

COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 12 JULY 2017

MOTION - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE – SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Whilst welcoming the first Residents' Survey to have been conducted in Merton for 3 years, this Council notes the following results in relation to anti-social behaviour (ASB) from the recently published 2017 Residents' Survey:

- Residents in both Wimbledon and Colliers Wood town centres are more likely than average to be concerned about people being drunk or rowdy in public places.
- Groups hanging around the streets are cited as a big problem by 27% of residents in Wimbledon town centre and by 28% of residents in Ravensbury, Cricket Green and St Helier wards.
- There is an above average level of concern in Ravensbury, Cricket Green and St Helier wards about vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property/vehicles (with 17% of residents citing this as a big problem) and also about noisy neighbours or loud parties (with 22% of residents reporting this as a problem).
- People using or dealing drugs is described as a major concern by significant numbers of residents both in Colliers Wood town centre (18%) and in Ravensbury, Cricket Green and St Helier wards (18%).
- 37% of all residents cite rubbish or litter lying around as a big problem in their local area, with this increasing to almost half of all respondents (49%) in Wimbledon town centre and two thirds (66%) in Ravensbury, Cricket Green and St Helier wards.
- The three issues young people in Merton are most concerned about are gangs (29%), crime (24%) and litter/dirt in the streets (23%).

It is clear that anti-social behaviour and low level crime of the kind described above is of considerable concern to many residents in Merton, and particularly those living in and around our town centres. This is borne out by the increased number of cases received each year by Merton's Anti-Social Behaviour team, which has increased by 43% since 2013-14 (from 547 to 781 cases in 2016-17).

This Council recognises that it has a responsibility, working in close partnership with the local police, to better use the resources at its disposal to combat the various issues of concern highlighted by the Residents' Survey, particularly in and around the town centres.

This Council welcomes the purchase of three mobile CCTV cameras for deployment to areas where ASB and/or low level crime is occurring - as set out in the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 6 July 2017 - and believes Merton should seek to expand its enforcement activities in order to maximise the possibility of taking action against those who commit these acts of anti-social behaviour.

This Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to look at further increasing the use and number of mobile cameras deployed in ASB hotspots around the borough as a cost effective way of supporting the local community and providing much needed reassurance to those affected.

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