton and facilitated the opening of the new school Harris Academy Wimbledon in the area of greatest demand. Demand is expected to remain at relatively similar levels for the next 3 years. We expect to ensure that there will be a secondary school place for everyone that needs it again for this September without further expansion and we expect to do so again for 2021. However, the position will continue to be closely monitored. To ensure they obtain a preference offer of a school place, parents are advised to ensure they read and follow the "Guide to applying for a secondary school place" which is on the council's website.

**4. From: John O'Sullivan
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

In Arthur Road some rainwater drains are blocked. The pavement is uneven, cracked & has holes in places. The road was resurfaced though mainly used for through traffic. The pavements are used by council tax payers. Why is there no proper maintenance?

Reply

London Borough of Merton (Merton) undertakes a system of regular highway safety inspections of all its adopted highways in order to comply with its statutory duty to maintain highways in accordance with Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980. Safety inspections are designed to identify defects that meets the Council intervention criteria. The risk of danger is identified by a highways officer on site, and if a defect meets the intervention criteria this is categorised in terms of an appropriate priority response. Arthur Road is on a monthly inspection regime and was last inspected by the highway officer on the 15th January 2020 where he identified one defect on the footway (outside no. 33). This was passed across to our term maintenance contractor to repair within 28 days for issuing.

With regards to gullies within Arthur Road, there is a schedule of works that has been programme for all gullies within Arthur Road to be inspected and cleaned within the next 2 months. If you are aware of any known blocked gullies, please feel free to report these via this web address <https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/street-cleaning/drain-and-sewer-problems> if you haven't already.

In addition, to determine roads for inclusion in our annual footway reconstruction each year the council uses a robust prioritisation model. This model benchmarks and ranks all roads in the borough in comparison to each other and considers a range of criteria such as Engineers Assessment, Condition Survey results, Road Classification, Safety Inspector Priority, Reactive Maintenance Expenditure, Traffic Volumes, Population Density, Emergency, Bus and Cycle routes, Traffic Generators (schools & hospitals etc), Ward Deprivation and Complaints Received. The information used in this model is reviewed and updated annually at the time that the programmes are developed to ensure that the most current picture of the network is taken into account. According to the current output from this model used to prepare the 2019/20 footway

reconstruction programme, Arthur Road is ranked 124th out of 1167 roads in the borough, indicating that its condition is below average for the borough. With the council's current levels of funding for planned maintenance, it only allows for 10 – 15 roads to be reconstructed per year, therefore, it appears unlikely that Arthur Road may form part of the Council's footway reconstruction programme within the next few years. However, this is subject to change as the model is reviewed annually and the possibility that footways deteriorate at different rates. Just for information, we are currently populating the raw data that has been collated and importing this data into our prioritisation model so we should have a proposed maintenance programme of works for 2020/21 around mid-February 2020.

In the meantime, the Council will continue to inspect Arthur Road to ensure it's maintained in a safe condition and is considered for inclusion in the council's future maintenance programmes.

5. From: Nicola Mills

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Building works began at a private school in Wimbledon (Willington School) prior to proposed works that needed Planning Committee approval. Photographs were submitted to Merton Council but not answered. Why are Merton Council not taking action in these situations? This is a worrying precedent to our planning process.

Reply

Planning permission is not always required for building works. It depends what works were undertaken at that particular time. The Council's enforcement records reveal that there are 3 investigations underway. For any action to be instigated requires evidence that harm results and the council are not aware of specific harm from the initiation of the building works. A site visit was undertaken on 27 Jan 2019 where it appeared that the vast majority of the building works were underway and it is considered that there were no issues apparent that would require formal enforcement action being instigated at this time. Complainants details are always remain confidential.

6. From: Joachim Tolle

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Pavement access recently closed to the public for weeks, unauthorised by Willington School contractors. Vulnerable people expected to cross the busy road (young school children, those with mobility restrictions, elderly, mothers with prams). Concerns were lodged with Merton Council but unanswered. Why Merton Council allowing builders to do this?

