

# Merton Council

## Council

**12 April 2017**

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**From: David Stephenson**

**To the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking**

Why does this unfair levy only apply to council tax payers who live in a controlled parking zone? What about diesel drivers in the rest of the borough? Are you not discriminating against those in controlled parking zones simply because you have their car details?

**Reply**

Air Quality in London is a Public Health Emergency according to experts and reported in the House of Commons. Merton is exercising its powers to respond to this emergency in the best way it can. It is well known and scientifically proven that diesel cars contribute much more damage to London's poor air quality and the health issues arising. We are following many other boroughs in implementing a surcharge on residents purchasing parking permits for diesel vehicles . We are unable to directly deal with motorists outside of these zones but acknowledge that work is underway by the Mayor of London to address this. This is not discriminatory but simply an illustration of the powers we have and the fact that we are utilising them to do what we can to clean up London and Merton's air.

**From: Tony Burton**

**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

Will Merton Council publish its pre-application advice on development proposals for the site of the Burn Bullock and Mitcham cricket pavilion and inform the tenants - Mitcham Cricket Club - when it has been provided?

**Reply**

Currently the council does not automatically publish its pre application advice on-line. These are not formal planning applications and there is no statutory requirement to place the information on line. As it is not a formal application there is also no requirement to inform the tenants. However, the council is reviewing its position regarding publishing pre-application advice, balancing the confidentiality some applicants expect with the public interest in such issues.

**From: Sandra Vogel**

**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

When will the Listed Building Repair Notice issued in August 2014 for the Burn Bullock be enforced and what action is being taken to remove this listed building from the national Heritage at Risk Register where it remains despite works done thus far?

**Reply**

The owner of the property has been working with the council since the service of the notice and significant repairs to the building have been made. However, it is considered premature to seek removal of the property from the Risk Register at this

stage as it is considered important that enforcement powers be retained if matters deteriorate for any reason.

**From: Simon McGrath**  
**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

What is the % of affordable housing in developments approved by Merton Council since 1.1.2017?

**Reply**

Between 01 January 2017 and 31 March 2017 Merton Council has issued one decision notice for a major housing development that provided affordable homes. The planning decision (Forestcue Road 16/P3430 ) provided 11 affordable rented homes and 5 starter homes (homes to be sold at a discount in perpetuity), a total of 22%; Merton's Planning Applications Committee resolved to grant permission for other major housing developments during the same time period (for example at 25 High Path, which will provide 80 affordable rented homes (60% of the total). This application has been referred to the Mayor Of London who may decide to determine the application himself or allow Merton's decision to approve stand.

**From: John Davis**  
**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

Given that another tree planting season has ended, I ask when will Merton Council / Rediscover Mitcham / TfL plant the Liquidambar feature tree proposed in the tree planning for Rediscover Mitcham at Fair Green? Further, when is it envisaged that reported dead and vandalised street trees will be replaced?

**Reply**

Major construction is still taking place on and around the Fair Green, therefore the new trees to be planted along the edge of the Green will be planted next season. This avoids risking damage to the trees during the construction period.

In general terms, Merton Council's policy is to apply arboricultural first-aid measures to vandalised trees wherever practical and to replace dead street trees where it is necessary. Where a tree is repeatedly vandalised and may need replacing, it is often more practical to seek an alternative location for its replacement. Each case is therefore considered on its own merits depending on the circumstances of the tree's death or damage.

In some cases, the damage may have occurred as collateral damage as part of a local development project, for example, and the completion of the associated works may determine where the replacement tree is sited to maximise the chances of its growth and survival.

Regrettably, it is not always possible to replace every dead tree during the same financial or calendar year that it expired owing to the demands of the operational service and given that the core replanting season typically occurs between December to March, and planting works are pre-planned between September and November.

**From: Daniel Weir**

**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

What are Merton Council going to do about Rowan Park? The park should be handed over to Merton Council a public space over 3 years ago per the section 106 on Rowan development (20.23 and 20.24) and is falling into disrepair.

[http://planning.merton.gov.uk/MVM.DMS/Planning%20Application/1000060000/1000060451/07P1216\\_S106%20Agreement.pdf](http://planning.merton.gov.uk/MVM.DMS/Planning%20Application/1000060000/1000060451/07P1216_S106%20Agreement.pdf)

**Reply**

**THIS QUESTION WILL BE ANSWERED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND CULTURE**

Three years ago Rowan Park was not in a suitable state to be handed to the Council. Over the last 3 years, a number of design and maintenance issues have been resolved. The landscape has also matured during that timeframe making it a more attractive environment for the enjoyment of local residents.

The Council's Greenspaces team is actively engaged with the site developer to finalise the handover of the park to Merton. The final checks are being carried out and are expected to be completed this month, with a view to handing over the site shortly afterwards. The Longthornton ward councillors have worked hard for their residents on this issue and I am looking forward to their being able officially open the park after such a long time.

**From: Richard Hilton**

**To the Cabinet Member for Finance**

What progress has there been with the formal investigation into the Labour Leader of Merton Council, Cllr Alambritis over the Council Tax 'consultation'? When will the investigation conclude and will the results of the investigation be fully disclosed to the public?

**Reply**

I understand that the investigation is complete and the results will be presented to a meeting of the Standards and General Purposes Committee. I strongly believe that it is right that we listen to all of our residents, particularly on issues such as council tax which have a disproportionate impact on the poorest in our community.

**From: Laura Paine**  
**To the Cabinet Member for Education**

Which schools in Merton are likely to lose funding overall under the government's new funding formula? Can you provide a list?

### **Reply**

The main differences between the National Funding Formula and Merton's Funding Formula are as follows:

- The amount for the basic per pupil funding (Age-Weighted Pupil Unit) is less than Merton's current formula.
- The amounts for additional needs funding (deprivation, lower attainment and English as an additional language) are higher than Merton's current formula.
- The lump sum will be £110,000 under the national funding formula compared to Merton's £150,000.

