

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT	
	<u>NOTES OF MEETING</u>
	Subject: Wimbledon Community Forum
	Date: 18th March 2014 Time: 19.15
In attendance	Councillor Henry Nelles – Chair; John Hill (Head of Public Protection & Development) – Lead officer; Rana Bhutta – Consultation and Community Engagement Officer.
Action Needed By:	<p>1. <u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>1.1 Cllr. Nelles (HN) welcomed all to the meeting at Drake House, St George’s Road.</p> <p>1.2 Approximately 28 residents attended, as well as Merton Councillors, Police Constable Dan Hayward, Adele Williams from Merton’s Healthwatch and officers from the council and its partners.</p>
KW/HN	<p>2. <u>Minutes of last meeting/Update</u></p> <p>2.1 Councillor Nelles briefly updated residents on the council’s ‘Mini Hollands’ bid, which was removed from the agenda after the council’s bid for £30m of funding was unsuccessful. The council will however receive a smaller grant of approx. £15million for cycling improvements in the borough. Merton expects feedback on its bid from the Mayor of London by the next Forum in June 2014 so it was agreed that officers would attend the next forum to explain the feedback received.</p>
KW/HN	<p>2.2 Councillor Nelles explained that an update on plans for the redevelopment of the YMCA was also removed from the agenda as the plans have not progressed. The YMCA has said it will attend the next forum meeting in June.</p> <p>2.3 A resident commented that the Shelton Rd consultation had been undertaken too quickly. John Hill (JH) agreed to discuss this further with the resident at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>2.4 In response to residents’ complaints that litter bins in the town centre are not being emptied properly and the town centre streets are not being swept properly, it was reported that the council empties the litter bins up to four times a day and sweeps the streets regularly; however residents can report a problem if they see one and the street cleaning team will respond within 24 hours. The same reporting procedure applies for rubbish left behind from residential bin collections.</p>

<p>JH</p> <p>JH</p>	<p>It was noted that a 'Love Clean Streets' app has just been launched by the council which residents can use to take a photo of litter and report it.</p> <p>2.5 Residents reported overflowing bins on Francis Road and rubbish outside specific houses on Palmerston Road. JH to follow up with Enforcement.</p> <p>2.6 A resident commented that cigarette butt bins were needed at bus shelters in the borough. JH to feed suggestion back to TfL.</p> <p>2.7 JH updated residents on the council's plans to develop the Wimbledon Community Association site as a car park: the planning application for this was withdrawn so there are now no proposals for temporary use of the site. The long-term use of the site will still be for community use.</p> <p>2.8 JH also provided an update on 28-30 Palmerston Rd: surveyors had visited the site and determined that it is not a dangerous site; however, the owners have been notified that the gates of the building keep blowing open and will be reminded to shut them.</p>
<p>PC Hayward</p> <p>HN</p>	<p>3. <u>Policing update</u></p> <p>3.1 PC Dan Hayward provided crime figures for Hillside, which overall are lower than the same time last year. He also explained the new structure for Safer Neighbourhoods teams, whereby each ward in Wimbledon has one PC and one PCSO, plus there is a team of shared PCs and PCSOs for all of Wimbledon. Police officers also now follow a five-week shift pattern which involves them being on duty late at night, when crimes are more likely to happen.</p> <p>3.2 A resident commented that little seems to be being done to stop cyclists from riding on pavements and going through red lights. PC Hayward explained that the police had undertaken Operation Safeway for a month, stopping all cyclists who were seen to be cycling irresponsibly. It is difficult to continue to monitor the situation because of other responsibilities and dealing with emergencies.</p> <p>3.3 PC Hayward agreed to provide information on which PCs and PCSOs represent each of Wimbledon's wards.</p> <p>3.4 A resident commented that the Borough Commander's monthly newsletters are very informative and that people can sign up to receive them by visiting Neighbourhood Link.</p> <p>3.5 HN informed residents that a new Borough Commander for</p>