Reply

We have contacted Willington School contractors today (29-01-20), to advise them of the duties and to inform them that they can't close the footway without having a temporary traffic order in place and also without prior engagement/agreement with council officers. The only temporary traffic order that was made for any of the works undertaken within the school, was the recent crane operation that was undertaken in October 2019. Moving forward, the highway officer for the area will be visiting site on a regular basis to ensure that the footpath outside the school isn't closed unlawfully.

**7. From: Tony Burton
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

To ask when Merton Council will complete the Borough character studies as part of the essential evidence base for the new Local Plan?

Reply

We are working on a wide variety of evidence for the Local Plan. At this time we aren't proposing to complete the final borough character study areas due to the wealth of design and conservation guidance published by the Mayor of London, organisations that champion design and Merton Council, and due to prioritising valuable resources to complete the Local Plan.

**8. From: Klaartje Dresselaers
To the Cabinet Member for Women and Equalities**

Is the ethnic make-up of Merton council employees reflective of the diversity of the population of the borough, and if not, what is the council doing to improve diversity amongst its employees?

Reply

The Statistics show:

	Merton Population	Council Staff	Council Managers	Merton Councillors
White	63.2%	55.4%	70.9%	69.2%
BAME	36.8%	33.1%	11.4%	28.2%
No Data		11.5%	17.7%	2.6%

Please note that the following:

- The data sources differ in methodology and content, therefore providing at best an indication of the differences between the demographic of the resident population, council staff and managers and councillors. The Merton population for instance will contain individuals who are not eligible to work.
- The Council's workforce is drawn from a wide geographical area including and beyond Merton itself. The provision of data by staff, other than age is optional.

Action being taken by Merton Council to improve its BAME make up includes, but is not limited to:

- Appropriate recruitment and selection training for Manager, which includes unconscious bias
- The Chair of the selection panel will ensure any panel members have been appropriately trained
- Career Pathways are being progressed to encourage and enable staff to progress internally
- Agencies are required to demonstrate their track record in producing BAME candidates and the number of successful BAME appointments
- We run a diversity and cultural awareness programme for staff
- External recruiters are asked to conduct additional searches in order to be able to attract BAME candidates
- We are currently looking, where possible, introducing diversity in panel representation for senior appointments which may include stakeholders
- Staff are frequently asked to update their personal data on our HR system in order that our monitoring can be 100% accurate but as it is not legally mandatory then staff continue to have the option to say "prefer not to say"
- Flexible working options are available to help attract candidates, including term time only working, flexible start and finish times, condensed working weeks etc
- We can monitor all stages of the recruitment process and where candidates have indicated their ethnicity we can monitor the % of BAME candidates who apply, long listed, short listed and successful appointment

**9. From: Samantha MacArthur
To the Cabinet Member for Finance**

What are the average and maximum wait times for residents' phone calls to Merton Council to be answered?

Reply

The following information about average wait times is for all calls to 4901, the main switchboard number, that have been answered by an operator for the month on Jan 2020 (up to around mid-day 31/1/2020):

Total number of calls 5642

The average (mean) wait time was 55 secs

There is technically no maximum wait time for calls (i.e. we do not cut off callers after a set period).

**10. From: Shipra Gupta
To the Cabinet Member for Finance**

Last November the Council stated that there had been no formal discussion about committing to become accredited with the Living Wage Foundation. Can the council please provide an update on what discussions have taken place since then?

Reply

All of our employees, including apprentices are paid the London Living Wage so there have been no recent discussions.

**11. From: John Braithwaite
To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment**

When is leaf clearance scheduled and is particular attention being given to designated cycle routes. With autumn being wet, the leaves turn to mulch which as well as being slippery also makes it much harder to clear.

Reply

Our service provider, Veolia provides additional capacity to collect and dispose of leaves during the autumn and winter season. This 'leafing season' runs for ten weeks, starting from a council agreed date between, typically between October and November, and finishing in December/January. Exact dates are flexible due to the seasonal factors that can affect leaf fall.

This year due to the relatively mild weather we experienced this autumn, we delayed the start of the service until the middle of November.

Our leafing plan comprises road assets that historically have experienced heavy leaf fall or have been prone to flooding in adverse weather conditions. The plan allows for two visits across the ten-week period by the leafing resource to each of the roads outlined in the plan. The leafing schedule is neither exclusive nor exhaustive and other locations will be cleared as required including designated cycle paths if required.

