

06: Non ST Questions

## **From Councillor Ben Butler to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

Can the Cabinet Member provide a statement updating Council on the NHS's Improving Healthcare Together 2020-2030 programme?

### **Reply**

As Council will be aware, three Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) - Merton, Sutton and Surrey Downs - have come together to form a Committee in Common, to look at the reconfiguration of acute services currently provided by Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust. This builds on the work undertaken by the Trust itself last summer. The three options being considered are to downgrade Epsom Hospital and locate acute and maternity services at St Helier Hospital; downgrade St Helier Hospital and locate acute and maternity services at Epsom Hospital; or downgrade both hospitals and locate acute and maternity services at a new hospital in Sutton, next to the Royal Marsden. More information can be found on the website: <https://improvinghealthcaretogether.org.uk/>

Following a series of engagement events over the summer, three workshops were held on 30th October, 6th November and 14th November. The workshops brought together residents, clinicians and NHS staff and were asked to: (1) agree the criteria by which the different options should be scored; (2) agree the weighting that should be afforded to each criteria; (3) score the options, based on what was agreed at the first two workshops. The third and final workshop that scored the options took place on Wednesday 14th November.

The NHS has not published any details of the criteria, weighting or scores, and states that the next step is for the CCGs to look at the scores alongside the financial assessment, in order to make a decision on a preferred option. That decision will then form part of a Pre-Consultation Business Case that is due to be submitted to NHS England before Christmas, before formal consultation takes place next year.

## **From Councillor Daniel Holden to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness:**

Is the Cabinet Member as confident as the Council Leader that all wheelie bins have been delivered?

### **Reply**

Following the roll out of the new service on October 1<sup>st</sup>, we were made aware that there were a number of properties that had not received the new wheelie bins. We have addressed these concerns with our contractor who deployed additional resource to address this matter. For households who had not received the containers we have ensured that their waste was collected as scheduled. Our Neighbourhood Client team are in daily discussions with the contractor to ensure that all reports of non-delivery of bins are addressed as a matter of priority.

## **From Councillor Linda Kirby to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

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Following the implementation of the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation and Liability for Housing Standards) Act on 1 October, what implications has this had on improving standards in the private rented sector?

### **Reply**

This bill received its first reading in the House of Lords on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018 and the next event is the House of Lords on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018. In summary the bill seeks to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 to require that residential private rented accommodation is provided and maintained in a state of fitness for human habitation.

### **From Councillor Paul Kohler to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness**

Please would Councillor Brunt detail how many of the 5721 Fixed Penalty Notices issued, and 485 prosecutions brought, in the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, were for dropping cigarette butts? And, how many of the 3834 Fixed Penalty Notices issued, and 217 prosecutions brought, in the period 1 April 2018 to date, were for dropping cigarette butts?

### **Reply**

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 – 4996 (97.26%) out of 5137 FPNs

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 (as of writing) – 4073 (95.79%) out of 4252 FPNs

### **From Councillor Dennis Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport**

Can the cabinet member update council on progress which has been made on implementing 20 mph zones across the borough and can he please explain the benefit?

### **Reply**

Merton is committed to road safety and we have a number of initiatives that promotes road safety. One initiative is the introduction of 20mph speed limits. To improve the general road safety environment and in line with the Mayor of London's transport priorities which has been adopted within the Borough's LiP, it is proposed to introduce 20mph speed limits at locations around the borough.

The objective is to change behaviour –to encourage drivers to travel at a consistent lower speed not just throughout the borough but from borough to borough. The borough limit will work alongside neighbouring borough's 20mph speed limits. (Neighbouring boroughs of Lambeth, Croydon and Wandsworth) This is expected to bring about a culture change so that it is socially unacceptable to drive over 20mph in London. This contributes to delivering the Mayor of London's vision zero initiative.

The Council has started its programme for rolling out a borough wide 20mph speed limit and we have provisionally secured funding through our LiP for next financial year which will be utilised to continue the roll out of the borough wide 20mph speed limit. Given the limited available funding this financial year, the Council has started

from the borough boundaries where neighbouring boroughs have already introduced a lower speed limit.

In terms of benefits, it is considered that with a change in behaviour, there will be less aggressive driver behaviour; less likelihood of accidents; improved perception of safety; safer highway environment / experience for all vulnerable road users. Studies show that compared to 30mph, not only are the number of accidents reduced in 20mph roads, but also their severity. For instance, a pedestrian sustaining a fatal injury from a collision decreases from approximately 55% at an impact speed of 30mph to 17% at an impact speed on 20mph. There are also health benefits, as lower speeds help improve physical and mental health. As roads become safer so people are more inclined to walk and cycle more, providing regular exercise and enabling healthier lifestyles. Noise pollution is also reduced at 20mph and these measures support sustainable transport options and encourage modal shift.