	<p>Merton, Stuart Macleod, started last week. HN to ask if he can attend one of the future forum meetings.</p>
	<p>4. <u>Healthwatch Merton update</u></p> <p>4.1 Adele Williams (AW), the Information and Outreach officer for Merton's Healthwatch explained that it had been set up to listen to residents' views on health and social care services in the borough.</p> <p>4.2 Three events have been held so far; the key issues that arose from these events will be written up into a report which will determine Healthwatch's focus for the coming year.</p> <p>4.3 There will be a public meeting at the Acacia Centre on 31st March at 5.30pm where further details will be provided on the projects Healthwatch will be working on in the near future.</p> <p>4.4 Asked if there was an overlap between the work of Healthwatch and that of hospital trusts, AW explained that Healthwatch is separate to the trusts but meets with them to give them customer feedback and direct questions from the public to them.</p>
	<p>5. <u>Sites and Policies presentation</u></p> <p>5.1 Tara Butler (TB) from the council's Future Merton team explained that Merton's Site and Policies Plan is a development plan that is produced every 10 years and is used to help guide decisions on planning applications.</p> <p>5.2 The plan contains: detailed planning policy; potential development sites in the borough; and a map outlining the location of different areas in the borough (for example, town centre boundaries, protected nature reserves etc).</p> <p>5.3 The plan contains some key policy changes: an emphasis on the importance of good design in buildings; the importance of town centres; a policy on basement applications; and a list of potential development sites such as the former community centre at St George's Rd, the Greyhound Stadium (for which two proposals have been put forward and are available to view on the council's website, although no planning applications have been received to date), the YMCA, and the office block opposite the YMCA (which is likely to be changed to a mixture of offices and residential).</p> <p>5.4 Wimbledon Library is not in the plan.</p> <p>5.5 There are lots of protected areas on the map near Wimbledon Common as well as green spaces also along the Wandle Valley that have been marked for protection.</p>

<p>TB/Planning</p>	<p>5.6 Separate to the Sites and Policies Plan, TB explained the article 4 direction that Merton Council is introducing in order to prevent offices in Wimbledon being turned into flats. This is after Central Government announced that shops and offices can now be converted to new homes without developers needing to obtain change of use permission from councils. The only three considerations that would have to be taken into account are contamination, flooding and transport. Merton Council is proposing the Article 4 direction to avoid losing businesses in Wimbledon; following community consultation councillors will vote on the matter on 02 April 2014. Further to a question from a resident, it was confirmed that this rule only applied to conversions of offices to residential. Demolition of offices and their replacement with residential properties would be subject to the usual planning rules and policies.</p> <p>5.7 Asked about the P3 (Hartfield Road car park) and P4 (theatre car park) sites, TB explained that P3 has been designated in the plan as a potential site for development. It will be used as a car park for the adjoining supermarket until at least until 2019 but beyond that, there is potential for it to be used for a variety of different uses such as retail, offices, community, residential. Councillors and constituents would need to decide on the matter nearer 2019.</p> <p>5.8 There is a development brief to guide the design of the P4 site as it is next to an historic listed building: New Wimbledon Theatre: the ground floor could be retail or restaurants; the upper floors office or residential. The council undertook a parking survey which ascertained that the multi-storey car parks in Wimbledon are usually only partially full, therefore the P4 site is not planned to be used as a multi-storey car park.</p> <p>5.9 Asked about whether the plan will place restrictions on the height of buildings, TB explained that Merton's Core Planning Strategy supports buildings of a consistent height along Wimbledon Broadway. It was also explained that although there is no specific maximum height, generally the council will not accept plans for buildings that are substantially taller than existing buildings.</p> <p>5.10 A resident commented that there has been no formal consultation on the plans for the stadium and that it would be useful for homes off Haydons Park Road to be sent information. TB explained that although there are interested parties, no planning applications have been submitted for the stadium. The council will create a webpage with details of what is happening on Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium.</p> <p>5.11 The future of the site at St George's Road (former Wimbledon</p>
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TB	<p>Community Centre) will be considered by the next administration.</p> <p>5.12 Merton Priory Homes/Circle Housing consulted residents last summer about the possible redevelopment of the High Path Estate. The housing association has recently (March 2014) appointed architects to prepare a masterplan, but this would be at least a year-long process so planning applications were not expected before late 2015. At this early stage there are no answers as to whether tenants will have to move out during any type of redevelopment.</p> <p>5.13 It was agreed that TB would source an answer to the question about the official relationship between Circle Housing and the council regarding development planning. HN explained that some councillors sit on the association's board and that Merton Council has nomination rights over the people placed in Circle Housing/ Merton Priory's homes.</p> <p>5.14 Councillor Williams commented that if new flats are proposed in Hillside ward, the council needs to insist that developers include private parking spaces because on-street parking permits are not available now that the ward is entirely a CPZ. TB explained that the Mayor of London sets parking standards, which are usually based on a development's proximity to public transport. Landowners always have a choice about whether to provide parking spaces within their developments or not.</p> <p>5.15 The hotel application above Henry J Bean's has been allowed on appeal.</p>
JA	<p>6. <u>Merton's Mega Recycle Challenge</u></p> <p>6.1 Jane Alexander (JA) from the council explained that the council is introducing an incentive scheme, funded by the DCLG, to try to increase recycling rates in the borough by 3.5% in the next two years (the current recycling rate is 39%). A campaign was launched on 24 March which involves cash prizes for individuals, estates, flats and schools that recycle. A door-stepping campaign from 22 April will encourage people to recycle, take requests for new recycling boxes and answer questions on recycling.</p> <p>6.2 The council can recycle wet newspapers providing they are not too wet. Residents can prevent them from getting too wet by putting them out for recycling in plastic bags.</p> <p>6.3 JA agreed to feed back residents' requests for lids for the recycling bins and to check with council's waste department whether litter collected from the borough's parks is recycled or not.</p> <p>6.4 Councillor Williams, who sits on the London Waste and Recycling Board, suggested that every few weeks there should be</p>