The outcome of each year is factored into the plan and additional assets are added as the street scene changes or as the team is made aware of further need. In addition to the programme, roads and footways continue to be cleansed on the normal cleansing schedule.

**12. From: Tom Killick
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

For planning applications approved in the last 12 months for housing developments of 10 units or more, how many units in total do these applications provide, and how many of those will be "affordable"?

Reply

Merton's authority monitoring report (AMR) summarises the changes that happen in Merton from planning applications and construction of new homes, businesses and other developments. <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan#titleCol20> Chapter 4 of Merton's most recent authority monitoring report summarises how many new homes, including affordable homes are approved and built. Merton's AMR 2018-19 will be published in February 2020.

**13. From: Emlyn Williams
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

What has Merton council done to support private sector renters, including information on the website and drop in sessions for residents?

Reply

The Council supports tenants living in the private rented sector in a number of ways which includes providing appropriate advice and assistance on a range of tenancy related issues including security of tenure, harassment and illegal eviction, rent controls etc. The team also supports tenants by working with their landlords to improve housing conditions in their homes and where Landlords are non-compliant in dealing with repairs appropriate enforcement action is taken. This service is provided by the housing options team and the housing enforcement service. The service provides a duty officer on a daily basis located in the Civic Centre and a telephone service throughout the working week between the hours 9 to 5.

There are numerous pages on the council's website on private tenants' rights

**14. From: Somayeh Aghnianejad
To the Cabinet Member for Finance**

How many administrative tasks are not available for residents to do online currently (e.g. renewing residents parking permits) and can only be done by phone, and when does Merton council anticipate that residents will be able to carry out all these tasks online?

Reply

We have automated over 200 different transactions/service requests. We have focused to date largely on those that are most used by customers, for example within our waste service.

Requests from 'apps' such as Fix My Street and Love Clean Streets continue to be accepted and processed through the relevant service areas to ensure customers can use them, although the most efficient reporting method is to contact the council directly.

From 14 January, you are now able to renew your permit on line. You can use an e-permit immediately after you buy it, as it is not printed or posted to you. If you have an e-permit you don't need to display anything in your windscreen – we can tell if your vehicle has an e-permit by reading its number plate and checking it against our records.

Going forward, we are in the process of refreshing our Customer Contact Strategy and this will include a website enhancement project, where we will prioritise For those areas that can be automated (for shift to online):

- Services identified by departments as a priority
- Highest efficiency gains
- Low complexity transactions
- Development that is relatively easy to implement
- Areas with strong demand from customers

15. From: Mary Butler

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Re LBM's sale and transfer of land at Church Path and Hallowfield Way Mitcham, what plans, and over what period of time, does Merton have for its land on Hallowfield Way? Will this be delivered by Merantun Development Ltd and when will the local community be engaged?

Reply

The contract for the sale and transfer of these lands is not completed as completion is dependent upon grant of planning permission with a longstop date of 30th September 2020. Once the transfer of the property to the council is completed the council will need to consider whether to retain the property for its own use or to dispose of its interest. This decision will be made in the normal way under the constitution and

should planning permission be sought the local community will be engaged through the planning process.

**16. From: Mrs Carpenter
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

Why are you still allowing the owners of the Burn Bullock to have squatters and not have them or the owners pay any council tax which is chargeable on the first floors (according to the council tax department) and also allowing the squatters/tenants to fix fencing to a listed building.

Reply

The Council's planning enforcement team recently visited the site to inspect following various concerns regarding the site. The occupiers expressed the view they were 'guardians' protecting the property. However, the issue of Council tax will be passed to the Council tax section for investigation. The issue of fixing fencing to the building was not previously raised, although other aspects were, and will therefore be investigated by the enforcement team accordingly along with the occupation issue.

**17. From: Barry Smith
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

Can the council please provide an update on whether Merantun Developments Ltd will be adopting PassivHaus energy standard for the homes it is/will be building and if not, an explanation of the decision making process that was involved?

