

Merton Park Ward Residents Association meeting

Tuesday 2nd December 2024 8 pm at Merton Park Primary School

Present Mariam Ali-Puttergill, Councillor Edward Foley, Councillor Stephen Mercer, David Merriman, Hubert Child, Desi Child, Fred Rayner, Peter Southgate, Pauline Southgate, Pauline Lightfoot, Stephen Johnson, Neaz Ahmed, Chris Stutt

Apologies Krysia Williams, Ian Garbett, Jolanta Novak, Greg Bryant

1.0 Chairwoman welcome

Miriam Ali-Puttergill welcomed everyone to the Christmas meeting - the last of the year.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting

These have been distributed and were signed as correct.

3.0 Safer Neighbourhood Police team.

Sgt Attwell introduced PC Tom Carter who will be working in the team together with PCSO Paula Besleaga

The Police have been working on teenage drinking and testing the local off-licences and warning them about selling alcohol to underage children. 5 out of the 6 off licences failed the tests. They were fine and visited by licencing and trading standards officers. They will be retested and there could be changes to the licence or they could lose their licence, if they have not improved.

Morden Hall Park – there has been a flasher there in the outer area of the park. Please call the police if you see him.

Positive stories are that at Morden tube station a female female was arrested for a stabbing. In Dorset Road there was an arrest and a drunk driver was also arrested.

PC Tom Carter who used to live in the Ward, said that burglary was in on the increase now that the nights were getting darker earlier. The usual crime prevention advice applies. Plain clothed police and unmarked cars will be patrolling the area, as well as hi vis patrols to deter burglars.

PCSO Besleaga reported on motor vehicle theft and theft of motor vehicles.

Q Are there many robberies in this area?

A No robberies are not a big problem in Merton Park area. There is some 'kids on kids' crime when the schools come out. That said please be vigilant in the dark evenings and especially around transport hubs

Q Are the police involved in stopping shoplifting crimes?

A Yes - speaking to the shops and trying to get them to report incidences and have CCTV footage and also make statements. Staff are reluctant to make statements and go to court.

Q Are some of the shoplifters repeat offenders?

A Yes they are and also there are cross border offenders from Colliers Wood and Tooting, where they do have shops on board re-reporting and monitoring. Some thieves just get on the northern line and work the shops at each stop.

Q Do the shops talk to each other?

A Yes they do in Wimbledon but not in Morden. We are trying to get the Morden shops linked together.

Q Is there any news about about electric bikes deliberately crashing into cars and asking for cash?

A There was a camera at the corner of Mostyn Road and Kingston Road and since that has been put up there have been no more crashes for cash. A lady in the audience said that it had happened to her at Circle Gardens.

Q Do the police have any resources to restrict speed through Merton Park to 20 mph? Mostyn Road, Cannon Hill Road and Dorset Road are bad for speeding at all times of day and there has been no speed watch for at least six months.

A Will ask transport colleagues and set up a speed watch. As the police have to wear high viz jackets most drivers slow down in time, but it does warn drivers that the police are trying to catch them and does make people slow down for a few weeks.

Q At Morden station on the northside there is someone rough sleeping?

A This person has been moved but the Police will check for others. Sometimes they have mental health problems.

Q Will the place talk to children in secondary schools?

A Yes, very happy to talk to them in secondary schools.

Q Shop link - who is it funded by? There used to be a Love Morden group which folded but people are trying to set it up again.

A Will look into it but shop link is funded by the businesses.

Q Is Morden getting a town centre manager?

A Councillor Foley will raise this with the Council

Q Councillor Foley rang 999 when he found a rough sleeper in the bandstand and then was surrounded by youths displaying antisocial behaviour. The Police were quick to respond and the youths wearing balaclavas escaped on lime bikes. The Police knew Sergeant Atwell and praised him.

4.0 Councillor Edward Foley's report.

At the Overview and Scrutiny committee the acting Borough Commander for the Police talked about the problems facing the Met, namely a £450 million funding gap and problems with recruitment and retention E bikes and other illegal bikes being written on the pavement, but sadly Police have no resources to deal with this. Councillor Foley said that 6 or 7 years ago he went out with the police on 999 calls and he saw it took them hours to do the paperwork for each incident. If you actually see these challenges you understand the problems facing the Police. Hopefully the situation with the paperwork has improved recently. Violence against women was also discussed at the committee meeting.

At the full Council meeting Councillor Foley & Councillor Mercer talked about having better public consultation. They voted for the Local Plan - was not perfect but better than having no plan. The Lib Dems put forward motion to allow Councillors to deal with casework in different wards to the ones they were elected in, but this did not make a lot of sense. Councillor Foley helped some people get their Blue Badge in a timely manner.

The Mayor's charity held their Christmas dinner last week and it was well attended. Councillor Foley advertised the Mayor's office and the Wimbledon Guild events for the coming month.

New trees are being planted around around the Ward at last.

Q What is happening about the Church Lane surgery site and the Morden Road tram stop?

A No information at the moment. The access to Kenley Road is owned by TfL.

Councillor Foley said during the cold spells if you see a rough sleeper, please report them on the Streetlink app. They will go and see the rough sleeper and advise them where they can get help.

Councillor Foley also recommended the Rail Guardian app which has lots of useful features. One feature is you can track your loved ones journeys home, if they allow that. You can report trees and street lighting problems and there is bystander training. If you are in a carriage where there is antisocial behaviour, you can discreetly report it and at the next stop the people should be dealt with.

5.0 Councillor Stephen Mercer's report.

Trees – Councillor Mercer has lots of residents complaining because trees have not been replaced and also residents complaining because there are too many trees!

Q Who looks after the new trees?

A Volunteers required please?

Councillor Mercer was involved in World Toilet Day on the 19th of November and had 5 meetings. The London Loo alliance was launched that day. Itinerant workers like deliverers, posties, Police, Firefighters et cetera have no fixed toilets and this is a problem. The law says employees should use public toilets as the last resort! At the Westminster meeting Alex Norris a government minister said he would try to do something. The London Society of engineers architects discussed the gender split required for male/female toilets. There was also a sustainable communities meeting Councillor Foley said he will cut down the time spent on toilet issues in 2025.

Councillor Mercer also did some Blue Badge work for local residents.

E bike – Merton ran a three wheeler scheme in Morden Hall Park for two hours a day from mid September for eight weeks. Councillor Mercer commented that a longer trial period would have been better. Three wheeler bikes suit people whose balance is not quite as good as it was.

Tomorrow is the Morden Forum meeting. Asking people for their ideas about Morden at night - what is good? Flood prevention and extreme weather - what can we do? How to improve life in Morden ?

Councillor Mercer asked if there was interest in a Zoom meeting in January to touch base. Please let him know?

6.0 100 Club Draw

Greg Bryant sent his apologies and Fred Rayner and Councillor Foley did the draw.

3rd prize £10 73 anonymous - donation to Saint Raphael's hospice

2nd prize £20 28 Fred Rayner

1st prize £30 15 Tim Fripp

7.0 AOB

Miriam Ali-Puttergill said that they were charity Christmas cards at the back of the hall to buy.

Miriam thank the Councillors and Committee for the help given to her since her election at the July AGM and well welcome to people to have a glass of wine and mince pie at the end of the meeting.

8.0 Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be Tuesday the 4th of February by Zoom