

Merton Council Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel



Date: 1 July 2015
Time: 7.15 pm
Venue: Committee rooms C, D & E - Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden
SM4 5DX

AGENDA

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**This is a public meeting – members of the public are very welcome to attend.
The meeting room will be open to members of the public from 7.00 p.m.**

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Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel membership

Councillors:

Linda Taylor OBE (Vice-Chair)
Charlie Chirico
Edward Foley
Joan Henry
James Holmes
Katy Neep (Chair)
Marsie Skeete
Dennis Pearce
Jeff Hanna
Agatha Mary Akyigyina

Substitute Members:

Sally Kenny
Peter Southgate
Fidelis Gadzama
Najeeb Latif
Stephen Crowe

Co-opted Representatives

Peter Connellan, Roman Catholic diocese
Colin Powell, Church of England diocese
Simon Bennett, Secondary and Special
School Parent Governor Representative
Denis Popovs, Primary School Parent
Governor Representative

Note on declarations of interest

Members are advised to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting. If a pecuniary interest is declared they should withdraw from the meeting room during the whole of the consideration of that matter and must not participate in any vote on that matter. If members consider they should not participate because of a non-pecuniary interest which may give rise to a perception of bias, they should declare this, withdraw and not participate in consideration of the item. For further advice please speak with the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance.

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny describes the way Merton's scrutiny councillors hold the Council's Executive (the Cabinet) to account to make sure that they take the right decisions for the Borough. Scrutiny panels also carry out reviews of Council services or issues to identify ways the Council can improve or develop new policy to meet the needs of local people. From May 2008, the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and Panels have been restructured and the Panels renamed to reflect the Local Area Agreement strategic themes.

Scrutiny's work falls into four broad areas:

- ⇒ **Call-in:** If three (non-executive) councillors feel that a decision made by the Cabinet is inappropriate they can 'call the decision in' after it has been made to prevent the decision taking immediate effect. They can then interview the Cabinet Member or Council Officers and make recommendations to the decision-maker suggesting improvements.
- ⇒ **Policy Reviews:** The panels carry out detailed, evidence-based assessments of Council services or issues that affect the lives of local people. At the end of the review the panels issue a report setting out their findings and recommendations for improvement and present it to Cabinet and other partner agencies. During the reviews, panels will gather information, evidence and opinions from Council officers, external bodies and organisations and members of the public to help them understand the key issues relating to the review topic.
- ⇒ **One-Off Reviews:** Panels often want to have a quick, one-off review of a topic and will ask Council officers to come and speak to them about a particular service or issue before making recommendations to the Cabinet.
- ⇒ **Scrutiny of Council Documents:** Panels also examine key Council documents, such as the budget, the Business Plan and the Best Value Performance Plan.

Scrutiny panels need the help of local people, partners and community groups to make sure that Merton delivers effective services. If you think there is something that scrutiny should look at, or have views on current reviews being carried out by scrutiny, let us know.

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Agenda Item 3

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 24 MARCH 2015

(19.15 - 20.40)

PRESENT

Councillors Councillor Jeff Hanna (in the Chair),
Councillor Linda Taylor, Councillor Charlie Chirico,
Councillor David Chung, Councillor Edward Foley,
Councillor Joan Henry, Councillor James Holmes,
Councillor Katy Neep, Councillor Marsie Skeete and
Colin Powell

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Maxi Martin (Cabinet Member for Children's
Services); Councillor Martin Whelton (Cabinet Member for
Education)

Paul Ballatt (Head of Commissioning, Strategy and
Performance, CSF) and Yvette Stanley (Director, Children,
Schools & Families Department) Heather Tomlinson (Interim
Assistant Director of Education) Julia Groom (Public Health
Consultant) Stella Akintan (Scrutiny Officer)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 1)

None

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fidelis Gadzama and co-opted members: Simon Bennett, Peter Connellan and Denis Popovs, Councillor Sally Kenny attended as a substitute

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2015 (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: The Panel agreed the minutes as a true record of the meeting

4 MATTERS ARISING (Agenda Item 4)

Councillor Linda Taylor enquired about whether promoting apprenticeship opportunities in the council's contracting activity had been discussed at the Procurement Board. Paul Ballatt informed the Panel that it was due to be raised at the last meeting. However he was unable to attend therefore it would be raised at the next meeting.

5 UPDATE ON PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (Agenda Item 7)

Julia Groom gave an update of the public health programmes within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, highlighting that the Strategy is currently being refreshed and there would be a strong focus on tackling health inequalities.

Councillor Chung said inequality is a complex subject and there has been a lot of work to try and tackle the problems but the issues remain unresolved. How can we ensure we are not addressing the same inequality issues in a year's time.

Julia Groom responded that some good work is taking place including running a healthy schools programme in the east of the Borough. This included undertaking an audit of schools in Mitcham to identify gaps and funding a range of programmes. As a result cooking clubs, exercise programmes and parenting support are being run for pupils and families. School Profiles are also being developed by the School Nursing Service to ensure that in addition to universal services, support is also being targeted to those schools with the highest needs.

Paul Ballat said Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services are currently being re-commissioned with a specific focus on looked after children and young offenders as this is where the support is needed. It is crucial to consider "Bridging the Gap" activity as part of the commissioning process.

Councillor Skeete thanked officers for their report and asked who will be monitoring the public health outcomes. Julia Groom said that key outcomes are monitored by the Children's Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Outcomes that are showing success include low birth rates, teenage pregnancy and children who are overweight or obese at reception age, which are all on a downward trend. Paul Ballatt noted that the providers undertaking work on these issues will be subject to robust performance management.

Following a suggestion from the Chair, the Panel agreed that monitoring public health targets should be included as a topic suggestion for 2015/16.

Councillor Holmes asked how the Council will determine if we have the right skills set if services are being taken over by other providers. Julia Groom said commissioning is undertaken jointly by the public health team and the Children Schools and Families Department and the commissioning staff, who are able to maintain oversight of specifications and quality assurance.

RESOLVED

The Panel thanked the public health team for the work that is going on and Julia Groom for attending the meeting to provide a briefing.

6 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT 2014 (Agenda Item 5)

Heather Tomlinson gave an overview of the six main pillars in the report and stated that in implementing the Act there is one strength and three challenges.

The strength is that the Department of Education monitoring visit has highlighted that Merton is particularly strong on involving parents in developing the local offer and the new Education Health and Care Planning Framework.

The first challenge is that the new process is more demanding than before because of the integrated nature of education, health and care planning. Trying to arrange for all the agencies to get together in one room can be difficult. Furthermore all professionals have different statutory processes and methodologies. Councils across the country are finding the demanding process a problem. In Merton eighteen plans have been accepted, four have been completed with only two of these within the timescale. Again other local authorities are having similar problems. The department must transfer the current one thousand statements into the new model. Twenty four have been completed and according to the timescales we should be completing two hundred and fifty per year. All this is putting additional strain on services.

The second challenge is the need to secure real and meaningful integration with health partners. The new structure has made provision for a dedicated health team and there is also a need for a Dedicated Medical Officer. This post has still not been filled in Merton and health partners are not sufficiently round the table as yet. The third challenge is the move to personal budgets and transfer of funds to eligible parents for travel and short break provision. We need to identify unit costs.

Councillor Holmes asked for further details about feedback from professionals on page six of the agenda. Heather Tomlinson said the national pilot is reporting the same issues that are being found in Merton including limited resources and the need to clarify roles and responsibilities. We need to do more training on multi-agency working. We need to identify and share good practice. Professionals need to develop smart outcome focussed plans, we need a new mindset and to be able to think ahead. Yvette Stanley added we are asking professionals to think in all three domains, therefore we are asking teachers and health workers to make judgements about the care of a child. Historically we used to collate this information, now all professionals need to be in the room with the parent and child. This is a longitudinal

programme we are also experiencing financial retraction and maximum outcomes are required with limited support.

Councillor Hanna asked if the implementation of the Act is achievable within current resources. Yvette Stanley said London local authorities recently met with the Department of Education and it was identified that there would be some economies of scale due to the likelihood of fewer disputes with parents. Councils received a £150,000 grant of which a third will go towards employing two extra staff members so there would be no capacity for additional services. It is still early in the process but more difficult than we thought, especially if an inspection regime is created around it.

Councillor Henry said that mediation is important and cost effective. Therefore in a time of budget constraints why is the department looking at outside providers for mediation services when we could do it in-house. Paul Ballatt said given that we only have a small volume of cases we tend to spot purchase these services. It is early days and we still need to decide if we need to commission this service. Heather Tomlinson said we have to provide this independent of the local authority but we can purchase services from other councils, private or voluntary sector.

Councillor Kenny asked if all the one thousand cases to be transferred are from within Merton and if all the relevant groups will be fully integrated at the transition meeting. Heather Tomlinson said some children will be out of borough. We have to go through a streamlined process working with the child and family and translate this into an Education Health Care plan. We have prioritised year groups; this year will be year eleven school leavers, sub groups include those in residential care. It is challenging preparing a plan that prepares the young person for adulthood especially if there are no links with social care. Yvette Stanley added eleven children are out of borough and over one hundred live at a distance, there is a wide range across the spectrum of need.

RESOLVED

The Panel has concerns about the challenges associated with implementing the Act and thanked the Children Schools and Families for working to tackle them.

7 THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ROLE IN PROMOTING ACCESS TO CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION FOR FAMILIES (Agenda Item 6)

Heather Tomlinson gave an overview of the report stating that there are two main challenges that the department is working to address:

Creating appropriate childcare for children with complex needs: this is a challenge faced by councils across London.

