

COUNCILLOR ROSS GARROD

Leader of the Council
(Labour, Longthornton Ward)



Ms Elisabeth Chapple
Chief Superintendent
Metropolitan Police

London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Sent by email

Email: Leaders.office@merton.gov.uk

Date: 05/09/2022

Dear Ms Chapple,

Re: Galpin's Road

I am writing to you on behalf of residents of Galpin's Road regarding a number of concerns that were raised at the public meeting held on 1 September 2022. This has been a tragic event that has affected residents and the wider community. I understand that this is a complex investigation and has required close co-operation from a number of local agencies. The Council will do all we can to support a thorough investigation that seeks answers and holds those responsible to account. However, as the Leader of the Council, I must also ensure that the concerns of my residents are properly heard and addressed.

- 1. Front doors being left open.** A number of residents within the inner cordon (properties 242-288 and 227-275) are concerned that the front door of their property has been left open following entry by police for a considerable number of days. They are concerned for the security of the property and the condition of the property, given that the door has been left open to the elements of the weather and wildlife. I would be grateful if you could arrange for officers to undertake an immediate check of all the properties in the inner cordon to ensure that they are locked. Where the doors have been left open, I would be grateful if an officer can make immediate arrangements to lock the properties and arrange for the affected residents to receive an apology and explanation as to the reason why this has occurred.
- 2. Body worn cameras.** As you will be aware, it was agreed that if the police or SGN entered a property body worn cameras would be used to provide peace of mind to the residents. At the recent meeting residents enquired as to the process for them obtaining the footage relevant to their individual property. I would be very grateful if you could advise of the process for making such a request.

3. **Seizure of personal items.** There was concern expressed that a CCTV camera had been removed from a resident's property situated in the inner cordon. I would be grateful if the investigation team can explain the reason for seizing the item, timeframe in which it will be returned to the resident, and if the police will make good any repairs that may be required. Furthermore, could you explain the reason for the resident not receiving prior notification that the item was to be removed.
4. **SGN's presence in the inner cordon.** There was concern expressed at the meeting by residents that SGN still had a presence in the inner cordon, which is currently subject to an investigation. Given, the concerns residents have long expressed regarding the apparent failures of the company and them being subject to the investigation it was not thought appropriate for them to be accessing the crime scene. I would be very grateful if you could inform me of the reason for SGN's presence in the inner cordon. It is causing great distress to residents and I would urge the police to prevent further access for SGN employees.

I would be very grateful for your response addressing each of the concerns listed above. As you will appreciate it is crucial at this time that the community feels it has the trust and confidence of the recovery and those supporting it. I will be circulating a copy of this letter and your response to the residents of Galpin's Road so that they are kept informed in the spirit of openness and transparency, and to keep them updated on the progress of their concerns being addressed during this distressing time.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Ross Garrod
Leader of the London Borough of Merton