

RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM  
6 OCTOBER 2020

(Time Not Specified - Time Not Specified)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Simon McGrath (in the Chair),

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held via Zoom, and chaired by Councillor Simon McGrath with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association (RPA). More than 50 residents and 8 councillors attended on Zoom with 115 additional views on YouTube. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would work.

2 FLOODING (Agenda Item 2)

Ashley Book and Nishad Sowky from Thames Water and Tom Sly from Merton Council gave a presentation on local flooding issues. The presentation is attached to this report. Nishad and Tom explained that responsibility for infrastructure above ground is Merton Council's but below ground it is Thames Water's. In Raynes Park there is separate foul water and surface water. Raynes Park town centre is low, with a raised embankment and river catchment areas.

Current work includes:

- Worple Road – carrying out an investigation
- Abbots Avenue – still looking to reduce the risk of flooding
- Cottenham Park – tackling a build-up in the sewers
- Coombe Lane – trying to resolve blockages
- Seaforth Road – carrying out surveys and investigations.

In addition Merton Council is investigating surface water across the whole of West Merton (Raynes Park and Wimbledon). We have also undertaken extensive gully cleaning programme, with 10,500 cleaned and another 9,000 to be cleaned this autumn. Gully sensors have been installed to monitor silt levels and surface water.

Gathering data has allowed to build up a picture that will inform future strategy, a Drain Water Management Plan. This can be brought back to a future meeting.

It is crucial that residents report flooding when it happens, Merton gets lots of reports, Thames Water not as many. Reporting helps us to build a business case and can include a sewer flooding questionnaire.

Tom explained that under the planning process he is consulted on all major and minor applications and has been able to influence development to help slow the flow of water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and improving green infrastructure. Thames Water are not statutory consultees but do support measures to reduce flow.

Jane Barnes from the Residents Association of West Wimbledon (RAWW) said that the extent of flooding in the area was greater than many realised and gave a number of recent examples. Tom agreed that the issue seemed to be misconnections between the surface and foul water networks. Slowing the flow is critical to helping the network cope. Storm Francis was a high intensity rainfall event that overwhelmed the network. These should be rare events, but with climate emergency these storms could be more likely. As a result we will focus on keeping the foul and surface water separate.

At a previous meeting Thames Water said they had cleared a blockage at Crescent Road. Nishad confirmed that they had checked and found the blockage was still cleared.

A resident asked about off street parking and Tom replied that this can be a problem. Any space over 5m<sup>2</sup> needs planning permission and must be permeable. Abbott Avenue residents had been given a code to use when reporting to Thames Water and Ashley agreed to looking into whether other residents could receive a code.

Tony Edwards from the RPA asked about gully clearance. Tom explained that Conway are contracted to provide two clearances a year as part of the highways contract in high risk areas. Veolia are contracted to do additional reactive clearing.

A resident raised the Lost Effra project in Lambeth following the historic channel of a river, adding greening measures along the catchment. Merton would support following a similar model and has some funding from the Neighbourhood CIL to conduct clearing of eight high-risk culverts.

### 3 EMISSIONS BASED PARKING CHARGES CONSULTATION (Agenda Item 3)

Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration introduced the item and explained why Merton is consulting on changes to charges and why now. Introducing emissions based charging was always planned, but in the last consultation the proposed changes did not include emissions as the technology to deliver it was not available.

Covid-19 has meant that public transport not available so during the lockdown we saw a move nationally to encourage much more active travel. In outer London car use now at 150% of previous levels so this is an issue that still needs addressing. We have delayed this consultation due to lock down, as the proposal was originally agreed to go out to consultation in the spring.

The proposed approach builds on the previous consultation. We do not have control over vehicles passing through the borough so we know the proposals do not take into account movement of vehicles. However, it is important to take a proportionate approach to the tools we have.

Ben Stephens, Head of Parking Services gave a presentation on the details of the proposals and the presentation is attached to this report. Ben explained that more than half of London boroughs either have or are introducing some form of emissions based charging. It is proposed that a supplementary charge based on the approach in the London ULEZ scheme will replace the current diesel levy. The consultation will remain open until 23 October 2020.

FOLLOWING THE MEETING: the consultation was extended to 26 October.

Residents can check their car by using Transport for London's [ULEZ checker](#), and emissions on the [Government website](#). The Mayor of London has launched a [car and motorcycle scrappage scheme](#) to help low income and disabled Londoners scrap older, more polluting cars and motorcycles in favour of cleaner vehicles and greener forms of transport. We also expect use of public transport to return to normal once the pandemic has settled down.