Increasing the take up of free nursery places for eligible two year olds: The current take up rate is 55% which is 9th of all London Boroughs and 6th among our statistical neighbours. This means that the council is doing comparatively well but improvements can still be made.

Councillor Kenny asked if the take up rate differs between the east and west of the borough. Yvette Stanley said the bulk of the outreach is in the east, where there are more seldom heard groups with a complexity of needs.

The Panel asked for detailed aspects of the childcare sufficiency report to be included in the topic suggestions for 2015/16.

RESOLVED

The Panel noted the report and thanked officers for their work

8 UPDATE REPORT (Agenda Item 8)

Councillor Chirico expressed concern about the possibility of longer travel times if pupils did not receive their choice of school and had to receive a central offer. Paul Ballatt said officers were mindful of this when making central offers. Yvette Stanley added there were school places within all the localities in Merton so this should not be an issue.

Councillor Chirico congratulated the teachers, staff, councillor officers and Councillor Whelton for the good Ofsted rating at Bond Primary School. The panel endorsed this comment.

Councillor Holmes asked for further detail about work to prevent the radicalisation of young people in the borough. Yvette Stanley said the Department of Education is concerned about active targeting of young people. All secondary schools are required to have Prevent training. An information leaflet for parents will be sent out soon, as this is a sensitive issue this has been developed in conjunction with the Interfaith Forum. Yvette Stanley added that she has recently met with the Chair and Vice Chair of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education to discuss additional work that could be done in the community. Five cases have been raised through a channel programme of which only two were investigated, highlighting that this issue is not a significant problem in Merton.

RESOLVED

The Panel noted the report and thanked officers for their work

9 PERFORMANCE REPORT (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Hanna asked for clarification about the absence of education data. Paul Ballatt said that many of the education indicators were annual and were last reported to the Panel in February's meeting in the Standards Report item. The Department will try and identify other indicators which could be reported more regularly.

RESOLVED

The Panel noted the report and thanked officers for their work

10 TOPIC SUGGESTIONS 2015/16 (Agenda Item 10)

The Chair invited panel members to suggest agenda items for the next municipal year, adding that there would also be an opportunity to make suggestions during the topic suggestion workshop in May.

Councillor Taylor suggested post 16 pathways

Councillor Holmes suggested that a head teacher or other service leader could be invited so the Panel can understand the issues and challenges from their perspective.

Yvette Stanley suggested the Panel may wish to meet officers from the Troubled Families programme.

Paul Ballatt suggested the Panel may wish to invite health partners and the police to consider how they support the Children Schools and Families agenda.

RESOLVED

That the Panel consider the following items as part of their work programme for 2015/16:

Post 16 pathways
Childcare Sufficiency Report
Public Health targets in relation to the children schools and families' agenda
Officers from the Troubled Families programme
Health Partners and the Police in relation to their work on children schools and families.

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Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 1st July 2015

Agenda item: 5

Wards: All

Subject: Overview of Services and Key Challenges for Children, Schools and Families Department 2015-16

Lead officer: Yvette Stanley, Director of Children's Services

Lead members: Cllr Maxi Martin; Cllr Martin Whelton

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

Contact officer: Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director Commissioning, Strategy and Performance

Recommendations:

A. Scrutiny Panel notes the report and considers the key service challenges outlined.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides members of the new Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel with an overview of services provided by the Children, Schools and Families (CSF) Department and the key service challenges facing the Department in 2015-16.

2 DETAILS

2.1 The work of CSF Department is informed by a complex legal and regulatory framework and by governmental public policy initiatives. In response to these drivers, the Department provides or commissions a comprehensive range of universal, targeted and specialist services for children, young people and families in Merton. Key statutory responsibilities of the Department working alone or with partner agencies include:

- Leadership of the statutory safeguarding and children's partnership arrangements in the local authority area
- The provision of sufficient, suitable early years childcare and education
- The provision of sufficient and suitable school places for children and young people 0-19yrs
- Statutory assessment of children's Special Educational Needs and the provision of suitable education for those with special/complex needs
- Improving school standards and pupil attainment in Merton Community schools and providing educational leadership to the wider school community

- Co-ordinating school admissions; ensuring school attendance including court action; quality assuring home education, commissioning alternative education
- Safeguarding and protecting children at risk of significant harm
- Providing support to children in need and their families
- Providing support services to children with disabilities and their families
- Looking after children and young people through compulsory & voluntary means
- Achieving permanency for Looked After Children through adoption, fostering or special guardianship
- Provision of leaving care services for young people who have been looked after
- Intervention with and supervision of youth offenders and prevention of offending
- Enabling the provision of positive activities for young people and a suitable local youth work offer

Overview of CSF Department Services

2.2 CSF Department is led by the Director of Children's Services, a statutory appointment, and 3 Assistant Directors who manage operational and strategic services. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the functions of each Division:

2.3 Education Division

- School Improvement including primary and secondary school improvement teams; continuous professional development of school staff; schools ICT support; school governor support service; Virtual School for looked after children and care leavers
- Education inclusion including education welfare team; virtual behaviour service; alternative education; youth services; young people's participation
- Early years and children's centres services including children's centres development; family information service; child care quality, standards and provider support; 0-5yrs Supporting Families Team
- Integrated service for Children with Disabilities and SEN including statutory assessment; educational psychology; sensory impairment; parent partnership; social work service, shortbreaks service (including Brightwell Children's Home)

2.4 Social Care and Youth Inclusion

- Multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH); First Response Team; 5-16yrs Vulnerable Children's Team; Bond Road Family Centre

- Social Work Intervention including core social work teams undertaking casework with children at risk, children in need and children looked after; Court Processes Team
- Permanency, Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers services including fostering support team; adoption team; 14+ settled LAC and care leavers team
- Family and adolescent services including Transforming Families team; Youth Offending Service; My Futures Team
- Quality Assurance and Practice Development including quality assurance of casework; management of Independent Reviewing Officers; professional support to Merton Safeguarding Children Board; professional learning and development

2.5 Commissioning, Strategy and Performance

- Commissioning and Partnerships including CSF commissioning team; joint commissioning strategy for Children’s Trust; partnership development with local community and voluntary sector
- Access to Resources service including LAC/SEN placements procurement; 16+ accommodation; fostering recruitment and assessment; LAC contact service
- Contracts and School Organisation including schools PFI contract; schools catering and cleaning contracts; Service Level Agreements with schools; services for young people and families contracts
- School admissions; school places planning; capital strategy and programme management
- Policy, Planning and Performance including strategic and operational planning; research and information; performance information and management reporting; continuous improvement co-ordination; policy tracking and cascade; Children’s Trust induction and communications

Budget and Staffing

2.6 The 2015 -16 revenue budget for the Department and current staffing levels are as follows:

Division	Net LA Budget	Headcount - FTE
Education	£13.562 million	269.6
Children’s Social Care and Youth Inclusion	£13.040 million	210.1
Commissioning Strategy and Performance	£10.092 million	50.0
Other Services*	£14.2 million	6.2
Totals	£50.894 million	535.9

* Note: Other Services include senior management; asylum seeker costs; schools related expenditure including PFI unitary charge; schools depreciation; schools pension and redundancy costs

* Note: Excludes Indicative Dedicated Schools Grant of £172.781 million

2.7 As part of the council's overall medium term financial strategy, CSF Department is required to deliver significant savings in the current and future years:

Year	Saving Target
2015-16	£0.781 million
2016-17	£2.041 million
2017-18	£1.206 million
2018-19	£2.064 million
Total	£6.092 million

2.8 Savings up to and including the current year have already been agreed by the council and included in budget figures. Proposals from the department to meet future years' savings targets will be published in the autumn budget setting round and reported to CYP Scrutiny panel.

2.9 In addition to the revenue budget, the Department also manages a significant capital budget, largely for the provision of additional school places to meet the council's sufficiency duty. In recent years, the growth in demand for school places has meant that CSF Department has been the major recipient of council capital funding and this is likely to remain the case for a number of years to come. Capital budgets in the council's medium term financial strategy for increasing primary and secondary school places, including for children with SEN are:

	2015-16*	2016-17*	2017-18*	2018-19*
Primary Expansion	£12.031	£4.092	£3.849	£2.575
Secondary Expansion	£0.670	£15.375	£11.500	£13.954
SEN	£2.941	£3.910	£3.000	£0.850
Other	£1.463	£2.707	£2.630	£2.725
Total CSF	£17.105	£26.084	£20.979	£20.104

• £000

2.10 The above figures will be reviewed within the budget setting process in autumn 2015.

Partnerships

2.11 The work of CSF Department is focused on improving outcomes for children and their families in Merton. In nearly all areas of our work, strong collaboration with other agencies is necessary to deliver services which are well co-ordinated and/or integrated - research over many years, supported by public policy, has demonstrated the positive impact on outcomes from multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approaches.

- 2.12 CSF Department has had a strong track record over recent years, marked by successive inspection findings, for building strong partnerships with key agencies including schools; other council departments; NHS Trusts and Public Health; the police service and the local community and voluntary sector.
- 2.13 At a strategic level, ongoing partnership development and accountability is promoted via statutory multi-agency governance groups including Merton's Safeguarding Children Board and Merton's Health and Wellbeing Board. These groups, and Merton's Children's Trust Board, undertake strategic planning and commissioning of local services and multi-agency performance management.
- 2.14 At an operational level, strong local multi-agency partnership practice is seen across many areas of children's services including in the implementation of integrated procedures for the safeguarding of children in the borough; multi-agency delivery of early years services; integrated services for children with SEN and disabilities and in youth offending services. A significant number of support services for children and their families and youth services are currently commissioned from the local community and voluntary sector.
- 2.15 Partners in Merton's Children's Trust have for many years agreed that the production of a multi-agency Children and Young People's Plan enables joint priorities to be set and agencies to be held to account for their contributions. Officers and partner agencies are currently in the process of refreshing the CYPP and the new plan is due to be finalised by autumn 2015.