This means that, although Merton as a whole will be getting more funding under the new formula, some schools will see an increase while other will see a decrease. The funding flow will be to schools in more deprived areas and where attainment is lower.

Also, due to the reduction in lump sum, small schools are more likely to see a reduction in their funding.

Based on the 2016/17 funding formula and the consultation formula values, which are all subject to change, the following schools will see a reduction in the national funding formula:

- Dundonald Primary School
- Hatfeild Primary School
- Hollymount School
- Merton Park Primary School
- Wimbledon Park Primary School
- St Matthew's CofE Primary School
- Holy Trinity CofE Primary School
- Bishop Gilpin CofE Primary School
- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
- St John Fisher RC Primary School

The above describes the changes in cash terms and does not take account of inflation, salary or pension contribution increases which would then result in real term reductions as has been reported by various institutions, including London Councils.

**From: Derek Sendall**

**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

How many names were on the petition to start the cpz3w3 Pitcairn Road ?

How many paper voting forms were sent out for cpz3w3?

Why is Island Road being victimised over cpz3w3?

Why will the council or councillors not listen to the concerns of the people who live in the area?

**Reply**

We received a petition from 125 residents in Arnold, Road Finborough Road, Pitcairn Road and Crusoe Road.

In response to requests from residents, we sent out 69 questionnaires in hard copies.

The Council carries out careful and comprehensive 2 stage consultations with all consultees in proposed CPZs . The initial informal consultation was completed and based on the results the Council progressed to the statutory consultation. The Council considered all feedback received from residents on individual roads, and in this case, the majority of residents of Island Road consistently voted against the scheme even if neighbouring roads were to be included within a CPZ. Having considered the feedback received, and consulted with your local councillors, the road was excluded from the controlled parking zone in line with the wishes of residents.

**From: Viv Vella**

**To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

What projects is the council undertaking with the local CCG and Better Care Fund to better integrate health and social care services and improve outcomes for residents - in particular for residents with dementia?

**Reply**

The council and CCG, along with other NHS and voluntary sector partners, have had a shared integration programme in place since 2013. We have 4 over-arching objectives: to reduce emergency admissions to hospital, to reduce lengths of stay in hospital, to reduce admissions to care homes, and to improve patient experience.

To achieve this we are seeking to provide more integrated services in the community. We have had liaison social workers in place since 2013 in order to improve communication with our primary care and community service NHS colleagues. We have been providing training and support for front line staff on integrated and person centred working. Recently NHS community staff have co-located with our staff in the civic centre. We have an integrated equipment service. For the forthcoming year we will be looking more closely at how we work together to assist discharge from hospital including our intermediate care/re-ablement services.

Specifically for people with dementia, some of our social workers are co-located and managed in the mental health trust service for older people, in order to provide a more integrated service. Some of the BCF funding has been used for dementia community nurses.

**From: Debbie Wambergue**  
**To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

How much has the council invested in services to support people with dementia in each of the last 5 years?

### Reply

Adult Services spends nearly £23m per annum on care and support services for older people, as well as providing social work and support to the voluntary sector. Our systems do not currently enable us to distinguish between spend on people with dementia as opposed to older people with other care needs. The table below shows our spend on older people care placements over the last ten years, which includes significant spend on dementia services. The 2016/17 figures are provisional pending the closure of the year's accounts.

	F/Y 2007/08	F/Y 2008/09	F/Y 2009/10	F/Y 2011/12	F/Y 2011/12	F/Y 2012/13	F/Y 2013/14	F/Y 2014/15	F/Y 2015/16	(Jan'17) 2016/17
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
OP care	18,814	17,318	19,090	21,559	21,559	21,595	21,508	21,502	21,489	22,808
Dementia Hub	346	330	250	250	250	209	232	239	239	239

As well as supporting various services for older people in the voluntary sector, the Council has funded the Dementia Hub since April 2013 with annual Council funding of £239,000.

**From: Victoria Wilson**  
**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

What representations has the Council made to the new operators of South West Trains in relation to service improvements and the introduction of step-free access at stations in Merton?

### Reply

Officers met with Stagecoach on 2 occasions to discuss our aspirations and sent a letter of support setting out our views including desire to see step free access at both Raynes Park and Motspur Park Stations. However, it did not prove possible to meet First/MTR Group representatives within the consultation timeframe permitted. Significant South West Train franchise infrastructure improvements including



congestion relief at Wimbledon Station remain intrinsically linked with the progression of Crossrail 2. The council will also lobby as opportunities arise for accessibility improvements to Thameslink and Southern stations within the borough including step free access.

**From: John Tippett-Cooper**  
**To the Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

Does Merton Council have any capacity to accommodate further unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and was Merton Council contacted by the Home Office/other Government Department in respect of this capacity to care for and support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children prior to Mr Robert Goodwill's announcement on 8 February 2017 (written statement HCWS467)?

**Reply**

Merton is part of a Pan London arrangement to distribute unaccompanied asylum seeking young people across the capital. Each month we get children allocated through this agreement and as result of this steady flow and the Dubs and Dublin Treaty children arrival before Christmas, the majority of London boroughs are now at or nearly at the 0.07% nationally agreed threshold. Merton is not yet at the cap and is still taking children through the rota on a regular basis. We anticipate that we will be needed more frequently now many of the other boroughs have reached their cap number. There is always some movement, however as when young people reach 18 and become care leavers they are taken away from a borough's quota/cap but obviously remain in local authority care with support. Through London Councils we continue to lobby government for adequate funding to enable us to continue to support unaccompanied asylum seeking young people both whilst they are in care and as care leavers.

We do not have a record of Home Office contact in February but on other occasions we have been able to offer specific placements for one or two children depending on the availability of our foster carers and our ability to commission appropriate placements.

**From: Philip Ling**  
**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

How many diesel vehicles are used by the Council, including those in outsourced services e.g. refuse collection? What plan does the Council have to reduce this number considering they are also encouraging local residents to reduce diesel vehicle usage?