Reply

Merantun Development Ltd have considered a number of approaches to achieving sustainability and carbon reduction policies. These are explained in the company's planning applications; available to view online at www.merton.gov.uk/planning

Whilst Merantun is not building to full PassivHaus specification, it has adopted a fabric-first approach to building design. This reduces the need for residents to use energy use in the first instance. Merantun is also promoting low-carbon technology such as air-source-heat-pumps and is not using gas in its developments; further reducing the demand on fossil fuels.

**18. From: Jane Plant
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

Following the council's declaration of a climate emergency, will it introduce a policy that no mature trees will be lost as a result of new development, say when this will take effect and also introduce a tree strategy for the borough which was approved by Cabinet in 2012?

Reply

Since declaring a climate emergency, both council officers and the Climate Emergency Working Group has kicked off a work programme within the Council to consider the implications of the 2030 and 2050 target and develop an action plan. This includes considering how key policies and strategies, such as the Draft Local Plan, need to be amended in response to the Climate Emergency declaration. More information can be found on Merton's website: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency-working-group> The council's planning policies already support the retention of mature trees.

19. From: John Davis

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Ask Merton Council whether it will reduce the number of mature broadleaf trees proposed to be lost as part of The Canons Lottery project following its declaration of a climate emergency?

Reply

Yes, we have reduced the number of mature trees that were proposed to be lost in the Canons "Parks for People" project. The Project Manager for The Canons 'Parks for People Project' recently met with community representatives, the Council's Arboricultural manager, Merton Tree Warden Group and the Consultant Landscape Architect.

At the meeting, the tree felling and planting proposals for the Canons project were discussed. The number of mature broadleaf trees proposed to be lost as part of the project were reduced, mainly through carrying out minor works to a number of trees that had previously been earmarked for felling.

20. From: Nicola De Brett

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Please can a cycle advanced stop box be installed outside South Wimbledon station going south. I cycle through this way 5 times a week .Doing this will support cycling through this junction and reduce the polluted air I have to breathe. Merton Council and TFL need to act on this.

Reply

We want to work with Transport for London to improve South Wimbledon junction for all users. We support cycling improvements and as part of proposed improvements we will raise this request with Transport for London who are responsible for approving amendments to stop lines at traffic signals.

21. From: Dan De Brett To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment

Could some rubbish bins be placed at entrances/exits to the cycle/footpath by Arthur Road, Joseph Hood rec & Green Lane and bins along the path would be nice too. My family removed about 20 bin liners of rubbish from this path over Christmas and it'll only come back without bins.

Reply

I would like to thank you and your family for your support and community spirit in the voluntary work which you have undertaken. This is very much appreciated.

With reference to the specific location, these are primarily cycle paths / routes which we expect our service provider to undertake the required litter picking and sweeping of these areas.

In regards to street litter bins at the site entrances and exits, we need to be mindful of how this may attract anti-social behaviour and in particular fly-tipping. I have asked the Public Space team to review these locations, with a view of conducting a trial by siting litter bin facilities on an interim basis. If the litter bins aid in managing litter and do not attract unwanted larger waste items, they will be adopted formally.

22. From: Ian Veacock To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

What is the minimum habitable roomspace and floorspace for a new build 2bed 5person flat(according to Merton and/or London Mayor) space standards?

Reply

The minimum space standards for new homes in London are set in the Mayor's London Plan. These space standards are the same as central government's national space standards. There are no space standards for a 2 bedroom /5 person dwelling; the space standards applied to two-bedroom dwellings stop at four people. The space standards for dwelling of 5 people or more require three bedrooms and range from 86 to 99 square metres depending on the number of storeys. The space standards can

be found here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan/london-plan-chapter-3/policy-35-quality>

**23. From: Nicola Thompson
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

It is well known that road danger, air/noise pollution, and unattractive car-dominant environments are a deterrent to walking and cycling in London. Given Merton Council's commitment to Climate Emergency measures, sustainable transport and improving air quality, please outline planned highways improvements for Plough Lane and how they address this agenda?