**From Councillor Omar Bush to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness:**

In light of the repeated poor performance of Veolia to undertake its contractual obligations, and a shambolic delivery of the administrations unwanted wheelie bins, does the Cabinet Member still believe that putting Veolia in charge of waste collection has been a good idea?

**Reply**

Whilst the contract performance has room for improvement the Council should note the benefits that this contract brings to the borough and the environment. The 4 Borough procurement and implementation will save Merton over 1.5 million pounds per year. The new refuse collection arrangements will reduce carbon, increase recycling and reduce litter on our streets. We will continue to work closely with Veolia on ensuring the contract delivers to the standards we expect.

**From Councillor Simon McGrath to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness**

What instructions will be given to Authorised Officers about exercising powers under Article 1(2)(c) of the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order 2018 (Dog Control), to demand members of the public in the company of a dog produce a device for removing dog faeces? How will use of these powers be monitored?

**Reply**

Article 1 of the proposed PSPO in respect of the clearing of dog faeces is primarily aimed at ensuring that faeces are not left behind within the relevant restricted areas by dog walkers where they might present a risk to public health and safety or otherwise contaminate the environment. That is an offence under the proposed PSPO.

The relevant parts of Article 1(2) (b & c) that refer to devices to remove dog faeces are designed to ensure that not having such a device - a plastic bag, for example - is not a defence, nor "a reasonable excuse" in the parlance of the current draft PSPO, for dog walkers not to remove their dog's faeces.

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It is not the intention of Article 1(2)(c) that dog walkers would be routinely and proactively challenged by Authorised Officers to produce such a device irrespective of their dog's behaviour and be guilty of an offence if they fail to do so. The draft PSPO needs to be reviewed and amended if necessary in order to clarify that position, but conceivably there may be persistent or recognisable offenders who commonly or routinely do not carry such devices with them and this power would enable Authorised Officers to intervene in such cases, regardless of whether their dog has defecated or not.

It is the intention of the authority to monitor the effectiveness of its proposed new dog control PSPOs through the issuing of FPNs and by the various categories of offence, but the encouragement of appropriate and respectful standards of behaviour by dog walkers through educational and other awareness-raising means are also key elements to our approach to reducing and eliminating dog fouling nuisances across the borough.

### **From Councillor Agatha Akyigyina to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness**

Can the Cabinet Member give us the figures for general waste, recycling waste and food waste in tonnages for the first month of the new service compared to this time last year and compared to the monthly average?

#### **Reply**

I am pleased to advise that following the introduction of the new waste service early indications suggest that there has been a significant improvement in the reduction of residual waste.

In October of this year we collected just over 2,600 tonnes of general waste compared to 3,839 tonnes in the same period last year. The monthly average in 2017 was 3,855 tonnes.

In addition to this we have seen an increase of 110 tonnes of food waste since the new service was introduced. Over the last 3 years we have seen a decline in food waste participation with a monthly average of 274 tonnes per month in 2017. In October this year we collected 384 tonne.

We are currently awaiting confirmed waste data with regards to our recycling material which we expect to show an increase

### **From Councillor David Simpson to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness:**

Why does Veolia not recognise some communal properties and recognise others?

#### **Reply**

Both the contractor and the council recognise communal properties.

We have experienced a number of data issues which has unfortunately resulted in some communal addresses being missed off the rescheduling of rounds. These have been identified and we are working closely with both IT teams [ours and Veolia's] to rectify this matter and ensure all communal properties are scheduled correctly.

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Where collections have been missed we have ensured that the contractor has been informed and additional resource deployed in order to rectify this matter and meet our resident's expectations.

### **From Councillor Dave Ward to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness**

Can the Cabinet Member update us on initiatives in tackling fly tipping?

#### **Reply**

Where there is a known 'hot spot' area fly tipping signage is erected to bring to the public's attention the consequences of fly tipping waste. Enforcement Officers carry out joint partnership operations, with the Police stopping vehicles within designated areas and checking vehicles who are carrying waste. In such circumstances the driver is required to produce a waste carrier licence along with evidence on where the waste is being taken to be disposed of. Failing to produce relevant information will result in being issued a fixed penalty notice.

Properties where building renovations are being carried out are targeted and left a leaflet advising them of their duties and our powers. Residents and builders are reminded of their responsibilities when handing waste to a third party and their duty of care.

The Enforcement team, as a last resort, where suitable and with Magistrates Court authority undertakes covert operations (Hidden Camera). Such operations are normally progressed over a few weeks, capturing information of vehicles pulling up and fly-tipping waste. All evidence is viewed with the intention of bringing culprits in for an interview. Depending on the circumstances and volume of waste involved, we can deal with the case by either a fixed penalty notice or by preparing a case for prosecution.

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