Public Policy Issues

- 2.16 Following the general election in May 2015, the Queen's Speech outlining the legislative programme for the new parliament contained a number of proposed Bills which will have an impact on the delivery of children's services.
- 2.17 A new Education and Adoption Bill is planned. This will provide new powers to change leadership and speed up the conversion of 'inadequate' and 'coasting' schools to Academy status. It will also enable government to require local authorities in some circumstances to hand over responsibilities for adoption (recruitment; matching and post adoption support) either to another local authority or to an independent agency. The establishment of regional adoption agencies has also been signalled.
- 2.18 A Childcare Bill will be introduced which will increase the provision of free childcare for 3 and 4 yr olds from the current level of 15 hours per week in term-time to 30 hours per week.
- 2.19 Government intends the proposed Policing and Criminal Justice Bill to contain provision designed to strengthen child protection through imposing sanctions on professionals who fail to take action on child abuse where it is their professional responsibility to do so.
- 2.20 Details and timings of these Bills are not yet available. The controversial nature of some of the proposals, as well as funding implications of some,

may result in changes to the Bills as finally drafted. The department will need to keep implications carefully in mind in the coming months.

Transformation

2.21 The significant budget reductions affecting the council since 2010 have been a major challenge. The council is responding to this challenge through its 'transformation' programme designed to re-engineer organisational structures and models of service delivery.

2.22 CSF Department's overall approach to service transformation has been to focus on its statutory duties while maintaining investment in preventive approaches which, when successful, can avoid more costly and intrusive interventions. The department has strengthened its approach to commissioning and progressed its longstanding commitment to partnership working. Some of the major 'transformation' already undertaken by the Department includes:

- Establishing a number of shared/hosted services with other local authorities including for school admissions; school improvement and school governor services
- Transforming universal youth services in Merton through implementing a partnership commissioning model
- Establishing a new Commissioning team and Access to Resources service to improve commissioning practice and the procurement of expensive placements and packages of care
- Re-commissioning early intervention and preventive services and establishing 'enhanced' level casework teams to sharpen the targeting of such services and maximise their impact
- Re-organising social care and youth inclusion services to improve assessment, planning and quality assurance in casework and to improve children's and families' experience of social work practice
- Establishing a locality model for the Department's children's centres enabling efficiencies to be made through sharing of resources and expertise and making more efficient use of infrastructure
- Vacating costly outposted service accommodation enabling both savings and closer co-operation across specific CSF services

2.23 In the year ahead and medium term, further transformation will be required to meet outstanding savings targets; to meet the demands of demographic growth; to achieve the Department's ambitions to further improve outcomes for children and families and also to respond to the ongoing public policy focus on children's services. Key elements of this work will involve refreshing the department's Target Operating Model (TOM) and will include:

- Engaging with the corporate flexible working agenda to enable further economies in the use of accommodation and increase efficiency of staffing resources. During 2014-15, some departmental services implemented flexible working pilots but it is now planned for the whole

department to adopt smaller office accommodation 'footprint' and maximise the use of mobile technology from November 2015.

- Examining ways of changing customer contact 'channels' to achieve economies. Although the majority of CSF services will continue to require 'face to face' contact between service users and staff, as part of the ongoing corporate strategy, the department will need to explore the potential for other, more economical, approaches to customer contact.
- Making better use of ICT to support the above strategies but also to promote improved integration of CSF services. Following procurement of a new ICT system (Mosaic) to replace the existing Carefirst system, the department has been preparing for the system's 'go-live' date in Autumn 2015. The implementation of the new system will enable improved co-ordination of casework across social care and education functions
- Driving further economies and efficiencies through progressing the joint commissioning agenda in particular with Merton's Clinical Commissioning Group and with Public Health services now located within the council. CSF officers with colleagues in Public Health and Merton CCG are currently re-commissioning community health services for children including health visiting; school nursing; specialist nursing for Looked After Children and Merton's MASH; and therapies for children. This recommissioning will promote further service integration and strengthen health input into work with vulnerable children and those requiring safeguarding.

Service Specific Challenges

- 2.24 In addition to the department's overall approach to further transformation noted above, there are a number of key challenges facing specific service areas within the department:
- 2.25 As a result of a general increase in expectations on children's services and the 'raising of the bar' demonstrated by the current Ofsted inspection regime, the department needs to maintain a relentless focus on the quality of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. In readiness for inspection, we continue to maintain an up to date self-evaluation; suite of documents and data, supported by regular staff and partner briefings.
- 2.26 As part of the department's continuous improvement agenda, we will continue to review key service strategies including:
- timeliness of court proceedings and permanency for children looked after;
 - overall sufficiency of placements, placement stability and use of out of borough placements for our LAC and care leavers;
 - our response to missing children and those missing education;
 - our work on the child sexual exploitation; violence against women and girls and Prevent agendas;
- 2.27 We will continue to adopt evidence based models of practice where they support improved outcomes for children – for example, following piloting of the strengths-based 'Signs of Safety' approach to engaging families in child

- protection, we intend extending its use in broader casework with children in need and their families. We will complete implementation of the action plan following the multi-agency review of the Child J case and will also need to further develop auditing and quality assurance of casework both in the department and across partner agencies.
- 2.28 The Department and NHS colleagues will continue the development work to implement duties arising from the Children and Families Act 2014 in respect of children with special educational needs and disabilities. This will particularly involve embedding NHS staff in the integrated service for children with SEN and disabilities and developing further the integrated processes involved in implementing new Education, Health and Care Plans for children previously subject to SEN statements.
- 2.29 In the area of Early Years services, further increase in provision for vulnerable 2 yr olds will be needed to meet government targets. Work will continue to increase alignment and integration of CSF, Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health commissioning of under 5's services.
- 2.30 School improvement capacity will continue to be more sharply targeted to schools requiring improvement and on narrowing gaps in progress and attainment for certain pupil groups. The response to individual schools will need to be proportionate and appropriate to their needs including local authority intervention where necessary and the development of partnerships and federations across schools and academies.
- 2.31 Having focused to date on implementing a major expansion strategy for primary school places in the borough, officers are continuing to develop and implement strategy for a significant expansion of Merton's secondary schools sector. Current projections indicate the need for between 10 and 14 additional forms of entry into secondary schools by 2018-19. Following the pre-opening approval of a 6fe Harris Federation school in the Wimbledon area, officers are currently supporting the EFA in seeking a suitable site. It is currently planned that a report on options will be provided to Cabinet in October 2015 and available for pre-decision scrutiny. The remaining forms of entry required will be provided through expansion of existing schools – Harris Morden, Harris Merton and St Mark's Academy.
- 2.32 In the SEN sector, additional capacity has been provided in recent years through the development of the secondary 'centre of excellence' at Perseid school, the expansion of Cricket Green school and through a number of new Additionally Resourced Provision (ARPs) in our mainstream schools. In the year ahead we will be implementing plans to add further primary places capacity at Perseid, further expansion and re-modelling of Cricket Green, and two new ARPs for pupils with autism. Officers are also currently looking at the short and longer term needs of Melbury college.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. N/A

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. N/A

- 5** **TIMETABLE**
- 5.1. N/A
- 6** **FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**
- 6.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report
- 7** **LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report
- 8** **HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report
- 9** **CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report
- 10** **RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 10.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report
- 11** **APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

- 12** **BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 12.1. N/A

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Committee:	Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date:	1 July 2015
Agenda item:	6
Wards:	All
Subject:	Agreeing the Work Programme 2015/16
Lead officer:	Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer
Lead member:	Cllr Katy Neep, Chair of Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Contact officer:	Rebecca Redman: Rebecca.redman@merton.gov.uk 020 8545 4035

Recommendations:

That Members of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

- i) Consider their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year, and agree issues and items for inclusion;
 - ii) Consider the methods by which the Panel would like to scrutinise the issues/items agreed;
 - iii) Identify a Member to lead on performance monitoring on behalf of the Panel;
 - iv) Identify a Member to lead on budget scrutiny on behalf of the Panel;
 - v) Agree on an issue for scrutiny by a task group and appoint members to the Task Group; and
 - vi) Consider the appointment of co-opted members for the 2015/16 municipal year, to sit on the Panel and/or on the Task Group
-

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to support and advise Members to determine their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year.
- 1.2 This report sets out the following information to assist Members in this process:
 - a) The principles of effective scrutiny and the criteria against which work programme items should be considered;
 - b) The roles and responsibilities of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
 - c) The findings of the consultation programme undertaken with Members, senior management, voluntary and community sector organisations, partner organisations and Merton residents;
 - d) A summary of the discussion by councillors and co-opted members at a topic selection workshop held on 19th May 2015; and
 - e) Support available to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to determine, develop and deliver its 2015/16 work programme.

2. **Determining the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Annual Work Programme for 2015/16**

- 2.1 Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of Merton.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have specific roles relating to budget and business plan scrutiny and to performance monitoring that should automatically be built into their work programmes. Members are recommended to appoint a Performance Monitoring Lead Member and a Business Plan/Budget Scrutiny Lead Member on behalf of the Panel.
- 2.3 Overview and Scrutiny Panels may choose to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work. Any call-in work will be programmed into the provisional call-in dates identified in the corporate calendar as required.
- 2.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel has six scheduled meetings over the course of 2015/16, including the scheduled budget meeting (representing a maximum of 18 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 3 hours per meeting). Members will therefore need to be selective in their choice of items for the Panel's work programme.