	<p>a central location for residents to take waste such as electrical goods so that they don't have to drive all the way to the rubbish tip to dispose of such waste.</p> <p>6.5 Asked how the council monitors that things are being recycled correctly, JA explained that all waste is highly regulated and checked. The council is also trying to educate residents on recycling correctly.</p> <p>6.6 Participation in food recycling rates in the borough is currently at about 50%.</p> <p>6.7 A resident enquired about the Council's approach to monitoring excess packaging of goods sold by major retailers. JH confirmed that the Council's Trading Standards team had already carried out a significant amount of analysis and were working with retailers to improve situation in this regard.</p>
	<p>7. <u>Topics for Scrutiny</u></p> <p>7.1 Richard Greig (RG) from the council's Scrutiny team provided an overview on the work that the team and its four scrutiny panels does. He invited residents to put forward topics for the scrutiny panels to look at in the coming year. Previous topics have included activities for the over-55s, climate change and whether the Government's Green Deal is suitable for Merton, and the provision of youth centres in the borough.</p>
<p>JH/Trading Standards</p>	<p>8. <u>Planning Update</u></p> <p>8.1 John Hill (JH) told residents that he is unlikely to attend future Wimbledon Forum meetings due to a shift in his role at the council, away from planning. Residents thanked him for all of his hard work and contributions to past meetings.</p> <p>8.2 A public meeting was held to discuss Wimbledon Park Athletics Stadium. Some plans have been put forward for improving the site by the Wimbledon Club but nothing definite has been decided. The council is hoping for a running track and upgraded facilities.</p> <p>8.3 JH explained that information should already be available on the council's website as to which part of the pavement various shops and restaurants have licence to use but the council will look into putting this information into My Merton as well. He asked residents to report businesses that do not have signs up explaining which parts of pavements they have licence to use.</p>
<p>JH</p>	<p>9. <u>Soapbox</u></p> <p>9.1 JH to report standing water issues on Merton High Street (opposite Hampton Road) and by Carluccio's in Wimbledon Village</p>

to Mario Lecordier.

9.2 NHS care workers are not currently permitted to park in residential permit areas but this is under review.

9.3 In response to a resident commenting that the entrance and exit signposts to the theatre car park are inadequate, it was explained that the council is currently undertaking a review of all car park signage.

9.4 Buskers are not generally seen as a problem in the borough although the council has some powers to move them on if necessary. Licences are not required for handing out literature.

9.5 Councillor Williams encouraged residents to attend an exhibition on traffic along the Ridgway, taking place on 29 March from 12-5pm at the Sacred Heart.

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