Reply

The highways improvements planned for Plough Lane (Merton Catalyst / AFC Wimbledon) will:

- Bring the local highways up to spec required for the lifetime of the development
- Invest in traffic measures at the Durnsford Road / Plough Lane junction, and on Haydon's Road
- The works have been designed to comply with healthy streets agenda:
 - The area will be greener: sustainable drainage and new trees will be going in, this will also help to reduce surface water flood risk; trees also have additional air quality benefits
 - The size of the pavement will be increased which will help encourage people to walk
- Safety audits will be carried out on the changes
- +£1million is going from the developers to Transport for London to improve bus capacity
- Earlier this year Merton Council allocated funding from Neighbourhood Fund (community from the Plough Lane development to improve shopfronts on Haydon's Road – this work will start in 2020
- +£200,000 will go towards improving play space for children and teenagers in the local park nearest the development (which happens to be Garrett Park in Wandsworth).

The above sets out the improvements arising from the Stadium scheme. Should other sites come forward, such as the adjacent Volante site, these may provide further benefits.

**24. From: Kenneth Cobley
To the Cabinet Member for Voluntary Sector, Partnerships and Community Safety**

I would like to know why the town centre is plagued with beggars, some of whom sit there with expensive rucksacks. I suspect many are not homeless, but just using our good nature to sponge a tax-free living. When will you do something about it?

Reply

The Community Safety service, with police and housing colleagues are taking action. Where there are people begging we will, when possible, engage with these people to ascertain the nature of their business. Where there is genuine homelessness and support needs we work with support agencies to engage them and support them to look at their options, including working to support them, to not live, on the street. This can take some time however due to the complex nature of homelessness.

Where we believe that the begging is problematic, we will seek to take enforcement action wherever and however it is possible. These actions can include the issuing of community protection warnings and notices as well as seeking to issue fines and arrest for breaches of these. We have issued several CPWs and CPNs to beggars and arrests have been made with those arrested taken through the criminal justice system.

We need the support of residents to help us identify where these people are and when they are arriving/leaving as, if they are begging, and this is linked to wider criminality, the intelligence we receive will assist us in tackling this further.

25. From: Maurice Groves

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Why do you use employment land for other purposes than high added value employment? I understand 247 Burlington Road is likely to be used for other purposes than most of the 20th century. High added value local Jobs will save on travel, travel costs, improve carbon footprint and local economy.

Reply

The council's planning strategy is to protect needed employment land for employment uses. Merton's emerging Local Plan proposes 245-247 Burlington Road as site allocation RP.3 for an active ground floor of shops and services, workspace, office and / or light industrial as well as new homes on upper floors. We consider that supporting a mix of uses on the site will help to boost the local economy, provide space for businesses, provide activity along the street, reducing the need for travel and provide much-needed new homes.

26. From: Ronald Dominy

To the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

A Council employee, though not a Merton Park resident, parks a vehicle in Merton Park on residents' spaces with a resident's permit. Council seeks to justify increased parking charges as a way of improving air quality by discouraging car use yet provides employees with permits. How is this justified?

Reply

Some council employees, as part of their conditions of employment, need to have a local parking permit in order to undertake essential duties and ensure the safety and well-being of our residents. The Council is, however, currently undertaking a review of staff parking permits which is aligned to the council's ambition to improve air quality within Merton.

27. From: Ingrid Dickenson

To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment

Re the South London Waste Plan: why does Merton Council rely on pollution measurements 'one mile' away from the source in Weir Road to justify maintaining that site, instead of quantifying the high levels of traffic and air pollution locally which result from waste processing operations there?

Reply

- The Council refreshes and reviews its network of monitoring to comply with its statutory responsibilities. In 2017 we completely refreshed our NO2 monitoring throughout the borough.
- It is important to note that there needs to be a degree of consistency to this monitoring to ensure that we can show changes to annual trends, therefore many of these sites need to remain static.
- The Pollution Team actively supports citizen science projects, and will work with communities for specific site monitoring; groups can apply for this through the Air Quality Action Group (New branch of the Environmental Forum).
- The main issue from pollution at this location will be from dust linked to poor housekeeping from the many waste sites, these are regulated by the Environment Agency, however officers are in contact with colleagues in street cleaning to tackle this problem.
- On a positive note, the Pollution Team secured funding from the Stadium Development for a new automated monitoring station to be located in Plough Lane, this will form a part of a London Network providing real time data in this area.

