

COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2017

MOTION - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE – CORPORATE CAPACITY

This Council recognises that at a time of constrained public spending, it is more important than ever that local authorities should innovate. Only in this way can they reduce costs and generate additional income whilst continuing to deliver quality frontline services at a price their residents can afford.

This Council is therefore concerned that Merton seems unable to innovate successfully in order to save money or generate income. There are a number of examples where such attempts have gone wrong leading instead to reduced customer satisfaction and increased costs for council taxpayers, including:

- Lengthy and ongoing delays to the Customer Contact Programme have meant considerable potential savings have still not been realised;
- The new waste management and street cleaning contract signed with Veolia at a cost of £600,000 has led to reduced services for residents and a large increase in complaints and service requests received by the council about the state of local streets, parks and town centres;
- Additional revenue forsaken as a result of delays to the new leisure centre in Morden and a contract with GLL that does not ensure Merton taxpayers will benefit from the uplift in revenue and value of this new asset;
- Pursuing a controversial land swap with the Elim Church which has meant the loss of Merton Hall, an important asset of considerable heritage, community and monetary value; and
- Refusal to consider ways of maximising ongoing revenue from the P4 site through alternative models that would help better deliver what residents wish to see at this location whilst potentially providing an ongoing revenue stream to the council.

This Council regrets that this persistent failure to innovate successfully is costing the borough significant amounts of money and therefore requests that the Chief Executive undertake a comprehensive review of Merton's performance in this regard in order to identify systemic weaknesses within the organisation and to bring forward recommendations for improvement to Members for consideration through the Scrutiny process.

Cllr Suzanne Grocott

Cllr David Simpson

Cllr David Williams

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