

Wimbledon Community Forum Meeting 28 September 2017

Merton 2020

Cllr Stephen Alambritis
Leader of the Council

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The challenges we've faced

- Families want to live in Merton so we need more money to create school places for all children
- People are living longer so we need to spend more money on looking after them in old age
- But our funding from central government has been slashed
- Since 2010, the government have cut **40%** of the funding for local councils
- The budget gap we faced in 2011 was **£70m**

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A business-like council

- Agreed our “July Principles” to protect services for the most vulnerable
- Focussed on key priorities:
 - Protect the vulnerable
 - Keep council tax affordable
 - Be a great place to grow up & go to school
- Re-engineered the council so more efficient

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How we save you money

- Shared Services with other boroughs eg Legal
- Better deals with our contractors- Conway GLL
- Looked at everything the Council does and cut out inefficiencies
- Better use of IT e.g. libraries
- These moves have helped us to protect services and deliver low Council Tax

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Adult Social Care

- Our residents are living longer, but as a result there is a greater need for council funded care services – we spend **over £50m**

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Despite government cuts, this year we **increased** funding for adult social care by **over £9 million**

- Gone from one of the lowest spenders on adult social care to above average of comparators

Children's Services

- Welcome medical advances mean more disabled children survive into adulthood, but means increased need for council funded care
- It can cost **£50,000** a year to care for one disabled child
- We pay for children in care up to age 25, including university costs
- Increased birth rate means we need to expand schools
- We have added **an extra £1million** to the Children's Services budget this year and for the next few years
- Ofsted - Merton in top tier for children's social services

Our achievements

Despite the financial pressures, there's lots to be proud of:

- Helping low income families
- GCSE results up yet again this year
- 4,000 extra primary school places – new classrooms, halls and sports facilities – and new secondary on the way
- Increased the budget for adult social care by over £9m
- New family friendly & efficient leisure centre in Morden opening next year
- New library in Colliers Wood opening soon
- New stadium for Wimbledon; new businesses in Centre Court
- Kept council tax low and parking permits frozen

Environmental Services

- Agreed a joint waste collection contract with Sutton, Croydon and Kingston to save money
- Could save about **£48m** over the life of the contract
This is money we can use to protect other services and make up for government cuts
- New service will stop the problem of black sacks and open boxes spilling rubbish on streets (responsible for 50% of Merton's litter)

Top marks from our residents

- Record results in this year's residents survey
- **76%** of residents say Merton Council is efficient and well run – highest ever
- **Two thirds** say we're value for money – well above most other councils
- **75%** of residents say the council listens to them and acts on their concerns
- **90%** satisfied with Merton as a place to live

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Merton 2020 Vision

- We want to continue to “look after the pennies” and be a business-like borough
- We want to continue to be a great place for families
 - For young people, with great schools
 - For older people, with good quality social care
 - For all the family with great libraries, parks and leisure centres