Principles guiding the development of the scrutiny work programme

- 2.5 The following key principles of effective scrutiny should be considered when the Panel determines its work programme:
- **Be selective** – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve.
 - **Add value with scrutiny** – Items should have the potential to 'add value' to the work of the Authority and its partners. If it is not clear what the intended outcomes or impact of a review will be then Members should consider if there are issues of a higher priority that could be scrutinised instead.
 - **Be ambitious** – Panels should not shy away from carrying out scrutiny of issues that are of local concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. the Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental well being of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.
 - **Be flexible** – Members are reminded that there needs to be a degree of flexibility in their work programme to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration/comment during the year and accommodate any developmental or additional work that falls within the remit of this Panel. For example Members may wish to questions officers regarding the declining performance of a service or may choose to respond to a Councillor Call for Action request.

- **Think about the timing** – Members should ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, their findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. Members should seek to avoid duplication of work carried out elsewhere.

Models for carrying out scrutiny work

2.6 There are a number of means by which the Overview and Scrutiny Panel can deliver its work programme. Members should consider which of the following options is most appropriate to undertake each of the items they have selected for inclusion in the work programme:

Item on a scheduled meeting agenda/ hold an extra meeting of the Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Panel can agree to add an item to the agenda for a meeting and call Cabinet Members/ Officers/Partners to the meeting to respond to questioning on the matter ■ A variation of this model could be a single meeting to scrutinise an issue that, although important, does not merit setting up a 'task-and-finish' group.
Task Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A small group of Members meet outside of the scheduled meetings to gather information on the subject area, visit other local authorities/sites, and speak to service users, expert witnesses and/or Officers/Partners. The Task Group can then report back to the wider Panel with their findings to endorse the submission of their recommendations to Cabinet/Council ■ This is the method usually used to carry out policy reviews
Panel asks for a report then takes a view on action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Panel may need more information before taking a view on whether to carry out a full review so asks for a report to give them more details.
Meeting with service officer/partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Member (or small group of Members) has a meeting with service officers/partners to discuss concerns or raise queries. ■ If the Member is not satisfied with the outcome or believes that the Panel needs to have a more in-depth review of the matter s/he takes it back to the Panel for discussion
Individual Members doing some initial research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A member with a specific concern carries out some research to gain more information on the matter and then brings his/her findings to the attention of the panel if s/he still has concerns.

2.7 Note that, in order to keep agendas to a manageable size, and to focus on items to which the Panel can make a direct contribution, the Panel may choose to take some "information only" items outside of Panel meetings, for example by email.

Support available for scrutiny activity

2.8 The Overview and Scrutiny function has dedicated scrutiny support from the Scrutiny Team to:

- Work with the Chair and Vice-Chair of each Panel to manage the work programme and coordinate the agenda, including advising officers and partner organisations on information required and guidance for witnesses submitting evidence to a scrutiny review;

- Provide support for scrutiny Members through briefing papers, background material, training and development seminars, etc;
 - Facilitate and manage the work of the task and finish groups, including research, arranging site visits, inviting and briefing witnesses and drafting review reports on behalf on the Chair; and
 - Promote the scrutiny function across the organisation and externally.
- 2.9 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel will need to assess how they can best utilise the available support from the Scrutiny Team to deliver their work programme for 2015/16.
- 2.10 The Panel is also invited to comment upon any briefing, training and support that are needed to enable Members to undertake their work programme. Members may also wish to undertake visits to local services in order to familiarise themselves with these. Such visits should be made with the knowledge of the Chair and will be organised by the Scrutiny Team.
- 2.11 The Scrutiny Team will take the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's views on board in developing the support that is provided.
- 3. Selecting items for the Scrutiny Work Programme**
- 3.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Panel sets its own agenda within the scope of its terms of reference, with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission taking a coordinating role to ensure that any gaps or overlap in the scrutiny work programme are dealt with in a joined-up way.
- The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel has the following remit: -
- Children's social care (including child protection)
 - Education (including school standards, special educational needs, the extended schools programme, and the Healthy Schools Initiative)
 - Youth services and youth engagement, including the Youth Parliament, young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), and the Connexions Service
 - Youth Offending
 - Children's Centre's
 - The Children's Trust
- 3.1 The Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for issues to scrutinise either as Panel agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions have been received from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the police, NHS Sutton and Merton and Merton Voluntary Service Council. Other issues of public concern have been identified through the Annual Residents Survey. Issues that have been raised repeatedly at Community Forums have also been included. The Scrutiny Team has consulted departmental management teams in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the panel could contribute to the policymaking process.

- 3.2 A description of all the suggestions received is set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The councillors who attended a “topic selection” workshop on 19th May 2015 discussed these suggestions.
- 3.4 The suggestions were prioritised at the workshop using the criteria listed in Appendix 3. In particular, participants sought to identify issues that related to the Council’s strategic priorities or where there was underperformance; issues of public interest or concern and issues where scrutiny could make a difference.
- 3.5 A note of the workshop discussion relating to the remit of this Panel is set out in Appendix 4.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 contains a draft work programme that has been drawn up, taking the workshop discussion into account, for the consideration of the Panel. The Panel is requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.
- 3.7 The Panel may also wish to select items for scrutiny from the presentations made by Directors and Cabinet Members (at the Panel’s meeting on 1 July 2015) or based on other public priorities of which Members are aware through their ward work.
- 3.8 Items on the Cabinet’s forward plan that relate to the remit of this Panel are listed in Appendix 5. The Panel may wish to include one or more of these issues in its work programme.

4. Task group reviews

- 4.1 The Panel is invited to select an issue for in-depth scrutiny and establish a task group.

5. Co-option to the Panel membership

- 5.1 Scrutiny Panels can consider whether to appoint non-statutory (non-voting) co-optees to the membership, in order to add to the specific knowledge, expertise and understanding of key issues to aid the scrutiny function. Panels may also wish to consider whether it may be helpful to co-opt people from “seldom heard” groups.

6. Public involvement

- 6.1 Scrutiny provides extensive opportunities for community involvement and democratic accountability. Engagement with service users and with the general public can help to improve the quality, legitimacy and long-term viability of recommendations made by the Panel.
- 6.2 Service users and the public bring different perspectives, experiences and solutions to scrutiny, particularly if “seldom heard” groups such as young people, disabled people, people from black and minority ethnic communities and people from lesbian gay bisexual and transgender communities are included.
- 6.3 This engagement will help the Panel to understand the service user’s perspective on individual services and on co-ordination between services. Views can be heard directly through written or oral evidence or heard indirectly through making use of existing sources of information, for example from surveys. From time to time the Panel/Task Group may wish to carry out engagement activities of its own, by holding discussion groups or sending questionnaires on particular issues of interest.
- 6.4 Much can be learnt from best practice already developed in Merton and elsewhere. The Scrutiny Team will be able to help the Panel to identify the range of stakeholders from which it may wish to seek views and the best way to engage with particular groups within the community.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1 A number of issues highlighted in this report recommend that Panel members take into account certain considerations when setting their work programme for 2015/16. Overview and Scrutiny Panels are free to determine their work programme as they see fit. Members may therefore choose to identify a work programme that does not take into account these considerations. This is not advised as ignoring the issues raised would either conflict with good practice and/or principles endorsed in the Review of Scrutiny, or could mean that adequate support would not be available to carry out the work identified for the work programme.

7.2 A range of suggestions from the public, partner organisations, officers and Members for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme are set out in the appendices, together with a suggested approach to determining which to include in the work programme. Members may choose to respond differently. However, in doing so, Members should be clear about expected outcomes, how realistic expectations are and the impact of their decision on their wider work programme and support time. Members are also free to incorporate into their work programme any other issues they think should be subject to scrutiny over the course of the year, with the same considerations in mind.

8. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

8.1 To assist Members to identify priorities for inclusion in the Panel's scrutiny work programme, the Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for possible scrutiny reviews from a number of sources:

- a. Members of the public have been approached using the following tools: articles in the local press, My Merton and Merton Together, request for suggestions from all councillors and co-opted members, letter to partner organisations and to range of local voluntary and community organisations, including those involved in the Inter-Faith Forum and members of the Lesbian Gay and Transgender Forum;
- b. Councillors have put forward suggestions by raising issues in scrutiny meetings, via the Overview and Scrutiny Member Survey 2015, and by contacting the Scrutiny Team directly; and
- c. Officers have been consulted via discussion at departmental management team meetings.

9. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the financial, resource and property issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific financial, resource and property implications.

10. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Overview and scrutiny bodies operate within the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

10.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the legal and statutory issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific legal and statutory implications.

