

Mitcham Community Forum  
14 March 2017  
Chair's Report

The meeting was held at Vestry Hall, and chaired by Councillor Ian Munn. 12 residents attended, as well as one other Councillor, and officers of the council and its partners. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **Police update**

PC Steve Green and PC Steph Capper provided an update on the policing priorities for Mitcham. The priorities are currently burglary, street drinking and drug dealing. There has been an increase in burglary over the last year so the Mitcham team has been promoting prevention measures.

On street drinking 50 Community Protection Notices have been issued to date with 12 fines of £180 subsequently issued. The current borough wide No Drinking Zone is due to expire in October 2017 and Merton Police are working with Merton Council to see if a Public Space Protection Order would be more effective. A PSPO would make certain types of behaviour a criminal offence so would provide stronger powers than the current system. In response to a question PC Green said that enforcement is related to anti-social behaviour rather than just drinking alcohol.

A range of overt and covert anti-drug operations have been taking place with a number of recent prosecutions taking place. The police rely heavily on intelligence from the public so residents are encouraged to report suspicious activity.

In response to questions from residents PC Green said that enforcement for littering is done by the council but the police do ask the council to respond to particular problem areas. PC Capper said that cycling on the pavement is enforced when appropriate but is not a high priority.

### **Choose Wisely**

Abbas Mirza and Michelle Wallington from Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) introduced the Choose Wisely programme. Their presentation can be found on the Council website at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/community-living/communityforums/mitchamcommunityforum.htm>

Merton CCG has challenging financial savings to achieve of £13.7m in 2017/18 so is reviewing the provision of services in a number of areas:

- Prescriptions for vitamin supplements and self-medication
- Prescriptions for gluten free foods
- IVF treatment
- Supporting patients to be more surgery ready with increased referrals to stop smoking and weight management services

Abbas has met with over 30 local community groups to encourage people to feed in their views. Residents can also complete a survey either on paper or online by 20 March. The results will be considered by the CCG Governing Body on 23 March and if they decide to proceed with any of these proposals there will be a full consultation.

In response to questions Abbas said that with changing demographics and more long term conditions the NHS will need to reflect on the financial challenges this creates. Abbas also agreed that any changes would need to consider the impact on low income households. In the case of gluten free foods they would also need to look at variations in the availability of these foods in local shops. The CCG will work with families to inform them about their options to eat healthily. The CCG has also looked into voucher schemes that are run elsewhere but it seems that that this sort of scheme might be more expensive.

Abbas also described how he was trying to reach seldom heard groups but encouraged residents to away copies of the consultation and pass them on to friends and neighbours.

### **Rediscover Mitcham update**

James Geeson from the Future Merton team, Merton Council, updated the meeting on the works in Mitcham Town Centre. Construction continues with a target for completion in December 2017 and final snagging in January 2018.

Currently new traffic lights are being installed and then resurfacing will be taking place overnight from 3 – 13 April on London Road, Raleigh Gardens, Upper Green West and Upper Green East. The works should be completed before Easter assuming there are no complications.

Lamp columns are being installed on the new bus street. The street should be operation by September and possibly earlier. If completed sooner this will allow other works to be brought forward.

In response to questions James said that the road closures for resurfacing had been approved by all stakeholders but he would check with Network Rail about works at Mitcham Eastfields. The bus stop for the 200 on Lower Green West has been completed so he will check with TfL when it will start being used by the buses. Work on the traffic islands did reduce the number of lanes creating a bottleneck for traffic but these works have now been completed. Where parking has been blocking traffic the yellow lines have been repainted and enforcement increased to reduce the problem. There will be sufficient space for lorries to turn at key junctions.

The painted markings for cycling on Majestic Way shared space has got dirty so will be refreshed. The fountain in the pond hasn't been working due to problems with the filter but these have now been resolved. There are a number of empty shops currently. The overall aim of the project is to increase footfall in a central area and focus on the market but this is not possible to

achieve whilst construction works continue. Toilet access remains an issue and options to improve this are being explored.

### **Soapbox**

Jezz Gibson, Neighbourhood Client Officer from Merton Council introduced himself to the meeting. Jezz is one of three new roles responsible for performance managing environmental service contracts and he will be looking after the Mitcham and Colliers Wood areas. The contracts include the waste collection and street cleansing services provided by Veolia and the parks and open spaces services provided by idverde. Any problems residents see should still be reported to the council in the usual way, online or by calling 020 82744901 but Jezz will be monitoring the performance of the contractors in dealing with these reports.

Merton Council's Scrutiny Panels are after your views on the sorts of issues they should review to make sure that the council and partners respond to local people's needs and concerns. These reviews involve finding out about local people's experiences and looking at how other councils deal with the same problems. Councillors then suggest ways of making things better in Merton. Past reviews have covered issues ranging from highway maintenance to local nursing homes to fear of crime. For more information please see <http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/decision-making/scrutiny.htm>

### **Date of next meetings:**

Wednesday 18 October at 7.15pm, in Mitcham Library

Tuesday 23 January at 7.15pm, in Mitcham Library