**Reply**

The Council currently has 96 vehicles in its fleet, this includes one plug-in electric vehicle, which is used as a pool car and one hybrid electric-petrol car, which is the Mayor's vehicle and six petrol cars. The remaining 88 vehicles are diesel. The vast majority of the diesel vehicles are buses or vans rather than cars.

The greenspaces contract with ID Verde uses 18 vehicles, all of which are diesel. On the waste and street cleaning contract with Veolia, 68 are diesel. The vast majority of which are refuse collection vehicles. By entering into joint contracts with neighbouring authorities, we are enabling the contractors to make the most efficient use of the vehicles through cross boundary working and optimisation of the collection rounds thus reducing overall emissions.

The new waste collection service which is due to commence in October 2018 will bring a new fleet of collection vehicles of the most modern and efficient standard thus further reducing emissions compared to the current fleet.

The Council is currently reviewing its in-house Transport Services to ensure it is operating as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. This review will include an analysis of the current fleet and consideration of our future fleet vehicle requirements which will also consider the carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide emissions with an aim to reduce these as much as possible whilst still delivering value for money for our residents.

**From: Anthony Fairclough**

**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

What actions have been taken by the Council in each of the last 5 years to support tenants in the private rented sector?

**Reply**

The Council supports private sector tenants in numerous ways over many years , and not just in the last five

This support includes

- 1/ Advice and Assistance on security of tenure and Protection From Eviction
- 2 Advice and Assistance on Housing disrepair
- 3/ Enforcement action against non compliant Landlords in accordance with the Housing Act 2004 and associated Legislation
- 4 / Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation, Housing Act 2004
- 5/ Appropriate advice and assistance on rehousing options, debt management and welfare reform
- 6/ Drop in Service on a daily basis for private tenants to meet with officers
- 7/ Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants where necessary and appropriate and reasonable and practicable.

**From: Richard Hackforth-Jones**

**To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

What is the council planning to do in relation to improve support for people with dementia over the next 2 years and how much will the council invest to achieve this?

**Reply**

Funding for the Dementia Hub for 2017/18 is £239,000. The Council will be re-commissioning the Dementia Hub services in 2018 jointly with the CCG as part of the 2017/18 BCF plan. In addition the council spends approximately £23m on care and support services for older people, some of which goes towards support for people with dementia.

In March 2017 the Council launched its commitment to be a 'Dementia Friendly Community' by 2020. Our aim is to make the day to day life of people living with dementia easier, such as using shops or local services. The launch brought together the Council, CCG, Alzheimer's Society, police and other statutory agencies, voluntary sector and community groups, all committing to take action to make Merton a dementia friendly community.

Over the next two years the Council through the Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) will focus efforts to increase and widen membership of the DAA. We will undertake work to get shops and businesses to undertake Dementia Friends training. Information and awareness raising will also be carried out. Larger projects are also planned including a 'dementia friendly library'.

The Council has plans to be part of the 'Coordinate My Care' project. CMC is a joint approach between health, social care and LAS in identifying residents who are at the 'End of Life' care/Gold Standard Framework. The principles of the CMC are to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach in care/support planning for this client group and also promoting information sharing between relevant organisations.

**From: Vincent Bolt**

**To the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Waste**

Would it be possible for the council to pull out of the proposed arrangements for wheelie bins/waste collections, if so what would the costs be, now, and after May 2018?

**Reply**

The Council, in partnership with Croydon, Kingston and Sutton Councils has just let a contract for waste collection that will run for the next 8 years. Under this contract Merton's waste collection arrangements are due to change from October 2018. The arrangements will be the optimal arrangements to save money, keep the streets clean and increase recycling. As a consequence, the Council will save c£2.2m per annum in operational budgets. The new collection arrangements are expected to increase the recycling rate. The financial impact of this improvement is yet to be fully

financially quantified and will be dependent upon market conditions which change over time.

The contractual arrangements can be changed by negotiation with the contractor Veolia. It is not possible to state what the cost of changing the planned waste collection arrangements would be without detailed negotiations with the contractor and also taking into account the financial impact on other parties to the contract.

The Council could withdraw from the contract completely – again it is not possible to state what the cost would be without substantial work but the financial impact would be significant. The change would not only expose the Council to potential breach of contract but also result in further costs of procuring a service together with the liability for any increased costs that would fall to Merton if the cost of the joint contract for the remaining partner boroughs increased as a result of Merton's decision.

**From: Claire Bolt**

**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

What discussions have the council had with housing associations in Merton in relation to supporting the government's estate regeneration programme - in particular, have the council supported any funding bids to refurbish or rebuild any estates in Merton, such as the funding recently awarded to Clarion?

**Reply**

The Council has raised the government's estate regeneration programme with another Housing Association with housing stock in the borough who, whilst confirming they were aware of the programme, decided that they did not wish to apply.

**From: Emma Maddison**

**To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

Please could I ask the council how many empty commercial properties were there in the borough in each of the last five years and currently?

**Reply**

**QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE**

The council does not hold data on private properties. However the number of council owned commercial empty properties is as follows:

2012 = 26 Empty Commercial Properties  
2013 = 16 Empty  
2014 = 8 Empty  
2015 = 6 Empty  
2016 = 10 Empty

The current number empty = 9

Please note that the figures for each year includes all those that have become vacant during that year but may have been relet within the year

**From: Nicola Reade-Lyons**

**To the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance**

How can I be sure that my latest subject access request (SAR) won't be heavily redacted or tampered with as has happened on my 3 previous attempts?

**Reply**

The rules governing disclosure of third party information is covered by section 7(4) of the Data Protection Act. The council will redact information if it cannot comply with a request without disclosing information relating to another individual, who can be identified from that information.

Detailed guidance is found in the ICO's subject access code of practice;  
<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1065/subject-access-code-of-practice.pdf>

**From: Andrew Boyce**

**To the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance**

Does Council agree the importance of listening to the views of local residents on decisions it makes which may impact that community and on which there is strong local support or opposition?