- 11. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 11.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement. The reviews will involve work to consult local residents, community and voluntary sector groups, businesses, hard to reach groups, partner organisations etc and the views gathered will be fed into the review.
- 11.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the human rights, equalities and community cohesion issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications.
- 12. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 12.1 In line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police and Justice Act 2006, all Council departments must have regard to the impact of services on crime, including anti-social behaviour and drugs. Scrutiny review reports will therefore highlight any implications arising from the reviews relating to crime and disorder as necessary.
- 13. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 13.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the risk management and health and safety issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific risk management and health and safety implications.
- 14. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
- 14.1 Appendix 1 – Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel draft work programme 2015/16
- 14.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of topics relating to this Overview & Scrutiny Panel’s remit suggested for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme
- 14.3 Appendix 3 – Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 19th May 2015
- 14.4 Appendix 4 – Notes from discussion of topics relating to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Scrutiny Topic Selection Workshop 19th May 2015
- 14.5 Appendix 5 – Extract from Forward Plan
- 15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 15.1 None

Draft Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2015/16

Meeting Date –July 2015

Theme: Setting the work programme			
Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member Topic Lead	External Witnesses/Representatives in attendance
Elected Member & Departmental Portfolio Priorities	Outlining the portfolio priorities of Cabinet Members and officers' service priorities for 2015-16 to inform discussion of the Panels work programme for 2015/16	Paul Ballatt/Yvette Stanley Cabinet Members – Cllrs Whelton and Martin	
Agreeing the Work Programme 2015/16	To agree work programme and consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Panel will deliver its work programme throughout the year with a thematic approach. • appointing topic leads • how to get the best out of performance monitoring, • how shorter task groups will operate, opportunities for pre decision scrutiny • on-going monitoring of task group recommendations • Co-opted member positions. 	Cllr Katy Neep/Rebecca Redman	
Draft Final Report – Online Strategies in Schools Task Group	Panel to endorse report and recommendations for submission to Cabinet for consideration.	Rebecca Redman	
Performance Report	Discussion of proposed 'basket' of performance indicators for on-going monitoring	Paul Ballatt	

Meeting Date –October 2015

Theme: Safeguarding/Corporate Parenting			
Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible	External

		officer/Member Topic Lead	Witnesses/Re presentatives in attendance
CSF Budget Proposals (Round 1)			
Looked after children and corporate parenting report	This is a standard item looking at services across the borough to support looked after children, pre and post-adoption.	Paul Ballatt	Invite partners.
Annual report and business plan of Merton's Safeguarding Children Board	To enable the Panel to consider the work and performance of Merton's Safeguarding Children Board	Paul Ballatt	Invite Chair of MSCB and partner agencies.
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting for information.	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme • To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	

Meeting date – November 2015

Theme: Improving Health Outcomes for children and young people

Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member	External Witnesses/Repres entatives in

		Topic Lead	attendance
Executive Response and Action Plan – Online Strategies in Schools Task Group	To provide a response from Cabinet outlining which recommendations from the review have been agreed and how they will be implemented going forward.	TBD	
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	
Task Group - Transfer of public health functions to the local authority and broader engagement of health in provision of services for children and young people.	<p>Task Group to prepare for the meeting by examining data on health outcomes to identify key lines of enquiry and challenging questions that could be put to health professionals at the Panel meeting.</p> <p>Key Lines of enquiry: TBD</p> <p>Focus on improving health outcomes for children and on 4 priorities of the health and achievement plan.</p>	TBD	<p>Witnesses/partners to be identified.</p> <p>Public Health – Kate/Julia</p> <p>CCG</p> <p>Head of Community Health Services provision</p>

Meeting Date – January 2016

Theme: Budget Scrutiny

Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member	External Witnesses/Repres
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		Topic Lead	Representatives in attendance
CSF Budget Proposals (Round 2)	To enable the Panel to consider the councils budget and business plan proposals and forward any comments/recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny commission to compile a scrutiny response on the Budget/Business Plan to Cabinet. Focus on specific budget areas as an option and look in detail at alternative savings that may be proposed.		
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting for information.	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	

Meeting Date –February 2016

Theme: School Standards			
Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member Topic Lead	External Witnesses/ Representatives in attendance
Briefing- School Standards Committee	To gain a more in depth understanding of the role and work of this Committee and to seek the view of the Chair of the School Standards Committee on areas of concern and how scrutiny might support this work.	Cllr Dennis Pearce/Rebecca Redman Jane McSherry to be included Include some pieces	

		on school admissions	
School Standards	Annual Report on Attainment and Progress of Pupils in Merton Schools for information.	Paul Ballatt	
Educational attainment for children with complex needs, SEN and disabilities	To consider the educational attainment of disabled children and young people.		
Progress Update - School leadership succession planning task group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the Panel to performance manage delivery of the recommendations resulting from its task group review. Topic leads should be appointed to champion this work through a follow up meeting with lead officers mid-year 	Head of Education/Rebecca Redman	
Progress Update – online strategies in schools task group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the Panel to performance manage delivery of the recommendations resulting from its task group review. Topic leads should be appointed to champion this work through a follow up meeting with lead officers mid-year 		
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme 	Rebecca Redman	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 		
Task Group - Educational attainment for disabled children and young people	<p>To establish a task group to examine the data in more detail with a view to identifying issues for potential scrutiny in 2016/17</p> <p>Key Lines of enquiry: TBD</p>	TBD	

Meeting Date – March 2016

Theme: Corporate parenting incorporating looked after children and transition			
Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member Topic Lead	External Witnesses/Representatives in attendance
Task Group – Housing and Health offer for care leavers and looked after children to prevent homelessness and unemployment	<p>Cross cutting review to be undertaken over 2/3 meetings to consider the housing, health, education and employment offer for older looked after children and care leavers.</p> <p>Key Lines of enquiry: TBD</p> <p>The Task Group should report back to the Panel with a final report and recommendations at its March 2016 meeting.</p>	TBD	
Looked after children and corporate parenting report	<p>This is a standard item looking at services across the borough to support looked after children, pre and post-adoption.</p>	Paul Ballatt	Invite partners.
Recruitment of foster carers and other placements for looked after children	<p>Report on the recruitment of foster carers with a view to identifying any areas for further scrutiny/or make any recommendations to Cabinet or partners.</p>		
Update Report	<p>Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting</p>	Paul Angeli	

Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme • To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	
Topic Suggestions	Panel to raise any topics for the 2016/17 work programme to consider at the Topic Workshops in May/June 2016	Rebecca Redman	
Final Report of Task Group looking at Transfer of public health functions to the local authority for children and young people.	Draft Final Report of the task group and recommendations for agreement to forward to Cabinet (and partners where appropriate) for consideration	TBD	
Final Report of Housing and Health offer for care leavers Task Group	Draft Final Report of the task group and recommendations for agreement to forward to Cabinet (and partners where appropriate) for consideration	TBD	

Description of topic suggestions received in relation to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The following topics were suggested by residents, Members and officers, for consideration by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, for their 2015/16 work programme.

Annual Residents Survey 2014:

The council's Annual Residents Survey undertaken in 2014 found the following, which relates to the remit of this Panel and may be of interest in prioritising the issues the Panel wishes to scrutinise:

- Concern over the standard of education is ninth priority for the borough overall, but concern about this is significantly higher than average for those aged 34-49, and those with children;
- 12% of residents stressed concerns that not enough was being done for young people; and
- There has been an increase in satisfaction with nursery and primary education, both of which are ahead of the London average

1. Topic: School Run and Travel Plans

Who suggested it?

Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage proposed that the adequacy of measures to address problems caused by the school run should be reviewed. They also feel that school travel plans are poorly prepared and rarely implemented and need to be more robust.

Summary of the issue

The overall aim of School Travel Plans is to reduce car use for school journeys or keep it at low levels in schools expecting higher numbers of pupils over coming years. Active travel campaigns and STAR (School Travel Accredited and Recognised) accreditation work are undertaken to reduce car use and increase walking, cycling and using public transport. STAR (School Travel Accredited and Recognised) is a strategic framework that encourages and rewards schools to adopt safer and active travel behaviour. The STAR accreditation recognises and rewards schools at one of 3 levels; sustainable, higher and outstanding. Participation in STAR is also an important building block towards achieving other accreditations and standards such as Healthy Schools, Eco –Schools and Sustainable Schools. Each school in Merton has a School Travel Plan Champion. They are responsible for producing their school's travel plan in conjunction with the borough's School Travel Plan Advisor.

The aims of the service are to:

- Significantly reduce the number of car trips on journeys to and from school;
- Remove the barriers, both perceived and actual, to walking, cycling and using public transport for school journeys;
- Increase the number of young people and adults choosing 'active travel' options over that of the car; and
- Increase understanding among whole school communities of the travel options that are available to them.

A School Travel Plan can result in:

- Less cars and congestion around the school site;
- Healthier and more active pupils, families and staff;
- Less pollution around the school;
- Safer walking and cycling routes around the school; and
- Improved school grounds with provision for bicycle storage.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel could request a briefing report on the number of school travel plans which are meeting STAR accreditation and operating effectively to make recommendations, as appropriate, to Cabinet and schools on any improvements the Panel feel need to be made.

2. Topic: Housing and health offer for care leavers and looked after children to prevent homelessness and unemployment

Who suggested the topic?

Officers within the CSF department; Chair of the Panel.

Summary of the issue

Merton's services for looked after children form part of a comprehensive continuum of support for children and young people who may be facing difficulties at home. These range from family support to intensive community interventions or seeking permanence through permanent alternative care. In taking this approach the council remain committed to ensuring that the right children enter care and that their experiences are positive and their opportunities many. Merton's looked after children population in the last ten years has ranged from a low of 96 (2006/7) to 150 (2013/14). This increase has been reviewed and audited to establish what is behind this trend. There are a number of reasons for this increase including increased national awareness of children's safeguarding, an increasing birth rate, more general demographic changes and a change in legislation in relation to children coming into care through remand placements. Merton has a higher than average profile of looked after children at the older age range.

The Children Act 1989 and the Leaving Care Act 2000 place clear statutory duties upon the Council to protect children from suffering significant harm and to provide continued financial and transition support to care leavers aged up to 21 (or 25 if in full time education). The duty to promote the educational achievement of a looked-after child extends to looked after young people aged 16 or 17 preparing to leave care. These are referred to in the Children Act 1989 as 'eligible children'. In 2014 Merton launched a Care Leavers Strategy.

Merton has maintained and strengthened services for care leavers to support their successful transition to adulthood. The outcomes achieved by care leavers often depend on the age they become looked after, however, Merton's ambitions for all looked after children and care leavers remain high. In addition to a targeted Care Leavers Strategy, the council also formalised its commitment to all Care Leaver's by signing up to a co-developed Charter in February 2013.