**28. From: Michael Gould
To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment**

Considering that Merton council has declared a climate emergency, and that methane released from decomposing food waste is a powerful greenhouse gas; What percentage of Merton's Local Authority Schools' food waste is recycled and what measures are the council taking to ensure that all food waste is recycled?

Reply

I am pleased to advise that we do provide a food waste collection service for Merton maintained schools. For those schools that use this facility and keep their food waste separate from the general waste 100% of this material is recycled.

School waste disposal is an item that is nationally delegated to schools. However, the council operates a central school meals contract for primary and special schools to buy into and all but one maintained school does so. The council uses this arrangements to ensure food waste is recycled by stipulating that the contractor is responsible for making available food waste disposal facilities

Our food waste is sent to our disposal contractor, Agrivert where it is processed using the most efficient and modern anaerobic digestion technology. Here all the gases are captured and used to generate electricity whilst the solid by-product is used as a soil improver for the agriculture and farming industry.

**29. From: Emma Maddison
To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment**

What measures have been put in place with Veolia to ensure that renewal notices for garden waste collections are sent out at the appropriate time, and not too early for residents to be able to pay for renewal of their service?

Reply

Our garden waste service continues to be valued by our residents and demand for the service continues to grow. The service is fast approaching 10,000 customers and we routinely review with our service provider, Veolia, on how the renewal process can be improved.

In order to inform customers of the annual renewal date, we provide written notification four weeks before their subscription ends (28-30 days) and a follow-up letter is sent 14 days after their service renewal date has ended. Residents can renew their subscription for the service as early as 30 days before the service end date.

**30. From: Gareth Hughes
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

Merton is already adversely affected by excessive plane noise and pollution from Heathrow. What is Merton Council doing to object to the expansion plans for a third runway? Is Merton Council involved in the legal action by other Local Authorities to stop the expansion? If not, why not?

Reply

- Merton is playing an active role in the many consultations around Heathrow and has now produced a webpage; this outlines our concerns and responses to recent consultations.
- We remain vigilant on this issue and its potential impact to the borough.

The published policy statement is as follows:

Merton borough lies almost equidistant between London Heathrow and Gatwick airports. The Council recognises the demand for airport expansion and the decision to expand Heathrow that has already been taken. The Council is now and has always been determined to ensure that any expansion has as little negative and harmful impact on the residents and businesses of Merton and we will work hard throughout this and future consultations to mitigate any impact.

Merton Council is concerned about the future impact of Heathrow expansion and the potential for impact to the borough and its citizens. This includes any changes to flight paths over the borough.

Merton and its officers will continue to play a role in the consultation process and we will actively encourage the residents to respond.

Our officers will act as key stakeholders throughout the consultation phases scrutinising the technical detail and highlighting risks to the borough, and report this information back to Leadership.

**31. From: Laura Collins
To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Environment**

How does the council intend to enforce anti idling and why are fines not being issued?

Reply

- The Pollution Team is actively tackling the problem of anti-idling, working in partnership with parking services. This includes providing training to our CEO's to assist in campaigns and raising this with motorists as part of their daily patrols.
- We are also part of a London wide campaign sponsored by the Mayor of London and are rolling-out signage throughout the borough.

- Many boroughs suffer from the problem of issuing fines for idling as the process involves asking the motorist to switch off their engines, and its only refusal that can result in a fine. These are very rare throughout London
- Officers are requesting stricter legislation to tackle this problem and we are doing our best within the framework we have to operate in.
- The Pollution Team do welcome volunteers to joint their campaigns to tackle this problem throughout the borough.

32. From: Maggie Kane

To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Environment

Air pollution is an issue that many of us are concerned about. I understand the council monitors it and various volunteer groups monitor it. Can you tell me how the council will use, share and report the data collected.

Reply

We monitor air quality to comply with our legal responsibility as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). By monitoring air quality around the borough, we can assess our compliance with the air quality objectives and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and projects. This can also be used to help provide information and alerts for residents, workers and visitors when pollution levels are elevated.

Monitoring also provides highly detailed information on long-term trends in pollution levels. Sharing air quality data beyond our borough is an important contribution to identifying national and regional trends.