**Reply**

Broadly speaking, yes we think it is important for the views of residents to be part of the decision making progress. However, we make decisions in the wider interest of all residents, and not those of individual residents. For example, planning applications are on occasion opposed by some residents, and they often believe that their views have "strong local support", but decisions have to be made based on a wider basis than this. Similarly, social media can have a distorting effect on a person's perceptions; he or she may believe that their views have strong support based on a small number of "likes", but the council has to make decisions in the best interests of around 200,000 residents, and that small sample of "likes" is unlikely to be representative.

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06: Non ST Questions

**From Cllr Laxmi Attawar to the Cabinet Member for Education**

Could the Cabinet Member update us on progress with the new secondary school planned for South Wimbledon?

**Reply**

I'm delighted we are on track to open a brand new comprehensive state secondary school in the borough and I know that it is welcomed by many parents who are worried when they look at how other London boroughs are struggling to accommodate increasing numbers of secondary aged children. Luckily in Merton the administration planned for this increase well in advance and is working with Harris, a great local provider who have turned around previously failing schools in Mitcham and are now keen to open a new school in South Wimbledon so that parents and young people at the heart of the borough can also benefit.

With regard to the overall project, the council and the EFA have now agreed terms to acquire and develop a site in the High Path area next door to Merton Abbey Primary School. The building on this site will not be completed until Summer 2020. For the first two years, from September 2018, the academy will operate from Whatley Avenue in the redeveloped adult education centre.

In February and March, the Harris Federation consulted residents in the Wimbledon area on admissions and curriculum issues in respect of their planned new secondary Academy. In advance of signing a funding agreement for the school, the EFA expects the sponsor to provide details of proposed admissions arrangements and sufficient interest in the school from prospective pupils. The Federation has consulted on a proposal to admit pupils from three 'nodal points' at Merton Abbey, and Wimbledon Chase and Park stations. To date over two hundred parents/carers have attended meetings and views on the admissions arrangements have been invited. The council has submitted a response to the consultation with a preference for the school to recruit students from communities close to the site.

**From Councillor Brian Lewis-Lavender to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking:**

What measures is the Cabinet Member taking to increase the use of the garden waste collection service?

**Reply**

Under our new contractual agreement Veolia provide a dedicated education and engagement team who will promote the garden waste service to ensure residents are aware of the scheme, encourage take up and minimise the impact on other services. Veolia will work closely with the Borough to increase the take up rate by an estimated 5% over the next two years. In addition, the cost of the garden waste scheme is being kept as low as possible to cover the costs of the service whilst keeping it at a rate that still retains existing customers and attracts new ones.

**From Cllr Imran Uddin to the Leader of the Council**

What response has the Leader had to his letter to the government about Surrey's social care funding arrangement?

**Reply**

I am not aware of any reply from government to this joint letter from council Leaders which I was happy to put my name to.

**From Councillor Oonagh Moulton the Cabinet Member for Finance:**

Please can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the plethora of problems that have followed the launch of the long awaited new e5 Financial Information System, and in particular the impact of these difficulties on the ability of Merton Council to close its accounts at the end of the 2016-17 financial year?

**Reply**

Teething problems are often experienced when implementing a new system, along with changes in procedures. Whilst there were problems with the implementation of the new finance system, these are now being resolved and the system is working far better now than it was eight weeks ago.

Problems with the implementation included a fault that meant that the organisation was unable to order stationery from our supplier Office Depot, some of our suppliers being paid later than they, or we, would expect, some issues with direct debit payments from some of the council's customers, and it being harder than we would like for the organisation to carry out purchasing and debt collection related tasks.

Thanks to the hard work of the team involved, in terms of closing the accounts, the processes and reports that we need to run have all been carried out as planned and as expected and we are working through the closing process in the normal way. So far, there doesn't seem to be any cause for concern. In addition, our external auditors EY have done testing which provides additional assurance, as they have 'identified no significant issues to date'.

There are still a number of issues to work through but once this process is completed the Council will have a far better financial system than it did previously and be better placed to ensure that we have the reporting and controls in place to ensure the highest quality of financial management in the organisation.

**Cllr Sally Kenny to the Leader of the Council**

What work is the council doing to protect services at St Helier hospital?



### **Reply**

The Council is fully committed to protecting services at St Helier hospital and has taken all opportunities to remind the local NHS about this commitment. In line with the recently agreed motion to full council,, we are currently publicising the meeting the NHS is holding to discuss the STP and we are encouraging residents to turn up at that meeting and to make their voices heard and make clear that we will not countenance any downgrade of services at our local hospital.

### **From Cllr Gilli Lewis-Lavender to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture:**

How much would it have cost if the new Morden leisure centre previously approved by the Council back in 2010 had been built in 2014 to the same full specification?

### **Reply**

It is impossible to calculate the costs retrospectively since the specification we have for the new Morden Leisure Centre was not put out to the market at any time between 2010 and 2014. Pricing would have been dependent on a number of factors including the contemporary market forces, labour markets and material prices as well as improved, cheaper construction methods.

### **From Cllr Jerome Neil to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing**

Given the rising concern about the growing numbers in temporary housing, what action is the cabinet member taking to address the issue?

### **Reply**

The Council is well aware of the growing issue of homelessness and is aware that currently there are 74,000 households in temporary accommodation in England with over 50,000 of those in the London area.

The Council has for many years managed to maintain its position of having the lowest number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in London and this have been achieved by having a robust homelessness assessment process and being committed to homeless prevention. As at the end of February 2017 there were 188 households in temporary accommodation being accommodated by the Council under the provisions of the Housing Act 1996, Part 7.

Homeless Prevention Activities assist households avoid the trauma that a homelessness episode brings. These activities include, working with excluders and private Landlords to prevent homelessness, providing legal advice on housing issues including security of tenure and debt advice. Where homelessness cannot be avoided officers work with households to identify an alternative housing solution so that a planned move, wherever possible, can be achieved.

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Additionally the Council continues to explore the how it can improve its offer to homeless households and will of course need to consider and adopt any changes that might flow from the Homeless Reduction Bill which is currently awaiting Royal Assent.