Children also often enter the care system with a poorer level of physical and mental health than their peers, and their longer-term outcomes remain worse. Nationally two thirds of looked after children have at least one physical health complaint, and nearly half have a mental health disorder. Health outcomes for Merton looked after children are better than the national average, these are supported by good support from NHS Trusts with good levels of routine health surveillance and access to specialist provision where necessary e.g. CAMHs.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel may wish to undertake a task group review that would be cross cutting and review the offer for care leavers in terms of employment, education, health and housing. This would enable the Panel to engage staff internally across directorates and also external partners. Should the Panel choose to undertake a task group review then terms of reference can be drawn up to agree at the Panels July 2015 meeting when they set their work programme to agree.

3. Topic: Recruitment of Foster Carers and other placements for looked after children

Who suggested it?

Officers within the Children, Schools and Families Department suggested that the Panel may wish to scrutinise the way in which the council can meet targets for recruitment of Foster Carers and other placements for looked after children.

Summary of the issue

Local authorities provide a range of placement options to ensure that the right placement is available for every child. For many children returning home to their family after a period in care will be the route to permanence and stability. For others, returning to other family or friends under a formal or informal arrangement will be the setting they need in order to thrive. Remaining in care with a long term foster family or finding a new permanent family through adoption, special guardianship or residence orders are other routes to permanence.

While it is evident that achieving timely permanence is desirable, nationally annual data returns show that a small but substantial number of children still experience multiple placements each year. All placements for looked after children are made by the councils dedicated Access to Resources (ART) service. Merton's placement stability performance of 12.7% (3 moves or more) is in line with the national average of 11% (2013/14). Similarly placement length performance (2 years or more) on a three year rolling average is 66% this is also in line 68% (2011 – 2013). While our placement stability is broadly in line with national averages, the council continue to review the children who have undergone 2 and 3 moves or more during the year to look at options for more permanent placements.

Fostering

Fostering is a way of providing a family life to a child unable to live at home. The first port of call for children who need fostering in Merton is Merton Fostering service. Only children that we cannot find homes for with Merton's own carers are placed via other fostering agencies. Merton's foster carers are given priority and are always approached first when Merton children who need to be fostered. Children need foster care for lots of different reasons. Their parents may be ill, in prison, or having relationship problems. Some children will have been neglected or abused.

Merton's Fostering agency was rated Good by Ofsted in November 2012. Inspectors noted that "Children and young people are able to make good progress in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their care and effective arrangements are in place to support this. Children and young people have positive views about their care and their relationships with foster carers".

Merton has recently confirmed it's new fast track process for existing foster carers wishing to transfer to the London Borough of Merton. The council are receiving a number of enquiries from

foster carers who are already fostering with another local authority or an independent fostering agency wishing to transfer to Merton.

However, in some cases adoption is the best option – particularly for younger children, but also for some older children. Adoption gives vulnerable children, including many with complex needs and a history of ill-treatment, the greatest possible stability, in a permanent home with a permanent family.

Adoption

The role and functions of Merton's adoption agency are set out in statutory regulations. In summary the main purpose and functions of the Adoption and Permanence Team are:

- To family find for 'looked after' children for whom the Permanence Plan is long term fostering;
- To work with the children's social work teams to match looked after children with suitable permanent families and develop appropriate support plans;
- To recruit, assess, prepare and support domestic adopters who will match the needs of the children awaiting adoption;
- To provide assessments of inter-country adopters living in Merton (Merton have a service level agreement with the Inter Country Adoption Centre);
- To provide court reports in adoption proceedings, both for non-agency proceedings (e.g. step-parent) and for children 'looked after' by the Local Authority;
- To provide advice on adoption and permanence issues to other professionals;
- To provide a post adoption support service;
- To provide a support and counselling service for birth parents including parents relinquishing children for adoption;
- To complete viability assessments of permanent carers and special guardianship agreements in court proceedings and the associated support plans.

The performance of these services is reviewed monthly at CSF DMT and in depth reports on the specific regulatory requirements go to DMT on a quarterly basis. The services performance indicators are also reviewed by the Merton Safeguarding Children's Board and our Corporate Parenting Advisory Group, in line with Ofsted's governance requirements on the service. The agency's adoption service was inspected in January 2013. Ofsted found that overall the adoption agency provides an effective service to all affected by adoption and the overall outcome was Good.

The Panel have previously considered the outcomes of the inspection and continue to receive regular updates on this service, as well as performance data, as part of their regular performance monitoring report.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is suggested that the Panel undertake a review of the processes for the recruitment and retention of foster carers and those wishing to adopt, and of performance and challenges in this area, to determine if they wish to make recommendations to the relevant bodies for improvement, to support the council to provide stable and long term placements for looked after children.

4. Topic: Looked after children and Corporate Parenting Report Who suggested it?

This is a standard item that the Panel considers each year by looking at services across the borough to support looked after children (LAC), pre and post-adoption.

Summary of the issue

The Council's duties as corporate parent to looked after children encompass the education, health and welfare of LAC, what they do in their leisure times, how they celebrate their culture and how they receive praise and encouragement for their achievements.

Merton is focused on ensuring that children remain in care when it is right for the child or young person. Considering alternative options to care, such as through commissioned voluntary sector support and other options for permanent substitute care, are part of these duties, since these alternative methods may be better for the child than becoming Looked After.

When becoming Looked After is the best decision for the child, Merton's Strategy for LAC is focused around the needs of the child, with seven main priorities.

1. Improve placement stability by developing multi-agency support packages around care placements.
2. Ensure the most effective role and function of the Adoption and Fostering Panels in order to secure timely permanence and appropriate placement for children and young people.
3. Increase capacity and local placement choice for older children and teenagers with challenging behaviour.
4. Consolidate progress and continue to improve the timeliness of permanency for LAC including adoption and rehabilitation.
5. Increase access to good quality education in a timely way for LAC with special educational needs, including those with challenging behaviour, which may not have a statement, and those who have been out of school for some time prior to entering care.
6. Improve access to and take up of positive community activities and opportunities for LAC and Care leavers.
7. Continue to improve opportunities for care leavers to access and sustain higher and further education, employment or training.

The Government has been clear in its drive to improve services and outcomes for Looked after children in all types of permanence care, with revised statutory guidance that clearly set out the need to address the problem of delays within the adoption system. Merton shares this ambition and commitment which was endorsed in a motion to full Council. The agency's adoption service was inspected in January 2013. Ofsted found that overall the adoption agency provides an effective service to all affected by adoption and the overall outcome was Good. In order to

ensure that adopters are progressed through the assessment process in a timely manner changes have been made to the structure of the assessment.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is suggested that the Panel receive the annual Corporate Parenting Report to undertake performance monitoring of the key services the council provides to looked after children and to identify any areas of concern. The Panel may wish to request any follow up items on how the council will address any issues identified in the annual report and what remedial action will be taken and how associated strategies for service delivery and partnership working will be developed.

The Panel could continue to receive updates on progress on the Adoption and Fostering Inspection action plans.

In order to support elected members to fulfil corporate parenting responsibilities (a key expectation of regulators), the Panel could scrutinise the council's approach to achieving positive outcomes for LAC.

5. Topic: Safeguarding

Who suggested it?

This has been a standard item on the Panels work programme each year.

Summary of the issue

Safeguarding children is one of the key functions of the CSF Department and its partner agencies. Regulators expect appropriate political engagement in and scrutiny of how effectively the council is fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities.

The Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) is the multi-agency forum for agreeing how local child protection services are planned, delivered and monitored in the borough.

The Scrutiny Panel has received a series of reports on Merton's Children's Social Care, including safeguarding and looked after children, outlining the service's challenges in the context of rising demographics and the changes required in response to national and local drivers for change, such as: revised and more onerous inspection regimes; new statutory duties; and responding to the initial Munro findings over the past few years. The Panel also regularly monitors safeguarding and LAC indicators as part of its routine work.

Merton has had a longstanding approach to preventing children becoming looked after, involving purposeful work with families to build capacity and resilience. Merton's Children and Young Peoples Well Being Model is well used and understood by partners, however, overall services are under severe volume pressures and this has, at peak times, impacted on timeliness and caseloads.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is proposed that the panel receive an annual report on safeguarding children issues. This could be in the form of the annual report and business plan of Merton's Safeguarding Children Board and partner agencies could be invited/called to contribute/address issues raised by panel members.

6. Topic: Transfer of public health functions to the Local Authority and broader engagement of health in provision of services for children and young people

Who suggested it?

Officers suggested that the Panel should look at the public health agenda and broader community health services in relation to children's services. This could include a review of services related to early years, children's centres, breastfeeding rates, childhood immunisations, healthy weight services and school nurses and how the council is delivering public health functions transferred to the authority for children and young people.

Summary of the issue

The public health functions that the NHS was previously responsible for have been transferred to local authorities. A public health team has been established and a Director of Public Health appointed. The council now work more closely in partnership with the support of Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, which works with local health practitioners including GPs and nurses.

The Children's Trust has sought to retain a sharp focus on improving children's health outcomes during a period of major transition for health services locally and nationally. Current key commissioners and providers of children's community health services continue to be engaged in the Children's Trust arrangements and the newly established Clinical Commissioning Group is now represented.

As well as chairing the Children's Trust Board, the Director of Children, Schools and Families also has membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board, as does the Lead Member for Children's Services. This ensures that children's issues and interests are being represented appropriately.

In Merton priorities are set out in the Children and Young People's Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Strategy includes a commitment to further strengthening the existing partnership approach to preventative strategies for health and wellbeing, across all universal services and settings, and ensuring the earliest identification of health and wellbeing issues to better target services to those families that are in greatest need of support, particularly for residents living in the east of the borough.

