

RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM
13 JUNE 2019

(7.15 pm - 9.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillors (in the Chair), Councillor Anthony Fairclough

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held in Raynes Park Library Hall, and chaired by Councillor Anthony Fairclough with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association (RPA). More than 30 residents attended, as well as three other Merton Councillors, and officers from the council and its partners.

2 OPEN FORUM (Agenda Item 2)

There were no additional items

3 WIDE REACHING GENERAL DISCUSSION ON IDEAS IN THE RAYNES PARK AREA (Agenda Item 3)

Rubbish and recycling collections

Claire Walsh, Client Officer from Merton Council's Waste team provided an update on waste collection services. The recycling centre at Wyke Road has been removed, as it was the focus of so much fly tipping. Hopefully this will result in improvements in the area. The team is auditing flats above shops across the borough, including on Approach Road. They are trying to resolve collection issues and ensure residents are putting out waste for collection at the correct time. The website has been improved so it is now possible to renew garden waste collections online and report fly-tips without needing to provide personal information.

Residents asked about charging for garden waste and bulky waste collections, Claire said she would pass on these concerns. Concerns were raised about bins not being returned to properties and lids being left up. Claire said crews are constantly reminded about this but would reiterate the message again. An issue with collections from communal bins on Kingston Road will also be raised with the crew. Claire also said she would monitor the collection from the clothing bank in Waitrose. In response to questions about weeds, Claire said there are four sprays each year, the first in April and the second beginning shortly. In addition, difficult weeds will be dug out. A resident asked what happens to recycling materials once collected. Claire said the relevant data would be made available.

Environmental issues

Councillor David Dean said that in addition to Government action residents could also take action to reduce the impact of climate change. This includes switching to renewable electricity, planting more trees and switching to electric vehicles. A resident asked what plans the Council had to become carbon neutral, Cllr Fairclough said there was a 40% reduction target for 2012-2020 but this is under review. When asked about Planning being used to green the area Cllr Dean said the Council has to work within planning laws and guidelines, and Cllr Fairclough said residents can seek to ensure the new Local Plan does include new environmental commitments.

Planning matters

Kris Witherington, Merton Council provided an update on behalf of Neil Milligan and the Development Control Team.

557 Kingston Road – Dundonald Church 17/P0763: New church with flats above. The decision letter issued and S106 signed but no progress on site.

559-589 Kingston Road – Manuplastics and land to the west. 16/P1208 S106 signed and planning permission for 99 flats plus commercial floor space issued. 18/P3927 Pre-app for redevelopment of same site but with more flats. This essentially reverts to the first iteration of the earlier application.

South side of Wyke Road. 17/P0609: Construction of three apartment blocks (two three-storey blocks and one four-storey block containing 10 x 1 bedroom flats. Issues have arisen regarding kerbside parking, footway access and accuracy of plans. Further amendments have been tabled deleting one of the blocks to try to provide more parking. Report drafted for review with likely reasons linked to impact on parking, pedestrian and highway safety.

Rainbow Industrial Estate: non-material amendment applications to add/amend conditions so as to enable phased development – 18/P0258 and 18/P0259. Various conditions partly signed off relating to phase 1 (commercial part of development). Recent application submitted for Certificate of Lawfulness pertaining to implementation – may be linked to on-going Crossrail 2 discussions and need or otherwise for land to be safeguarded.

Vacant office block 2 Amity Grove 18/P4363: External alterations to façade including cladding, balconies, reconstruction of plant room on roof, landscaping and associated works in connection with application 17/P4083 for the approval for change of use from office space to residential units. Permission granted.

Land rear of 2A Amity Grove 18/P4148: Development of open land by erecting 3 x 2 storey dwellings. Application has been subject of a pre-application advice. Ongoing

negotiation leading to a scheme that officers feel able to support. Likely to be a Committee case given objections – could be June PAC.

27-35 West Barnes Lane 18/P1058: Alterations and extensions to shop units and an extra floor above to create 9 flats in remodelled and extended block. Permission granted 19th October 2018.

80-86 Bushey Road 16/P1317: Major retail/food and drink development. Unoccupied buildings demolished – Pets at Home retained. No obvious building activity. Unclear as to how the approved scheme might progress but new pre application submitted: 19/P1390 for approx. 700 dwellings in blocks with 3,600 commercial floorspace.

