

Ged Curran  
Chief Executive  
London Borough of Merton

**By Email**

3 November 2016

Dear Ged,

**RE St Helier**

I was very disappointed to read the letter and questionnaire sent out to residents in St Helier ward that appeared to be signed off by the leader of the council. The opinion of our governing body is that the letter is misleading and fails to inform residents of all the key issues involved in the decision on whether to increase council tax and/or levy the social care precept.

The attached questionnaire seems to be a parallel survey to the official consultation survey and is so leading as to be meaningless if the intention is genuinely to engage with an informed population on this critical issue. Without some prior knowledge of the underlying issues, it would be very hard to imagine anyone responding to this questionnaire in any way other than to support the leader's recommendation to not increase council tax.

In our meetings when we discussed the consultation we had been led to believe that there would be an open and honest attempt to determine the views of the population on whether to raise the social care precept. This is only possible if the people of Merton are fairly presented with the facts and their views are tested with a well-designed and impartial survey. The letter sent out to St Helier residents obviously falls far short of what we had been led to expect.

Please could you explain how the council is going to deal with responses to the parallel questionnaire that was sent out to St Helier residents. We are firmly of the belief that these cannot be given the same weight as either responses to the official consultation

survey or considered written responses to the consultation. Please do treat this letter from me as an additional part of Merton CCG's response to the consultation (further to the letter that I previously sent setting out our organisation's position).

With best wishes,



**Dr Andrew Murray**  
**Clinical Chair**  
**Merton CCG**