The section of the Health and Wellbeing strategy devoted to children and young people has key themes such as: to help infants have the best start in life; support the personal, social and mental wellbeing of children and young people; promote healthy weight in children and help young people make healthy life choices. The rate of breastfeeding in Merton continues to improve ahead of target and is above the national average. Immunisation rates remain below national averages and below targets set. Health visiting services are achieving a 70% take up of the re-established universal 2 year old development checks which are being undertaken in Merton's children's centres. Levels of obesity are below national average at reception age but slightly above at year 6. Merton continues to perform relatively well in reducing the rate of teenage pregnancy which is below national average although more recent data indicates a slight rise in incidence.

CAMHs services continue to see young people in tier three settings in a timely manner and there has been strong partnership delivery of the targeted mental health in schools initiative and the nationally recognised multi-systemic therapy pilot.

The Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013-16 sets out priorities for CYP across 4 domains: wider determinants, health improvement, health protection and healthcare public health. 19 of the 66 indicators have a primary focus on maternity, children and young people and a further 21 include the younger age group alongside adults.

The Children's Trust Board have a set of high level performance indicators for prevention and early intervention and the Merton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been refreshed to ensure that it fully addresses the needs of children and young people.

The Panel have received a report on progress towards key public health outcomes for children and young people as part of their 2013/14 and 2014/15 work programmes and considered opportunities for future partnership work. The Panel have also considered the current context and priorities for public health prevention and early intervention.

The council are also in the process of re-commissioning broader community health services for children and there is a possibility that a new provider may be procured.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is proposed that the Panel receive a briefing from the Director of Public Health on public health interventions for children and young people to consider priority services and performance in these areas. The Panel may choose to undertake further, more in-depth scrutiny following this briefing.

It is also suggested that the Panel receive a performance report from the public health team covering work undertaken to date and planned work streams in relation to preventative health services for children and young people.

7. Topic: School Leadership Succession Planning Task Group

Who suggested it?

Councillors on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel requested that the Panel should maintain an overview of the delivery of the action plan resulting from the Panels task group review of school leadership succession planning.

Summary of the issue

Members established a task group to look at school leadership succession planning, in particular, with a focus on the recruitment, retention and development of BAME and female head teachers. The Panel concluded their review in June 2014 and have received updates on the delivery of the agreed recommendations from officers.

How could scrutiny look at it?

Scrutiny could request regular updates on delivery of the action plan and recommendations resulting from the review until all recommendations have been successfully implemented.

8. Topic: Educational attainment for disabled children and young people

Merton Centre for Independent Living proposed that the Panel look at how young people with disabilities are being supported to achieve academically.

Summary of the issue

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines which children are disabled. 'A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities'

(Section 1(1), Disability Discrimination Act 1995). The Code of Practice (schools), published by the Disability Rights Commission under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, states that:

'...the definition of children with learning difficulties includes children with a disability where any special educational provision needs to be made. It means that all children with a disability have special educational needs if they have any difficulty in accessing education and if they need any special educational provision to be made for them, that is, anything that is additional to or different from what is normally available in schools in the area'. (Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Part 4:Code of Practice for Schools 3.17).

In line with SEN Code of Practice and the Education Act 1996, Merton aims that the special educational needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings unless there are convincing reasons otherwise. Children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education.

Following the implementation of the SEN and Disability Act 2001, it is unlawful for schools, without justification to treat a child with a disability less favourably than other children. This includes discriminating against disabled children in relation to admission arrangements, education and associated services and exclusions. Schools also have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils or prospective pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

In addition to new duties to eliminate discrimination against individual disabled pupils, LEAs are also required to make plans to increase the accessibility of schools for current and future pupils.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel could request a briefing report outlining the policy and legislative framework surrounding the provision of education to disabled children and young people and look at the statutory responsibilities of the council and its performance in this area, in the first instance, to determine if there are areas for further scrutiny by the Panel.

9. Topic: Transition between child and adult social care and health services

Who suggested it?

Merton Centre for Independent Living proposed that the Panel look at how young people are supported in the transition from receipt of children's social care and health services to adult social care and health services.

Summary of the issue

The Merton Transition Team support young people between 14 and 25 years of age with severe and complex needs and disabilities making the transition from childhood to adulthood. The team works directly with the young person and their family/carers to ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are central in the planning of their future life as an adult. The Merton Transition Team will ensure that parents/carers are involved in every step of the process by sharing knowledge and information, enabling them, along with their child, to make informed decisions

about their child's future. The service work closely with children's social care, health, voluntary organisations and adult social care, amongst others. Adult Social Services also have a commissioning strategy which seeks to change the way in which adult social care services are commissioned. This includes a focus on improving the transitions process between children's and adult services.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel could review the processes in place for supporting young people in making this transition to other services by engaging with officers internally, external partners and consulting service users, with view to making any recommendations they feel are appropriate to the relevant body/organisations.

10. Topic: Performance Reports

Who suggested the topic?

Officers within the CSF department.

Summary of the issue

Routine performance reporting against a 'basket' of key indicators selected for attention by the Panel is well established.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is suggested that the Panel continue to receive their regular performance reports at each Panel meeting to maintain an overview on the department's performance. However, the Panel are asked to give consideration to the indicators they wish to review and to a thematic approach to performance management at each meeting.

11. Topic: Update Reports

Who suggested the topic?

Officers within CSF.

Summary of the issue

Routine update report received by Panel at each meeting to outline policy and legislative changes nationally and regionally, as well as local developments and any changes or updates on service provision within the CSF department.

How could scrutiny look at it?

Members should consider whether they wish to continue receiving this report or to adopt another approach, for example, update as appropriate by email to Panel or thematic update report, at each meeting, in line with the focus of that meeting.

12. Topic: Pre decision scrutiny

Who suggested the topic?

Scrutiny Team and Chair of the Panel.

Summary of the issue

Items which are due to be considered and agreed by Cabinet appear on the Forward Plan.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is proposed that Members engage with the Director and Cabinet Members every 3 months to discuss upcoming items for scrutiny and opportunities for pre decision scrutiny. It is also proposed that the Scrutiny Officer table the relevant items on the forward plan for the Panel to determine opportunities for pre decision scrutiny.

Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 19 May 2015

The purpose of the workshop is to identify priority issues for consideration as agenda items or in-depth reviews by the Scrutiny Panels and the Commission. The final decision on this will then be made by the Panels/Commission at their first meetings.

All the issues that have been suggested to date by councillors, officers, partner organisations and residents are outlined in the supporting papers.

Further suggestions may emerge from discussion at the workshop.

Points to consider when selecting a topic:

- Is the issue strategic, significant and specific?
- Is it an area of underperformance?
- Will the scrutiny activity add value to the Council's and/or its partners' overall performance?
- Is it likely to lead to effective, tangible outcomes?
- Is it an issue of community concern and will it engage the public?
- Does this issue have a potential impact for one or more section(s) of the population?
- Will this work duplicate other work already underway, planned or done recently?
- Is it an issue of concern to partners and stakeholders?
- Are there adequate resources available to do the activity well?

Notes from discussion of topics relating to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Scrutiny Topic Selection Workshop 19 May 2015

Attendees:

Councillors Katy Neep (Chair), Agatha Akyigyina, Edward Foley, Jeff Hanna, Joan Henry, James Holmes, Dennis Pearce, Marsie Skeete

Co-opted member Denis Popovs

Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director, CSF Commissioning, Strategy and Performance

Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services (note taker)

Councillor Katy Neep welcomed all present and thanked Councillor Jeff Hanna for his hard work and clear leadership whilst he was Chair of the Panel.

Councillor Neep suggested taking a different approach to this year's work programme through having a number of themed meetings for which member champions (or small task/sub groups) would prepare by carrying out research, consultation and/or undertaking visits and report back to the meeting. Expert witnesses and/or partner organisations would be invited as appropriate. These themed meetings would result in recommendations to Cabinet (and subsequent monitoring by the Panel to ensure these are actioned).

Following discussion, it was AGREED to have a small number of themed meetings. It was also AGREED to continue to receive those reports and performance indicators that are necessary to demonstrate to external inspection that there has been rigorous scrutiny.

It was suggested that it would be helpful to invite the Chair of the School Standards Panel (Councillor Dennis Pearce) to one of the meetings to explain the panel's role and answer questions.

Agenda items for meeting on 1 July

Noted that there would be statements from the two Cabinet Members on objectives, priorities and challenges for the year ahead. There will also be an update report from the Director of Children Schools and Families.

School Run and Travel Plans

AGREED to not take this forward for scrutiny due to the limited influence that scrutiny could have on traffic congestion via schools and parents.

Housing and health offer for care leavers and looked after children to prevent homelessness and unemployment

AGREED that this would be suitable for a sub group to examine the housing, health, education and employment offer for older looked after children and care leavers. This would be done through 2 or 3 meetings. The sub group would look at previous scrutiny reports on related issues, consider how they apply to this cohort and identified recommendations to report back to the Panel and on to Cabinet. (scrutiny officer suggestion – the sub group could report back to the themed meeting on corporate parenting).

Recruitment of foster carers and other placements for looked after children

AGREED to include a report on the recruitment of foster carers within a themed meeting on corporate parenting.

Looked after children and corporate parenting report

AGREED to continue with this standard item looking at services across the borough to support looked after children, pre and post-adoption. The item will be brought to a themed meeting on corporate parenting.

Safeguarding

AGREED to continue to receive this annual report on safeguarding children issues.