32-34 Bushey Road 18/P2619: Scheme amended from 34 to 32 flats. Approved by Planning Committee in Nov, subject to a S106 for affordable housing.

Southey Bowls Club, Kingston Road 19/P1903: Application submitted for minor amendments to approved scheme for 9 houses and new club building. (Tim Lipscomb case officer).

641 Kingston Road – (former Railway Pub south of railway embankment in Raynes Park) 18/P2207: Change of use from public house to ground floor retail with 9 flats above, including demolition of existing taxi hire business within curtilage. Completion of S106 pending.

Review on number of Councillors and Ward boundaries

Chris Edge explained that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England is reviewing the political boundaries in Merton as it does every twenty years. The Commission has already recommended reducing the number of councillors to 57 and is now consulting on where ward boundaries should be. To find out more and have your say please see <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/16844>

Town Centre Developments & events

Tony Edwards provided an update on developments in Raynes Park town centre.

- Astro turf and benches on South Side – thanks to Alan Lavender of PAG there is now enough material to construct seating cubes to be covered in artificial grass. A prototype should be available soon, with four seats installed by the end of June. If anyone would like to volunteer to help please contact the RPA.
- Removal of bins on north side – following lots of discussion at this Forum agreement was reached to remove these bins and Charlie Baker from Merton Council has now removed them. Hopefully this will see a reduction in fly tipping. Recycling bins remain available in Waitrose in car park.

- Bulb planting – volunteers from the RPA had planted bulbs in West Barnes Lane that have now been destroyed by the gas works. More planting maybe needed in the autumn.
- Railway – After the RPA met with Network Rail they agree to improve the embankment on the north side of the railway. Further maintenance is planned for this autumn but NR still will not agree to allow the RPA on to the area.
- Improvements and funding available – the RPA will meet with Merton Council to discuss the spending of Community Infrastructure Levy and section 106 funds. The RPA would like much clearer guidance on what money is available and what it can be spent on.

Ward allocation scheme suggestions from residents

Councillor Anthony Fairclough explained the process for the Community Infrastructure Levy ward allocations. £15,000 has been allocated to each ward to spend projects that need to be agreed by the councillors for that ward. Projects must be one of the following bulb planting; highway and public right of way vegetation full cut-back & de-weed/spray; supporting volunteer clean ups; footway & street structures; painting street light columns; park bins; park fence railings; seating in parks; installing playground equipment; deep cleaning pavements; grants to community groups; and alley-gate schemes.

Councillors can coordinate across wards, spend the funding in one go or spread it over a number of project. Cllr Fairclough encourage residents to get in touch with their councillors with ideas about projects that can be supported, whilst Cllr Dean said that councillors in the area should communicate with the RPA. Details on the scheme are at <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/community-infrastructure-levy/spending-the-levy#allocation>

Farmers Market

Simon Greig organises farmers markets and is keen to bring one to Raynes Park. The markets involve fresh produce usually from local farmers or producers and are usually popular with local communities. The thinking is to have a weekly market on Saturday mornings from September but a final venue has not yet been agreed due to the complicated ownership situation. Merton Council have been keen to support the market but are currently reviewing their policy on markets, which has delayed things.

My Raynes Park Festival

Nick Coke shared the programme for the summer festival. The festival will run from 28 June to 7 July and will include comedy, poetry, art, music and films, culminating with the Lark in the Park picnic on 7 July in Holland Gardens. Details are available from <http://www.myraynespark.co.uk/>

Business issues

- Local Business group – Tony Edwards says the RPA represents residents and business but is lacking at the moment. Business are encouraged to attend an event on 9 July in the Babylon Café.
- Business rates and LBM Discretion – Chris Edge said that Merton Council now has some discretion over business rates and the RPA would be lobbying for support to protect the high street.

Business and residential parking

Chris Edge provided an update on local parking issues

- Residential permits – Merton’s review of parking charges consultation received 3000 responses and as a result, the final decision has been deferred until July. The RPA submitted objections to the plan and Stephen Hammond MP also set out his objections.
- Business Permits – are currently prohibitive for small businesses and should be reviewed.

4 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

Councillor Fairclough thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting

Dates of future meetings: All at 7.15pm in the Library Hall
Thursday 19 September 2019 Cllr Eloise Bailey
Thursday 5 December 2019 Cllr Pauline Cowper
Tuesday 31 March 2020 Cllr Adam Bush.