### **From Councillor Daniel Holden to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking:**

Since 2014 how many street cleaners' jobs have been cut in Merton?

### **Reply**

Between April 2014 – March 2016 the street cleansing service operated with 57FTE for manual litter picking. This was reduced in 2016/17 by 7FTE following the introduction of 5 electric Glutton sweeping machines. This was part of the budget setting / MTFS process.

Veolia will implement a Neighbourhood Approach to deliver the street cleaning operations which will allow the needs of local areas to be understood and addressed and ensure our staff becomes an integrated part of the local community. As well as utilising the operatives for manual litter picking and sweeping, Veolia will be introducing 2 new large mechanical sweepers and 4 small mechanical sweepers.

It is important to note that the contract is an output based specification and as such the inputs and staffing numbers are the responsibility and risk of the contractor.

### **From Cllr Pauline Cowper to the Leader of the Council**

How is the council supporting businesses in the borough?

### **Reply**

The council is support businesses in a wide variety of ways. We have just won an award for being “small business friendly” by making it much easier for local companies to bid for council contracts. This is the third “Small Business Friendly borough” award that Merton has won in the past four years.

Over the past two years over 70 businesses in Merton have benefitted from our “Brighter Business” programme, helping to reduce running costs for local businesses [www.merton.gov.uk/what-businesses-can-do](http://www.merton.gov.uk/what-businesses-can-do) We have recently published advice for small shops on improving their shopfronts, including an interactive toolkit. With the support of the GLA, we are improving the shopfronts and investing in signage, lighting and the overall appearance of Morden Court parade.

We continue to work closely with Merton Chamber of Commerce on a range of programmes, including The Generator business centre, home to 23 startups

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employing over 150 people. We are also working with Business Improvement Districts in LoveWimbledon; Willow Lane and the emerging South Wimbledon Business Area. [www.merton.gov.uk/business/businesssupport](http://www.merton.gov.uk/business/businesssupport)

For business rates, Merton Council has a local business rate discount scheme. At present this scheme is designed to encourage businesses to occupy empty business premises in our area. It is run in addition to government's statutory business rates relief programme. A hardship relief scheme is also available for struggling businesses.

We have recently worked closely with South Wimbledon Business Association to support the Business Improvement District and with Wimbledon Village B.A. to fund the feasibility of a BID in that area.

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07a\_Member Questions ST

## **Cllr Abigail Jones to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing**

Will the cabinet member update council on when he expects a further consultation on Crossrail 2 and Wimbledon?

### **Reply**

Transport for London has been reviewing the business case for Crossrail2, details of which were submitted to the Department of Transport and HM Treasury earlier this calendar year. It is hoped that further government project support will be forthcoming in the coming months, but there is no fixed date for the consideration of the business case or for any consultation that might follow. Additional information is available at [crossrail2.co.uk](http://crossrail2.co.uk)

We have been clear as a council that the original proposals for Wimbledon are unacceptable, and that any revised scheme needs to enhance business and retail in the town centre. On a cross-party basis representations were made on the need for changes and on the need to ensure that any revised scheme does not cause economic detriment to the borough.

The council have also strongly supported a station at Tooting Broadway instead of Balham as it will improve transport accessibility from the Mitcham and Colliers Wood area to central London along with providing relief to the Northern Line. It will also provide economic opportunities for the east of the borough by supporting business and helping to bring jobs to the borough

An update on Crossrail 2 is included within the Strategic Theme Report - Sustainable Travel item 2.5 to this meeting.

## **From Councillor David Simpson to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking:**

Can the Cabinet Member please tell me a) how many electric vehicle charging points there now are in Merton; b) how that figure compares with all other London boroughs; c) what the total capital cost was of the installation of these charging points; d) what the estimated revenue to the Council is due to be from electric vehicles; and e) how many residents' parking permits have been issued in total for electric vehicles in Merton since the start of 2017?

### **Reply**

The Council has facilitated the delivery of 19 (fast) on-street charging points at nine locations, with one location still subject to statutory public consultation. Once complete the council intends to work with SourceLondon to install a further batch of around 20 electric vehicle charging point bays during 2017/18. SourceLondon provide a useful map of electric charge points across London: [www.sourcelondon.net/stations](http://www.sourcelondon.net/stations) which shows how we compare.

Installations are provided at no charge to the council. From these charging points there will be an annual income of approximately £6,200 to the council.

The use of electric vehicles is significantly higher across central and inner London boroughs, which translates in greater requirement for charging infrastructure. This has perhaps been motivated by free entry to the central London Congestion Charge Zone, which offers significant financial savings for car owners.

Separately we are also working with Transport for London to facilitate up to 10 rapid charge points, including dedicated taxi charge points. The Council has not issued any electric vehicle parking permits since the start of 2017.

**From Cllr John Dehaney to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking**

Would the cabinet member outline the action Merton Council is taking to reduce vehicle emissions?

**Reply**

The council is currently finalising a new Air Quality Action Plan for 2017-22, this contains a number of measures the council can take to help reduce pollution. Specifically with regards to vehicle emissions, this includes;

- Delivery vehicles re-timing trial, specifically around focus areas to try to mitigate the impact of delivery vehicles on the road network.
- Review procurement contract for outsourced transport services.
- Detailed assessment of traffic management solutions for Focus Areas and air quality 'hotspots' to ensure that we identify areas that can be improved.
- As legislation is changing there is an opportunity to look at the possibility of 'Mini 'Ultra-Low Emission Zones' for AQ Focus Areas and pollution 'hotspots' in Merton.
- Formalise proposed anti- idling enforcement arrangements.
- Continued provision and expansion of EV charge infrastructure
- We will look at free or discounted parking charges at existing parking meters for zero emission cars.
- Continue and review the diesel emissions based parking levy for residential and business parking permits in Merton.
- Continue to provide and expand infrastructure to support walking and cycling across the borough.
- Supporting our colleagues in the GLA in proposed changes to extend the ULEZ for polluting vehicles.

