

Committee: Council

Date: 1 February 2017

Subject: Petitions

Lead officer: Paul Evans, Assistant Director, Corporate Governance.

Lead member: Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis.

Contact officer: Democratic Services, democratic.services@merton.gov.uk

Recommendation: That Council

- 1) Receive petitions (if any) in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution; and
 - 2) Note the response given by officers in respect of the petitions presented to the Council meeting held on 23 November 2016.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report invites Council to receive petitions in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. At the meeting held on 14 September 2016, Council received five petitions as detailed below. Any petitions received by Council are referred to respective departments with responsible officers asked to advise the presenting member in each case of the way in which the petition is to be progressed.
- 2.2. A petition was submitted by Councillor Charlie Chirico regarding a dropped kerb outside 69-71 Craven Gardens.

Officer response

- 2.3 Craven Gardens had many complaints and we responded to each complainant. Every Property owner has a right to access their property and to park a motor vehicle within the property curtilage. The requirement for a legally constructed vehicle crossover comes into play where the use is classed as habitual.
- 2.4 All applications received are assessed against the councils approved criterion and where they meet those criterion a crossover can be constructed at the applicants full cost. Where this affects a Controlled Parking Zone a Public Consultation is undertaken. This invites the public, by way of yellow public notice on site and notices in the local paper and London Gazette, with Ward Members notified as well.
- 2.5 In this case the property did not meet the minimum criteria for a motor car crossing but the applicant does use a motorcycle every day. Due to the abuse of early motorcycle crossings the current construction must include two protective posts and the droppers (Angled Kerbs) are 0.4 l/m, total width of the crossover is no more than 2.4m including the dropped Kerb sections. The loss of on street parking is reduced by one bay to accommodate the access.
- 2.6 No objections were received prior to the construction.

- 2.7 A petition was submitted by Councillor Hamish Badenoch regarding a request by residents of Heights Close, SW20 not to have wheelie bins.

Officer response

- 2.8 The wheelie bin service is due to be implemented in October 2018. Given the operational challenges presented at Heights Close a joint inspection with our contractor will be undertaken in order to ascertain the most efficient collection service methodology.
- 2.9 It is recognised that the approach to waste collection cannot necessarily be a “one size fits all” approach and that different container types and sizes will need to be appropriate for the property type. However, in order for collection processes to be as lean and efficient as possible standardisation will be required and any variation from the standard process would require justifiable reasons. Acceptable criteria to vary from the “norm” should be agreed in advance of any service being rolled out.
- 2.10 For properties such as terraced housing where there are no front gardens in which to present the wheelie bin, the blue and purple sack collection will be retained with the revised frequency of collection. Maisonettes will need to be reviewed on a case by case basis as many maisonettes have side access and front gardens suitable to store the wheelie bins. Where this is not the case then different arrangements will need to be agreed.
- 2.11 A petition was submitted by Councillor Oonagh Moulton regarding a request for traffic calming on Wellington Road.

Officer response

- 2.12 The petition has been considered and the Council’s initial response is:
- 2.13 The Council takes safety very seriously and has an annual local safety programme. Rat running, perceived danger and excessive speed / volume of traffic are problems in a number of roads throughout the borough and regrettably due to insufficient funds and resource it is not possible to address them all. Due to limited available resource and funding and high demand for similar action that outweigh the available funding, it is necessary to consider action that is evidence based, for example by giving first consideration to those areas with recorded personal injury accidents and areas immediately outside schools. As part of our annual Local safety programme, all recorded accidents are investigated prior to drawing up implementation proposals. Having undertaken this process for this financial year, I can confirm that Wellington Road has not been identified as an area requiring engineering intervention.
- 2.14 However, following requests from one of the ward councillors, Wellington Rd has been assessed on a number of occasions. With parking on both sides of the road, it is a relatively narrow road that allows only one lane of traffic flow at any one time. It is not a through route or a rat run and accommodates low volume of traffic. Sightlines are not compromised as it is also a very straight road without any junctions. In the absence of any speed data, it is not possible to comment on speed and although it is appreciated there may be a perception of speed, it would be very difficult for motorists to travel at excessive speed particularly given that the only motorists within this road are residents, their visitor and the local business based at the bottom of the road.

- 2.15 Funding and other priorities aside, other factors that have also been considered include the fact that the most effective speed reducing features are road humps; however these are unpopular due to associated noise and vibrations. Due to the commercial vehicles using this road, such features would not be recommended as residents are likely to find the noise and vibration unacceptable. Other traffic calming measures such as chicanes and build outs could be considered but given the volume of parking that would be lost these are likely to be met with strong objections from the residents. Additionally, such features are not cycle friendly and could potentially result in a more aggressive style of driving and cause unnecessary accidents. Mobile speed cameras are operated by the police and they concentrate on through roads where there is evidence of constant excessive speed and personal injury accidents.
- 2.16 Speed activated signs are used very rarely in areas with high volume of through traffic with evidence of excessive speed and on very rare occasions they are used near schools which are based on routes that suffer from rat running. These signs are not permanent fixtures and are designed to be rotated throughout the borough but due to limited funding this is not always possible.
- 2.17 The Council has recently completed a consultation on improvement works immediately outside the school where the pedestrian entrance is based in Havana Road. The improvements include the appropriate road markings and signage to make motorists aware of the school but this does not include Wellington Road as the Council is not aware of any pedestrian access (other than vehicular access) via Wellington Road but this will be checked with the school. It should also be noted that the School has not raised the issue of the access via Wellington Road as one that would require attention.
- 2.18 With regards to restricting the size of commercial vehicles, the commercial unit that is located at the end of Wellington Rd has a legitimate right to operate its business and the Council cannot restrict or compromise its commercial viability by imposing restrictions on its vehicles. In situations where there may be conflict between a commercial unit and residents, it may be appropriate for representatives from both sides to discuss concerns and reach a suitable solution.
- 2.19 The Council fully understands residents' concerns, however, given other priorities and for the reasons set out above, the council will not be taking any action at this time.
- 2.20 A petition was submitted by Councillor Suzanne Grocott regarding a planning application for 162-164 Hartfield Road.
- Officer response
- 2.21 The petition has been fully considered in assessing the planning application with the case officer including an assessment in any final report on the application.
- 2.22 A petition was submitted by Councillor Katy Neep entitled "Morris up Merton".
- Officer response
- 2.23 Colliers Wood has recently installed several new benches with decorative William Morris style carvings. In addition to the benches LBM are currently identifying locations where William Morris style work can be displayed around the Colliers Wood High Street. Depending on the approval from building owners (identified locations for artwork), the community will see several pieces of William Morris

inspired work in 2017. Our Town Centre Business Support Officer has been in contact with Cllr Katy Neep and the Petition organiser to keep them abreast of the situation, which all parties are content.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. None for the purpose of this report.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None for the purpose of this report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None for the purpose of this report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. None for the purpose of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None for the purpose of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11 APPENDICES

11.1. None.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None.