Data is reported in our statutory return called an Annual Status Report, these are sent to and approved by our governing bodies and published on our website. Officers will also consider reporting citizen science projects where this data meets the required standards for the reporting.

33. From: Su Moody Greenwood

To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Environment

How does the council intend to enforce anti idling; why are fines not being issued? People seem ignorant about this. Do they understand what 'idling' means? They don't seem to know/care they are causing air pollution. They seem to be people with children. Please treat this with its' deserved urgency.

Reply

- The Pollution Team is actively tackling the problem of anti-idling, working in partnership with parking services. This includes providing training to our CEO's to assist in campaigns and raising this with motorists as part of their daily patrols.
- We are also part of a London wide campaign sponsored by the Mayor of London and are rolling-out signage throughout the borough.
- Many boroughs suffer from the problem of issuing fines for idling as the process involves asking the motorist to switch off their engines, and its only refusal that can result in a fine. These are very rare throughout London
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- The Pollution Team do welcome volunteers to joint their campaigns to tackle this problem throughout the borough.

**34. From: Gobi Raj Sriparan
To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Environment**

We are known as 'Mucky Merton' by our own residents and neighbouring councils. What actions has the council taken to combat extensive fly-tipping in our streets since the last time this issue was raised?

Reply

In line with the National trend, we have been handling a sustained increase in the volume of fly-tipped waste incidents across the borough. The waste deposited illegally is becoming a common form of anti-social behaviour and damages the overall image of our borough. On average, we are clearing in excess of 1,000 fly-tipping incidents per month with this sustained increase blighting our communities.

Unfortunately, fly-tipping has become common place in some areas even though it is a criminal offence, caused by the few whilst impacting on the many.

In partnership with our service provider, our primary aim is to ensure that we have the right resources in place to respond in a timely manner to reported incidents and to utilise evidence we gather to inform our approach to enforcement. We have trialled to great success additional operational resource that has improved the time taken to respond to reported incidents. We plan on further supporting this resource while volumes of incidents remain unacceptably high.

Prior to finalising the Fly-Tipping Strategy, the Public Space Division has held a number of Member engagement workshops in November and December with the objective of better understanding from Ward Councillors the key themes and site-specific issues arising across their Wards. The outcome of these workshops has informed our Fly-tipping Action Plan that is utilised by the enforcement team to target specific locations. An example of the success being made by our enforcement team

was the use of CCTV at an identified fly-tipping hotspot which has led to the issuing of over 60 fixed penalty notices and possible formal prosecutions through the Courts.

**35. From: Martin Lake
To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Environment**

Why is there no street cleaning in conjunction with refuse collection day? The (west) end of my street (All Saints Road) is perpetually strewn with rubbish creating an unsightly and unpleasant environment.

Reply

The SLWP contract with Veolia is an output based specification that requires our streets to be maintained to the required acceptable standard. In areas in which our roads are below the established standard, the service provider is required to attend to these areas and ensure that the road is brought back up to standard in the agreed time scale. As such the contract is not based on a prescribed frequency of sweeping or litter picking.

However, there are schedules that our service provider, Veolia, operate to and distinct operational areas they cover where a street cleaner needs to attend and clean if below standard.

It is important to note that these schedules will vary depending on pedestrian foot traffic, land use and need. The schedules are continually reviewed in order to ensure the efficient deployment of the suitable resource.

Our Neighbourhood Client team regularly monitor these areas along with joint inspection with Veolia's Environment Managers. The information is collated by the service provider and if required the schedule can be amended in order that the streets are cleaned to a required frequency and ensure that they do not fall below grade.

In regards to All Saints Road, I have asked for this to be investigated and action taken to ensure the required standard is met.

To assist in this matter, we encourage our residents to report service related issues on-line as this helps us to ensure we alert Veolia to areas requiring attention whether it is fly tipped material, or recent litter or any other environmental issue

**36. From: Eve Cohen
To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Environment**

Road sweepers' green refuse sacks are regularly left on the streets for a week or more. Does the contract with Veolia still require these sacks to be collected within 24 hours and what is being done to enforce this?