**From Cllr Abdul Latif to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture:**

Residents of Trinity ward have complained once again to the Council about the potential danger to pedestrians from cyclists and motorbike riders speeding along the Wandle Trail in Wandle Meadow Nature Park.

In addition, a 15metre long section of its wooden fence along Chaucer Way has been removed while its other sections remain damaged and broken.

Can the Cabinet Member explain why public safety in the park is being compromised and ignored?

**Reply**

We are not aware of any recent substantial issues with motorcycle activity in Wandle Meadow Nature Park. Assuming that this does occur then this would be an issue for police intervention and action; I would therefore encourage residents to report any incidents to the police using the 101 service.

Following consultation with the Trinity ward councillors it was agreed that the pathway through the park between Haydons Road Rec and the path to Chaucer Way be designated a joint footpath and London network cycle quietway. Cyclists will be expected to respect other park users as is the case with all quietways through London parks. Whilst physical interventions, such as gates and barriers, can impede both motorcyclists and cyclists, these measures also reduce access for other park users, particularly those using wheel chairs or mobility scooters.

I am aware that some of the fencing around the nature park, installed over 30 years ago, is in poor repair. Our intention is to remove or replace it over time, budgets permitting. The site is not intended to be entirely fenced so not all fencing is replaced unless it is required to keep the public safe. The fencing around the park is often surveyed by the Greenspaces team and our contractor *idverde*, and if there is a risk to the public then appropriate measures are considered and are introduced.

**From Councillor Peter Southgate to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment, and Housing**

In the light of growing concern about air pollution in Merton and in particular its effects on the health of our most vulnerable residents, what plans does the Cabinet member have to monitor air quality in the immediate vicinity of our schools – especially primary schools?

**Reply**

Since January of this year and as a demonstration of Merton's commitment to Air Quality, we have increased our Nitrous Dioxide diffusion tube network from 20 sites to 52 to give us a better picture of pollution in our borough.

One of the measures in our new Air Quality Action Plan is to undertake Air Quality audits of schools in areas of poor air quality. This is to identify measures that both the council and schools may need to take to protect our children.

These measures could possibly include:

## 07a\_Member Questions ST

- Enforce no engine idling schemes around schools
- Impose changes to local roads to restrict polluting vehicles around schools
- Pedestrianisation of roads near school entrances
- Introduce green infrastructure around schools to absorb/disrupt pollutant dispersion
- Formalise walking buses for large numbers of children, by funding a paid walking bus 'conductor' similar to the school crossing supervisor.

We are also engaging with schools to provide greater awareness about air pollution , to encourage sustainable travel plans and to encourage parents to transport children to school in more sustainable / less polluting ways.

### **From Cllr Dennis Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing**

How will the mayor's housing zone for Morden and the plans to build over 1,000 residential units be supported by transport improvements?

### **Reply**

In 2015 the council successfully bid to Transport for London's Major Schemes fund to consider transport improvements in Morden town centre associated with Morden's housing zone. Although Morden has excellent public transport access – with an underground station, many bus routes and a nearby train and tram stop – an important part of the MoreMorden proposals are to make the town centre more attractive and less like only a transport interchange. Transport for London are undertaking traffic modelling and other assessments and these results and the potential for transport and public realm improvements will be shared during the next MoreMorden consultation. We are also working with Transport for London on the consideration of tramlink between Morden and Sutton and we will also benefit in due course from increased capacity on the Northern Line. For more information, please see our regular newsletters and updates to the council's website: [www.merton.gov.uk/moremorden](http://www.merton.gov.uk/moremorden)

### **From Councillor Daniel Holden to the Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking:**

What action is the Cabinet Member taking to reduce pollution from moving or static vehicles?

### **Reply**

See answer to Question from Councillor Dehaney

### **From Cllr Agatha Akyigyina to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration Environment and Housing**

Can the cabinet member update council on what action the council is taking to improve road safety outside schools?



## Reply

The Council works closely with schools on School Travel Plans to help address safety issues. In recent years, the Council has worked closely with Merton's schools to:

- Develop and review School Travel Plans with the council's dedicated School Travel Plan officer to establish safe access to and from school for all users, by all means of transport.
- Work closely with schools to deliver road safety education / training to children, both off road (in the playground) and then on-road, for example to teach pedestrian safety to primary schoolchildren  
[www.merton.gov.uk/kerbcraft](http://www.merton.gov.uk/kerbcraft) and using memorable mascots such as Debra the Zebra [www.merton.gov.uk/debra](http://www.merton.gov.uk/debra)
- We have also introduced physical measures where necessary such as traffic calming measures, controlled crossing points, school beacons and appropriate road markings associated with a 20mph speed limits within the vicinity of schools.
- Use school crossing patrol officers or lollipop holders as they are affectionately known, to help children cross and reinforce good driver behaviour  
[www.merton.gov.uk/schoolcrossingpatrols](http://www.merton.gov.uk/schoolcrossingpatrols)
- Council officers will continue to work closely with traffic police and the schools to address any serious incidences.

### **From Councillor Michael Bull to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing:**

What measures has the council taken to encourage cycling over the last year?

## Reply

The council introduced a variety of measures to encourage cycling over the last year

In partnership with Transport for London and the Mitcham Common Conservators, the Council introduced a new shared cycle and footway on Croydon Road. This provides an off-road link along a busy highway to help connect Tooting / Streatham through Mitcham to Croydon and Sutton.

We have also been working with Sustrans / TfL to maximise cycle provisions along Quietways and bridge the gap between such routes that falls onto the public highway. We also provide secure cycle parking provision across the borough. Some key details can be found within the Scrutiny Panel's Strategic Theme Report - Sustainable Travel available at this meeting. More information can be viewed on the Council's website [www.merton.gov.uk/cyclequietways](http://www.merton.gov.uk/cyclequietways)

As well as the physical measures, we also provide an extensive programme of safety and cycle training for people of all ages who live, work or study in Merton. To help children be safe, confident cyclists we run off-road training programmes at Merton's

primary schools for beginners, on-road programmes with schools for children who are improving cyclists and a series of holiday cycle training courses for children:  
[www.merton.gov.uk/cyclingproficiency](http://www.merton.gov.uk/cyclingproficiency)

We also facilitate three different levels of cycle training for adults, from beginners through to commuter proficiency [www.merton.gov.uk/adultcycling](http://www.merton.gov.uk/adultcycling) to encourage safe cycling.

