

## Raynes Park Community Forum Thursday 14 September 2017 Chair's Report

The meeting was held in Raynes Park Library Hall, and chaired by Councillor Michael Bull, with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association (RPA). Approximately 30 residents attended, as well as Merton Councillors, Leonie Cooper AM, and officers from the council and its partners. Chris Edge opened the meeting, welcoming everyone and introducing Councillor Bull as the Chair.

### **Open Forum**

A local resident asked when the hoardings on Durham Road will be removed as they attract fly posters. Neil Milligan, Development Control Section Manager, explained that the hoardings are technically legal; however the council is investigating whether or not to take action.

Statistics on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued since April 2017 were provided: 2,683 for littering; 0 for dog fouling. Merton Council employs five members of staff from contractors Kingdom Security.

Asked about whether road markings can be painted at the junction at the bottom of Lambton Road, Neil Milligan said that this has been raised with Chris Chowns, the Council's transport planner, but the response is that currently there is no budget to do the work. Neil agreed to raise the matter again.

Residents voiced concerns about the white line outside Waitrose, which has been moved, making it difficult for cars to get past one another and leading to traffic. Neil Milligan agreed to speak to Highways engineers about the matter.

Concerns were expressed about litter outside the library and in the Apostles. It was noted that the drains are also covered in litter. Councillor Bull acknowledged the problem.

### **Flooding in Raynes Park area**

Carley Mason and Patrick Maher from Thames Water attended the forum to discuss residents' concerns about flooding.

Chris Edge informed Thames Water that there are lots of issues with flooding in the area. He noted that there is a particular problem under the railway bridge, where the council has cleared gullies, which suggests that the pipe is not big enough to handle the flow of water. Patrick Maher explained that Thames Water have investigated and not found any issues; the pipe is large enough to cope with this. Because of the contour of the land - a bowl shape - in severe storms this would no doubt cause further problems and flood at its lowest point. It was agreed the problem would nonetheless be taken back to Thames Water for further consideration. Thames Water will need to look at whether the pumping station is also working correctly.

Chris Edge suggested that if major building works take place for Crossrail 2, perhaps Thames Water could undertake major sewer works at the same time, including

perhaps implementing a soak-away if the sewers cannot handle all of the rainwater. Thames Water agreed to investigate this further. This would go through Tim Beech's team (South London Infrastructure Planning Manager Wastewater Strategy, Planning & Assurance), as a soak away would not be a Thames Water asset.

Thames Water are aware of flooding at PAG Ltd and Dundonald Church and are carrying out investigations into the problem. This is linked to the flooding on Abbott Avenue, which Thames Water are further investigating. This will be raised at a risk review meeting and Thames Water will be requesting a catchment study be done of the area.

Residents were reminded that flooding incidents should be reported every time they occur, so that Thames Water have a record of all of the problems – if a problem is not reported, it is not logged as an incident by Thames Water. Flooding leaflets have been given out to residents asking them to call if they experience further flooding.

A resident pointed out that the pump stations have failed and asked why Thames Water are not more proactive in such instances. Carley Mason agreed that the situation is unacceptable and apologised on behalf of Thames Water. In October 2016, the law changed which meant that Thames Water became responsible for all eligible sewage pumping stations. Since adopting certain pumping stations the company is in the process of investigating and upgrading them: Westway Close, Abbott Avenue and West Barnes Lane are all operational. Abbott Avenue pumping station; the equipment has been upgraded; and Approach Road is under further investigation.

Compensation was mentioned by a resident. Thames Water explained that this would only be offered if there had been a failure in the service Thames Water provides by being negligent. Thames Water provides a clean-up service and a follow up visit. Thames Water undertook to visit the residents whose names had been noted at the meeting, in order to investigate further concerns.

A resident explained that drains along Clifton Park Avenue are blocked, but when this was reported to Thames Water, the response was that Thames Water would not clear the drains until flooding had occurred. Carley Mason apologised and undertook to report the issue so that it can be investigated further. She voiced strong disagreement with the statement that Thames Water should wait for flooding to occur before reacting.

