

# Agenda Item 9

MORDEN COMMUNITY FORUM  
23 FEBRUARY 2022

(7.15 pm - 9.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Nick Draper (in the Chair),

## 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held via Zoom and chaired by Councillor Nick Draper. Ten residents and five councillors attended on Zoom with 73 additional views on YouTube. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would work.

## 2 WARM AND WELL PROJECT (Agenda Item 2)

Olivia McKay, Winter Warmth Engagement Officer for Wimbledon Guild, gave an update on the [Warm and Well Project](#). The project started in 2019 and is a partnership between Merton Council, Age UK Merton and Thinking Works.

Thinking Works is a free service in operating across five south west London boroughs that provides home energy assessments and assess eligibility for additional utility support. Thinking Works also provide a starter pack to residents that can help improve water and energy efficiency. Wimbledon Guild provides also provides referrals to Thinking Works for fuel vouchers. To be eligible you must be a Merton resident, and either over 65, have a long-term health condition or on a low income.

Wimbledon Guild also provide a handy person service, a free service for older people or those with long term health conditions, to do those small jobs that do not need technical qualifications and excludes gardening or decorating.

The Warm and Well project also provides outreach to share information and can refer to other Guild services.

For more information, please email Olivia [omckay@wimbledonguild.co.uk](mailto:omckay@wimbledonguild.co.uk)

Cllr Kenny has been sharing information and asked how many residents have approached the service. Olivia said most referrals are self-referrals and when explained what is on offer, they often opt for an assessment.

Cllr Southgate asked if the handyman service included gardening. Olivia said it did not and would provide poster that explains the offer.

Cllr Gretton asked if the Handyman repairs fences. Olivia said they do not usually work on external areas but happy to have a look. Cllr Draper asked what help might be available to repair fences a resident asked why Merton do not collect as a bulky item. KW to check.

Cllr Pearce asked if Wimbledon Guild is in contact with other local groups. Olivia said she is currently reinitiating existing contacts.

### 3 COMMUNITY FORUM REVIEW (Agenda Item 3)

Kris Witherington, Engagement and Consultation Manager at Merton Council, gave a presentation on the review of the Community Forum meetings currently taking place. The presentation is attached to this report.

Merton Council is asking residents to provide feedback on their experience of the community forums, what they think works, and what they think could be improved. Kris has looked at what other types of engagement is taking place across London and ran through seven other models for engaging with residents.

Cllr Pearce said that previously Forums had been more resident led and have been taken over by digital groups like Nextdoor. Kris said that Merton Council joined Nextdoor in 2021 and have been promoting the forums on there but it has not yet resulted in new people attending the forum. Kris said that since going online there had been less interactivity as we got used to the format but hoped to see more once we were meeting in person again.

Cllr Southgate said that Morden is one of the less well supported and asked if the frequency might be a factor. Kris said the Colliers Wood is usually the worst attended and only meets annually, attendance and Mitcham and Morden is similar, and they meet biannually, whilst Raynes Park is the most consistently well attended at the quarterly meetings. Wimbledon attendance varies depending on the topics. This was the same before the number of meetings were changed. In some cases, low attendance can be explained by the success of local residents' associations.

A resident asked about having ward-based meetings. Cllr Draper said many wards do have meetings but not on a regular basis and often topic specific like planning or parking. Cllr Kenny said they host quarterly coffee mornings to listen to residents.

A resident asked about linking Section 106 funding to area forums. Cllr Kenny said that Ward Allocations and Neighbourhood Fund are based on resident feedback.

A resident suggested that the open forum should be the first item on the agenda but limit the length of contributions and that the meetings are too far apart.

Cllr McClean suggested that there is a case for annual get together for residents and resident association.

Cllr Draper asked about youth engagement. Kris said there is specialist engagement with young people through the Young Advisors, and Youth Parliament.

#### 4 OPEN FORUM (Agenda Item 4)

A resident asked about the felling of trees to accommodate 5G masts and why wired comms were not being used instead. The Development Control team will be asked to respond.

Future Merton has recently updated the Morden Regeneration webpage at [www.merton.gov.uk/moreMorden](http://www.merton.gov.uk/moreMorden) Cllr Pearce said residents are frustrated with the lack of progress.

A letter has been sent to residents in regard to solar panels under the Solar Together scheme. A resident said it would have been helpful to have a broad idea of costs. Kris will pass this on to the Climate Change officer.

A resident asked about progress on the Peel House car park works. Cllr Southgate said has been chasing. A survey was to be undertaken and then works will need to go to tender. Cllr Southgate has also asked for Kenley Road to be restored.

Councillor Draper thanked residents for attending and closed the meeting.

#### 5 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 5)

Wednesday 19 October 2022 at 7.15pm, venue to be confirmed.

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# Community Forums

## Your feedback 2022

Page 87

# Why have a review?

- 10 years since last major changes
- Pandemic has introduced new technology options introduced
- Your Merton engagement showed desire for more engagement

# What do we want to know?

- We want to know what you think works currently and what can be improved
- We want your views on different approaches
- We have looked at what other boroughs do to see what alternatives exist
- We found 8 different models in London, including those that are similar to Merton

# Area Committees

- Formal committees of the council
- Councillors supported by co-opted residents associations or other groups
- Public meetings at which residents can speak
- Example - Sutton



# Externally managed forums

- Networks or forums delivered by local organisations external to the Council
- Can involve existing residents groups
- Mix of public meetings and online discussion
- Example - Lambeth

# Digital Panels and Boards

- Panels are representative group or residents who complete regular online surveys

Page 8  
• Example – Kensington & Chelsea

- Discussion Boards are online discussion groups

- Example – Barking and Dagenham

# Question time events

- Public meetings where elected councillors and officers can be questioned

Page 83  
Can be either borough wide or locally focused

- Example – Mayor of London; Wandsworth

# Citizen Assemblies

- Randomly selected group of residents discuss and recommend solutions to a particular issue
- Example - Newham

# Councillor led structures

- Ward councillors organise and host local meetings in their ward

Example - Ealing

# Have your say

- [www.merton.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.merton.gov.uk/consultations)
- Complete the survey by 4 April
- Any questions or comments?