Reply

Yes – our contract does require street cleansing sacks to be collected at the end of each working day. Where this has not been completed they have 24 hours from notification to rectify this service requirement.

As part of the Annual review process I have asked officers to review the current Service Performance Indicators to ensure that this area of service is covered and the contractor held to account.

Please consider using the official reporting process below to ensure your enquiry is processed in the most efficient manner. Our website enables you to easily report a range of service requests including:

- Missed recycling or waste collection
- Litter and street cleaning problems
- Abandoned cars
- Graffiti
- Fly-tipping

Report It On-line: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/doitonline/report-it.htm>

Or if you prefer, please telephone the **Merton Council Contact Centre:** Tel: 020 8274 4901.

The Contact Centre are able to deal with the same range of service requests as the Report It On-line function.

In the interim I would welcome further information on your experience in order to ensure that these areas are rectified and proactively inspected in the future in order to ensure our service provider is delivering on our requirements.

37. From: Andrew Boyce To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Council claims to care about tackling air pollution and a 2017 motion agreed to work with residents in South Wimbledon. How will it mitigate the toxic pollution resulting from the major gas works at South Wimbledon junction? Who granted a licence for such work proceeding at a tortoise level pace?

Reply

Unfortunately, works of this kind are unavoidable and can have a considerable impact on congestion and the traffic network. This can also cause localised short-term spikes in pollution.

Officers in the Pollution Team are in contact with the contractors and colleagues to see if notifications can be added to signage around anti idling messages to road

users. This is a point we would like to push with many road works that have an impact on idling.

Pollution at the junctions of Merton Road / High Street Merton and Kingston Road have been monitored on a daily basis since the start of these works and no noticeable increases have been observed on the Londonair website: <http://www.londonair.org.uk/LondonAir/>

There is an air monitoring apparatus located road side on Merton Road and if there was any significant rises in pollution, this would have been registered. With regards to the pollution of works sites in general stemming from an increase in congestion, this has to be taken into consideration with all factors when planning works. It is a fine balancing act of providing safe and expeditious road works, minimising impact to traffic & pedestrians and most importantly, ensuring that local residents are accommodated with a gas supply. The current gas works are on schedule and SGN is doing everything it can to ensure works are completed as quickly as possible thus minimising pollution in the South Wimbledon area.

**38. From: Sara Sharp
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

Merton declared a Climate Emergency, hired officers and set up a Climate Emergency Working Group, but what is it doing to link up departments such as planning to ensure net zero carbon by 2030 in new builds, and to stop making poor planning decisions that don't address this climate emergency.

Reply

Since declaring a climate emergency, both council officers and the Climate Emergency Working Group has kicked off a work programme within the Council to consider the implications of the 2030 and 2050 target and develop an action plan This includes considering:

- decarbonising the Council's fleet and buildings,
- approaches to integrate climate considerations in the Council's procurement policies and decision-making,
- integrating the Council's climate ambitions into the Staff Travel Plan to reduce emissions from Council staff travel.
- how the Draft Local Plan and other key council strategies, need to be amended to help achieve the targets set out in the Climate Emergency Declaration

To help deliver the above, a number of teams, including public health, transport and Future Merton are working together. We have also supported a number of climate internships which have helped to maximise what our teams can achieve. We are very grateful to the volunteers on the Climate Emergency Working Group who have given up their time and knowledge to gather evidence and ideas and are helping to identify priority actions. For more information please see Merton's website:

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency>

**39. From: Dom Aitchison
To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

Merton Council won a 2013 London Transport Award for “Excellence in Walking and Public Realm”, in recognition of the “Destination Wimbledon” project. With drop-offs/pick-ups from Wimbledon Station now almost impossible, given the Council’s acceptance of 10-20 delivery scooters occupying the remaining parking spaces, is the Council still a worthy winner?

Reply

The Council is pleased that the local businesses are doing well but is also aware of the issues surrounding delivery scooters. The Council is working with the local business in determining a suitable facility for the increase in demand for scooter parking. Meanwhile, given the excellent public transport to Wimbledon town centre (the only town centre in London served by underground, tram, rail and bus), visitors are encouraged to use public transport instead of driving into the town centre, thereby minimising congestion and pollution.