Thames Water agreed to investigate regular flooding of the shops by Raynes Park Bridge. The company also asked residents to report it every time it occurs.

Thames Water will discuss with the council to look at inlet gullies. Gullies are the responsibility of the council's Highways team. If it could be ensured that the sewer and pumping station were in good order, it would be for the council to remove the water from the highway.

Edna Road is being investigated and further works are scheduled.

A CCTV survey of Abbott Avenue was carried out after flooding occurred on 30<sup>th</sup> July. No structural issues were found. Worple Road, which is linked to the same problem, is being investigated.

Carley Mason reported that Dupont Road's gully sewer was heavily filled with silt. As of 23<sup>rd</sup> June this has been surveyed and is clear.

Residents noted that Burlington Road is still flooding, despite works to rectify it. Thames Water agreed to follow this up with further investigation. CCTV following the lining works in on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 showed everything was clear. There were no other reports following that.

Thames Water agreed to come back to a future Raynes Park Community Forum meetings to provide further updates.

### **Information updates**

#### *Christmas Fair*

The Raynes Park Christmas Fair will take place on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December from 3.30-7pm at the Waitrose car park.

### **Deputy Leader of the Council, Mark Allison**

Councillor Allison gave a [presentation](#) on key issues within the council and Merton's vision for 2020.

### **Update from Nell Allen on the No Wheelies Campaign**

Nell Allen informed residents that a petition against the proposed wheelie bins has now been handed in to the council. She also explained that she believes as an alternative to wheelie bins, money could be saved with weekly rather than fortnightly collections, by using cheaper bins and by using the 'slave bin' method for collections. Councillor Allison refuted that these methods were more efficient or would save money, highlighting that the 'slave bin' method would require more than one collection point, therefore increasing the time it would take to collect the bins.

Councillor Allison noted that a considerable amount of the debris on streets is due to existing collection methods. He explained that the council has carried out extensive research into bin operations over the years and its Scrutiny panel has specifically looked into how wheelie bins would operate and is generally satisfied. Additionally, a large trial of the new bins was carried out across different types of housing, in order to examine suitability. Trials showed that people recycle more with wheelie bins.

A contract for waste collection has been signed after much analysis and several consultations. Additionally, a large trial of the new bins was carried out across different types of housing, in order to examine suitability. Exceptions will be made for people assessed, by the council and Veolia, as not having appropriate space for wheelie bins, and assistance will be provided for those unable to physically manage the bins.

The council and Veolia will disseminate information about the usage of the new bins and educational communications are ongoing with regard to recycling food waste.

Chris Edge noted that the general feeling at the meeting was that a 'one size fits all' approach to wheelie bins is not appropriate and that the council should consider, for example, those whose properties that could not accommodate large wheelie bins, such as the small terrace houses in the Apostles. He asked that Councillor Allison take this back to the council for consideration.

### **Leonie Cooper, AM**

Leonie Cooper, London Assembly Member, provided an update on the work of the Assembly.

- A draft Environment Strategy is out for consultation until mid-November. Residents were encouraged to take a look and respond.
- The Mayor's new knife crime, housing and draft transport strategies are also out for review.
- The draft London Plan is due out soon.
- Ms Cooper recently carried out an investigation into biodiversity in new housing developments. Many of the recommendations from this investigation have been included in the draft Environment Strategy, including ensuring there is net biodiversity in developments.
- The assembly is working with the Metropolitan Police and the Mayor's office for policing crime to look at the recent growth in acid attacks, as well as moped crime and knife crime.
- Ms Cooper explained that police station closures are a result of decreased police budgets. Due to people not using stations very much and instead reporting crimes using other methods, there is less justification for keeping the stations open. Because the borough is company and the police respond quickly in emergencies, getting to incidents in Raynes Park and Wimbledon from Mitcham station will not be a problem.

### **Feedback from LBM Raynes Park Champion**

Neil Milligan explained that details on the Atkinson-Morley Hospital Wolfson development are available online.

The Chair thanked residents for attending and closed the meeting.

**Dates of future meetings** all at 7.15pm, in the Library Hall: 7 December 2017; 8 March 2018.