Residents said they felt this proposal was unfair to people who don't drive regularly or who cannot afford to change cars. Chris Lee said residents may well feel this makes low use of cars less economic so we want motorists to consider other options like car clubs. The intention is to seek to balance responsibility for air quality and climate change in order to nudge behaviour. We will use resources from additional charges to improve infrastructure. We hope public transport will recover from COVID-19 and will improve. With air quality and the climate emergency we cannot continue to live in a car based transport system.

A resident said Motability only has a small choice of low emission vehicles, and asked if this was taken into account in equalities impact assessment. We are currently consulting with equalities groups to make sure they are engaged in consultation and can raise these concerns. Free permits for blue badge holders and carers will still not be charged.

A resident asked if they can vote to remove CPZ or to change operating times, Chris explained that in Merton CPZs are only introduced by resident requests so residents can equally request changes or removal of their CPZs.

Chris Edge from the RPA asked why there are no charges for non-CPZ areas and variations in areas. These charges will apply to anywhere where we have some controls, as we have no powers in other areas. Although we are adding emissions to existing scheme introduced earlier but surcharge will be the same everywhere.

Chris Larkman from the RPA said the increase in the cost of visitor parking would make it difficult for residents.

Cllr Michael Bull said this policy would hit local motorists parking on street but there are not enough incentives to move to electric vehicles. Will the infrastructure for EVs be improved? Chris said that Merton is well ahead of London and national average for EV infrastructure. We have won £160,000 to install 40 lamppost charging units across the borough. Cllr Whelton said we have seen sales of EVs increase and we are keeping the permit charges for EVs low. We are still looking to continue to improve infrastructure.

Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport, thanked everyone for their contribution and summed up the discussion. He said that Merton wants to improve air quality and make sure the scheme is fairer. The scheme will be a success if fewer people have cars on the road. Cllr Whelton encouraged responses to the consultation and these will be considered by Scrutiny and the Cabinet.

#### 4 RAILWAY STATION, STREET MANAGEMENT AND RAYNES PARK IMPROVEMENTS (Agenda Item 4)

Chris Larkman from RPA gave an update on Raynes Park station. We are hoping to get a mural on Southside facing the road, funded by Network Rail. The Area south of the station as the road goes into the Rainbow estate, difficult to establish who is responsible for enforcing parking on the road.

Tony Edwards said that two bids to the Neighbourhood CIL Fund were both sadly unsuccessful. This was a missed opportunities to complete the Enhancement Plan.

#### 5 PLANNING UPDATE (Agenda Item 5)

Kris Witherington provided an update on behalf of the Development Control Team.

Post permission:

Development progressing on the former Rainbow Industrial Estate Site and also well advanced on the Dundonald Community Church site and flats on Kingston Road south of the railway lines in Raynes Park.

Appeals:

Informal hearing for mixed use primarily residential development on former Manuplastics site and adjoining land to the west – two applications refused by PAC for extra flats. No date as yet for the Hearing.

Applications.

37-39 Cottenham Park Road - Permission granted at August Planning Application Committee subject to completion of S106 for flats and houses.

Land on south side of Wyke Road - Amended plans for two blocks of flats alongside railway embankment. Very long standing negotiation after an earlier refusal and an even earlier appeal. Highways/Transport input proving frustrating and rather slow but would entail significant S106 works to remodel pavements and parking along the south side of Wyke Road. This will go to a future PAC meeting.

Pre-applications.

Phoenix House 2A Amity Grove – advice for demolition of the existing building and erection of a 6 storey (plus basement) residential building comprising 17 flats and terrace of four two-storey dwelling at rear. This has been referred to the Design Review Panel.

9 Amity Grove, Amity Grove Clinic – advice for the demolition of existing health care clinic and erection of a part one storey, part three storey mixed use building comprising a children’s nursery and residential units, a meeting with the developer is to be arranged.

Garage blocks on land at rear of Crossway – there are two pre-applications for same site, and both involve demolition of the existing building. One plan is for 18 residential units and the other is for 9 residential units.

## 6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 6)

St Helier Hospital

Clare Gummatt Lay Representative, Patient Voice Merton, SW London CCG said A&E and all services all open and welcoming new patients. Newspaper reports of a lockdown were inaccurate and St Helier has [issued a statement](#) accordingly.

## 7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor McGrath thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The next meeting is on Thursday 3 December at 7.15pm and will be held on Zoom. The following meeting is scheduled for 30 March 2021.

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