The cycle training programmes are funded by Transport for London in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

**From Cllr Russell Makin to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration Environment, and Housing**

How will the award of the new South West train franchise to First/MTL impact on train services in Merton?

**Reply**

The new seven-year South West Train franchise between First Group and MTR will start on 20 August 2017. SWT network stations in Merton include Motspur Park, Raynes park and Wimbledon Stations. Aspirations for step free access at these locations remain linked to the delivery of Crossrail 2.

Non- physical improvements include expanded use and flexibility of smart ticketing/mobile services e.g. A new flexible season ticket for passengers working fewer than 5 days a week, better free wifi at stations and on board trains, improved customer compensation scheme and better help for passengers during periods of disruption. Sunday services should also be improved.

Officers are seeking an early meeting with the new franchise to discuss their proposal for the borough on more detail.

**COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2017**  
**ITEM 7C**  
**LABOUR AMENDMENT**

*That the words struck through re deleted and those underlined are inserted.*

This Council recognises that ~~the government's swingeing cuts to local authority funding have resulted in a reduction of more than 40% in council budgets since 2010 and that this inevitably has an impact on local services.~~ Merton's residents regularly cite ~~street cleanliness~~ litter on the streets as one of their top concerns (according to the annual residents survey), and ~~that the weekly street clean of residential roads is, after a period under the previous administration when government data rated Merton the dirtiest borough in the country, -have rated street cleansing services as above the London average in recent years~~ integral to delivery of the clean streets that residents want and value.

This Council ~~notes that government cuts have forced councils such as Merton to look at options for less costly waste collection and street cleaning services and notes that is therefore concerned that,~~ following the hand over of operational responsibility for street cleaning in Merton to Veolia from April 2017, there will ~~no longer be guaranteed weekly sweeping of all residential roads in the borough~~ be a new focus on outcomes rather than inputs, with the quality of the service, rather than the number of FTEs, being what is important to residents and to the council. Furthermore, ~~the new system will mean just 35 (Full Time Equivalent) street cleaners being deployed by Veolia across the whole of Merton, a reduction of 39% compared to April 2014 (57 FTEs). Further cuts by Veolia to the number of street sweeping posts have not been ruled out.~~

Given the above, this Council notes that:

- 1) The current administration was elected in 2014 on a manifesto commitment to sweep roads in Merton each week and in fact many roads will be swept more often than this where needed;
- 2) ~~The~~ is quality of street cleaning is a key component of the Phase C contract although this may not have been understood by some ~~was not brought to Members' attention during~~ despite a number of years of scrutiny in Merton of the South London Waste Partnership joint procurement process;
- 3) There has been no consultation with residents on these changes to the service they receive as there is no statutory requirement to do so, nor is there a reduction in the standards we expect to be met; and
- 4) ~~Further doubt is cast on the robustness of t~~ The financial case for the contract with Veolia is based on at least £1.7m in savings per annum for 24 years, since this is yet another example of with the proposed savings being delivered through service level reductions rather than increased efficiency and a business-like focus on outcomes rather than an old fashioned staff headcount approach which might bear no relation to the quality of the service.

This Council therefore calls on Cabinet to ~~negotiate~~ continue to robustly monitor the contract with Veolia to a) ensure they deliver on their contractual commitment to achieve high levels of street cleaning based on regular quality checks ~~reconsider the~~

~~end of the weekly street clean~~; b) look at any additional alternative options that ~~enable Merton to retain a weekly sweep of residential streets, preferably straight after the refuse collection as used to occur~~ could increase the quality of the service provided, in the absence of any additional funding from central government; and c) continue to seek to deliver the Phase C contract through efficiencies rather than service level-quality reductions, whilst acknowledging that government cuts will inevitably have an impact on local services.

### **Motion now to read:**

This Council recognises that the government's swingeing cuts to local authority funding have resulted in a reduction of more than 40% in council budgets since 2010 and that this inevitably has an impact on local services. Merton's residents regularly cite litter on the streets as one of their top concerns (according to the annual residents survey), and , after a period under the previous administration when government data rated Merton the dirtiest borough in the country, have rated street cleansing services as above the London average in recent years.

This Council notes that government cuts have forced councils such as Merton to look at options for less costly waste collection and street cleaning services and notes that, following the hand over of operational responsibility for street cleaning in Merton to Veolia from April 2017, there will be a new focus on outcomes rather than inputs, with the quality of the service, rather than the number of FTEs, being what is important to residents and to the council.

Given the above, this Council notes that:

- 1) The current administration was elected in 2014 on a manifesto commitment to sweep roads in Merton each week and in fact many roads will be swept more often than this where needed;
- 2) The quality of street cleaning is a key component of the Phase C contract although this may not have been understood by some Members' despite a number of years of scrutiny in Merton of the South London Waste Partnership joint procurement process;
- 3) There has been no consultation with residents on these changes to the service they receive as there is no statutory requirement to do so, nor is there a reduction in the standards we expect to be met; and
- 4) The financial case for the contract with Veolia is based on at least £1.7m in savings per annum for 24 years, with the proposed savings being delivered through increased efficiency and a business-like focus on outcomes rather than an old fashioned staff headcount approach which might bear no relation to the quality of the service.

This Council therefore calls on Cabinet to continue to robustly monitor the contract with Veolia to a) ensure they deliver on their contractual commitment to achieve high levels of street cleaning based on regular quality checks; b) look at any additional options that could increase the quality of the service provided, in the absence of any additional funding from central government; and c) continue to seek to deliver the Phase C contract through efficiencies rather than service quality reductions, whilst acknowledging that government cuts will inevitably have an impact on local services.

## COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2017

### ITEM 10a

#### LABOUR AMENDMENT

*That the words underlined are inserted:*

That the following recommendation of the Wimbledon Community Forum held on 6 December 2016 is agreed as amended:

This Council notes the work undertaken by the council to date, including renewing the entire length of Merton High Street, and agrees to continue to work proactively and in a meaningful way with residents in South Wimbledon to develop it into a vibrant and thriving community, that is culturally and economically progressive, and which respects its rich heritage, and as part of this welcomes the work that is already underway to develop a South Wimbledon Enhancement Plan as a result of a partnership approach between the council and local residents.

#### **Motion now to read:**

That the following recommendation of the Wimbledon Community Forum held on 6 December 2016 is agreed as amended:

This Council notes the work undertaken by the council to date, including renewing the entire length of Merton High Street, and agrees to continue to work proactively and in a meaningful way with residents in South Wimbledon to develop it into a vibrant and thriving community, that is culturally and economically progressive, and which respects its rich heritage, and as part of this welcomes the work that is already underway to develop a South Wimbledon Enhancement Plan as a result of a partnership approach between the council and local residents.

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**COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2017**  
**ITEM 12**  
**LABOUR AMENDMENT**

*That the words struck through are deleted and those underlined are inserted:*

This Council notes that under the CIL Regulations and Government Guidance there is no prescription on how local authorities without a Parish Council within their administrative area are to apply the neighbourhood funding element of CIL revenues other than that 15% of the CIL raised is to be spent on neighbourhood projects to support the development of the area and that they are to agree with the community how it is to be spent. ~~the 15% neighbourhood proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is supposed to be spent:~~

- ~~• on addressing the demands development places on local areas where development occurs; and~~
- ~~• on priorities agreed between the council and the communities from those areas.~~

This Council notes that the council undertook a consultation exercise with local residents from November 2016 to January 2017, with a large number of responses received from residents and community groups. Council believes that, given the neighbourhood CIL funding is designed to ensure residents benefit from improved local infrastructure as a result of developments in their own area, it is not only crucial that neighbourhood CIL in Merton should be spent in the neighbourhood where it was raised but also that local residents and their elected representatives should have a say over how it is spent important to listen to residents and to take time to assess the views they have expressed as part of the consultation, rather than pre-empt the results of the consultation which will be presented to Cabinet in July.

This Council notes that the Sustainable Communities overview and scrutiny panel will receive regular reports on CIL allocations. Council notes one of the key instructions from government is to ensure that the CIL process does not result in an extra layer of bureaucracy. Existing financial and democratic structures, including Scrutiny, will therefore be assessed for their robustness and used in preference to establishing new layers of bureaucracy where this is appropriate.

This Council therefore resolves to support and promote:

- ongoing involvement of residents in how CIL funding is allocated, in line with the results of the consultation exercise in the fund allocation process through regular agenda items at meetings of the 5 Community Forums and further consultations such as the online survey conducted earlier this year on residents' priorities; and
- the formation of a CIL Review Panel consisting of two council officers and five nominated councillors representing each of the designated town centres (Colliers Wood, Mitcham, Morden, Raynes Park and Wimbledon) analysis of existing democratic structures, including Scrutiny, in identifying the most efficient and effective ways of ensuring transparency and accountability.

~~Having~~ Although still to be decided based on the consultation results, it is expected that, ~~having~~ been received and studied by council officers, ~~these each~~ project bids considered acceptable for funding according to the CIL legislation would be tabled for consideration and agreement by the CIL Review Panel, before then being recommended to the Cabinet Member for final approval of the allocation of funds. ~~would be expected to demonstrate:~~

- ~~• whether it is in line with the aspirations of residents as outlined in the consultation response;~~
- ~~• whether it is in line with government regulations on what neighbourhood CIL should be used for;~~
- ~~• whether the project is deliverable; and~~
- ~~• that the project does not result in an additional cost (that cannot be resourced) for businesses, residents, other organisations or the council.~~

This Council therefore asks Cabinet to ~~request officers to draft appropriate terms of reference for a CIL Review Panel, to achieve these objectives, for agreement by the appropriate decision-making body~~ receive the results of the consultation exercise and ~~consider the recommendations from officers arising out of this.~~

### **Motion now to read:**

This Council notes that under the CIL Regulations and Government Guidance there is no prescription on how local authorities without a Parish Council within their administrative area are to apply the neighbourhood funding element of CIL revenues other than that 15% of the CIL raised is to be spent on neighbourhood projects to support the development of the area and that they are to agree with the community how it is to be spent..

This Council notes that the council undertook a consultation exercise with local residents from November 2016 to January 2017, with a large number of responses received from residents and community groups. Council believes that, given the neighbourhood CIL funding is designed to ensure residents benefit from improved local infrastructure as a result of developments in their own area, it is important to listen to residents and to take time to assess the views they have expressed as part of the consultation, rather than pre-empt the results of the consultation which will be presented to Cabinet in July.

This Council notes that the Sustainable Communities overview and scrutiny panel will receive regular reports on CIL allocations. Council notes one of the key instructions from government is to ensure that the CIL process does not result in an extra layer of bureaucracy. Existing financial and democratic structures, including Scrutiny, will therefore be assessed for their robustness and used in preference to establishing new layers of bureaucracy where this is appropriate.

This Council therefore resolves to support and promote:

- c) ongoing involvement of residents in how CIL funding is allocated, in line with the results of the consultation exercise; and



- d) the analysis of existing democratic structures, including Scrutiny, in identifying the most efficient and effective ways of ensuring transparency and accountability.

Although still to be decided based on the consultation results, it is expected that, having been received and studied by council officers, each project bid would be expected to demonstrate:

- whether it is in line with the aspirations of residents as outlined in the consultation response;
- whether it is in line with government regulations on what neighbourhood CIL should be used for;
- whether the project is deliverable; and
- that the project does not result in an additional cost (that cannot be resourced) for businesses, residents, other organisations or the council.

This Council therefore asks Cabinet to receive the results of the consultation exercise and consider the recommendations from officers arising out of this.

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