(scrutiny officer note – also need to decide whether to include the annual report and business plan of Merton’s Safeguarding Children Board and invite partner agencies to answer questions from Panel members)

Transfer of public health functions to the local authority and broader engagement of health in provision of services for children and young people

AGREED that this would be suitable for a sub-group to prepare for the meeting by examining data on health outcomes to identify key lines of enquiry and challenging questions that could be put to health professionals at the Panel meeting.

School leadership succession planning task group

AGREED that the Panel should continue to monitor the delivery of the action plan resulting from this task group review plus other recent task group reviews.

AGREED that there should be an officer update report on action plan implementation to the Panel’s July meeting and to a subsequent Panel meeting later in the year.

AGREED that a sub group should lead on championing this work through a follow up meeting with lead officers mid-year.

Educational attainment for disabled children and young people

AGREED to use the Standards Report meeting as an opportunity to consider the educational attainment of disabled children and young people.

Also AGREED that, subsequent to the Standards meeting, a sub group could examine the data in more detail with a view to identifying issues for potential scrutiny in 2016/17

Transition between child and adult social care and health services

Noted that this would be a big issue to scrutinise in full.

AGREED to use the themed meeting on corporate parenting to examine issues around the transition of looked after children between child and adult social care and health services.

Also AGREED to use the themed meeting on improving health outcomes to consider transition between child and adult health services.

Performance reports

AGREED to continue to have a report on a basket of key indicators at each Panel meeting.

Also AGREED to appoint lead members for any performance indicators causing concern at the July meeting.

Update reports

AGREED to continue to receive an update report at each panel meeting to outline policy and legislative changes nationally and regionally, as well as local developments and any changes or updates on service provision within the CSF department.

AGREED that these should include updates on:

- special needs travel budget
- free school meal uptake and impact on pupil premium
- provision of school places, especially secondary places

Pre decision scrutiny

AGREED to take the following actions to identify items that might be suitable for pre-decision scrutiny:

- to include a list of Forward Plan items on the work programme report that is received at each Panel meeting
- for the Chair, Vice Chair, Cabinet Members and Director to meet informally twice yearly
- to adopt a flexible approach to the work programme so that urgent items may be accommodated as they arise

Other

Discussed the possibility of carrying out some visioning work in future to consider the shape of services in 5, 10 and 20 years time

Length of meetings

AGREED to use the full three hours allocated for Panel meetings if needed.

Forward Plan items relating to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

None.

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Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 1 July 2015

Agenda item: 7

Wards: All Wards

Subject: Draft Final Report of the Online Strategies in Schools Task Group

Lead officer: Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Katy Neep, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Contact Officer: Rebecca Redman, rebecca.redman@merton.gov.uk; 020 8545 4035

Recommendations:

- A. That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel considers and endorses the report arising from the scrutiny review of online strategies in schools, attached at Appendix 1; and
- B. That the Panel agrees to forward the review report to cabinet for approval and implementation of the recommendations.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To present the scrutiny review of online strategies in schools to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for endorsement; and to seek agreement to forward the report to Cabinet for approval and implementation of the review recommendations.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 The Panel, at its meeting on 3 July 2014, agreed to establish a task group to look at online strategies and e-safety in schools.
- 2.2 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel appointed a task group to carry out the review. The task group's report is attached at Appendix 1.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel can select topics for scrutiny review and for other scrutiny work as it sees fit, taking into account views and suggestions from officers, partner organisations and the public.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1 In carrying out its review, the task group had co-opted representatives on its membership and consulted with young people, governors, safer schools police officers, young cadets and schools. In addition, the task group talked to council officers and the Cabinet Member for Education and shared its report with the Chair of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board.

4.2 Appendix 1 of the Task Group Report lists those who contributed to the review.

5. TIMETABLE

5.1 The task group's draft final report will be considered, with a view to being endorsed to forward to Cabinet, by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 1 July 2015.

5.2 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel will then send the report to the Council's Cabinet in September 2015 for consideration.

6. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None for the purposes of this covering report.

7. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engaging with local partners in scrutiny reviews. Furthermore, the outcomes of reviews are intended to benefit all sections of the local community. An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed as part of the review process and is available on request from the Scrutiny Team.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None for the purposes of this report.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None for the purposes of this report.

11. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

11.1 Appendix 1 – task group review report on Online Strategies in schools.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 None for the purposes of this report.



London Borough of Merton

**Report and Recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review of Online Strategies
in Schools**

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Panel

June 2015

Task Group Members

Cllr Katy Neep (Chair)
Cllr James Holmes (Vice
Chair)
Cllr Joan Henry

Co-opted members

Peter Connellan
Denis Popovs

Scrutiny Support
Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer

For further information relating to the review, please contact:

Scrutiny Team
London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
Surrey SM4 5DX
Tel: 020 8545 3864
E-mail: scrutiny@merton.gov.uk

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the officers and external witnesses who have taken the time to provide written and verbal information and discussed their ideas with us. All contributors are listed in Appendix 1 of this report.

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Foreword by Councillor Katy Neep - Chair of the Online Strategies in Schools Task Group

It is important in this changing world of online technologies and innovations that we ensure our young people access the latest developments and use them to enhance their learning and development.

However it is clear from both the media and this short task group review that there are some lessons to be learnt around the support, advice and guidance that we provide our young people whilst they are online. This was particularly evident when looking at the potential impact that online presence can have on job roles and interviews in later life.

All contributions to the task group have been informative, engaging and insightful. Each one providing us with either a new idea or verification that the recommendations that we had started to form fulfilled their specific needs.

A special thanks should go to the young people who have helped shape this report and provided us with an insight into how they use the online world and the impact it has on them. We all really enjoyed these workshops and hope we have captured their vision in this report.

Our thanks also go to officers at the council who have done a sterling job in pulling together workshops, interviews and the vast reports that have guided and informed us throughout. Specific thanks goes to Rebecca Redman without whom this report literally would not be written.

My thanks as Chair of my first task group goes to my fellow contributors and Vice Chair who have supported and encouraged me as I hone my Chairing skills. I look forward to working with officers and the Cabinet member to implement the recommendations and ensure that our young people build successful, safe and inspirational lives both off and online.

Executive Summary

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel set up a task group to review the mechanisms in place within schools in the borough to support young people and mitigate any potential risks to their safety when online. This issue was felt to be important because it touched upon a number of issues and challenges which have been made prominent by Government, the media, schools, parents and other organisations.

The task group agreed that this review should be a short piece of work that would focus specifically on the role that schools play in managing young people's exposure to risk when online, and to establish how they might be better supported by the council. The task group engaged a range of stakeholders in this review in order to hear first hand what experiences head teachers, governors, young people and the police had of e-safety and both the positive and negative uses of the internet for children and young people. The task group also sought to establish how e-safety considerations and measures have been embedded into school policy, practice and culture.

Expertise in this area was also sought through accessing research undertaken and guidance and good practice provided by the following organisations/government publications:

- UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
- London School of Economics (LSE)
- EU Kids Online Network
- London Grid for Learning (LGfL)
- Byron Review – Safer Children in a Digital World (2008)

The focus of the task group's recommendations are on:

- All schools having a robust e-safety strategy that is regularly monitored and refreshed;
- Parents being equipped with the necessary skills to support their children in their online experiences;
- Building young peoples resilience and ability to respond appropriately to e-safety risks;
- Young people being empowered to act responsibly and safely when online to ensure positive use of the internet can be utilised to aid learning, the development of peer

relationships, and promote creativity, so that young people develop skills which lead to employment opportunities;

- An increased role for governors in supporting schools and undertaking a more frequent performance monitoring role in determining the effectiveness of e-safety policies within schools;
- Awareness raising and education for young people and parents, in particular, education earlier on e-safety issues with much younger children; and
- The use of technology, such as apps, that can be employed as an information tool for parents

The task group wishes to take forward these recommendations in consultation with schools, governors and the Merton Safeguarding Children Board.

List of recommendations

Recommendations	Stakeholder/Responsible Team
Recommendation 1 - That Council work with schools that do not currently have an e-safety strategy to develop this policy, providing advice and guidance and signposting to resources online where appropriate (paragraph 3.6).	Cabinet
Recommendation 2 – That the council and schools provide more regular training for parents and carers to educate them on the risks that young people face, how to manage these and on the safe use of new technologies and discuss what training and awareness raising is required/appropriate, for example, bulletins (paragraph 4.7).	Cabinet/Schools
Recommendation 3 – That schools and the council equip children and their families to remain safe online by signposting to, and providing, information and resources on new and potential risks to young people when online (paragraph 4.7).	Schools
Recommendation 4 – That schools brief new students on the positives and negatives surrounding the use of the internet, for example, profiles on social media sites and potential impact on future employment and educational opportunities, when they sign up to the schools acceptable user agreement (paragraph 4.10).	Cabinet/Schools/MSCB
Recommendation 5 – That Cabinet engage with the council’s corporate communications team to consider how best to raise awareness of e-safety issues and how schools and parents can best support young people when online (paragraph 4.10).	Cabinet
Recommendation 6 – That Cabinet explore the use of existing volunteers in libraries being asked to include raising awareness amongst parents and young people on e-safety issues and measures to their role (paragraph 4.10).	Cabinet/MSCB
Recommendation 7 - That Cabinet identify schools that are exemplars of good practice in relation to e-safety to provide peer support to schools that require guidance, advice and support on e-safety issues or policy (paragraph 4.10).	Cabinet/Schools
Recommendation 8 – All schools should be encouraged to undertake the e-safety audit developed by the council annually to ensure that their e-safety strategies and measures are effective (paragraph 4.13).	Cabinet
Recommendation 9 – That schools notify the council’s MASH team regarding any safeguarding issues concerning e-safety and that the MASH team analyse that data to determine if any vulnerable groups or demographics require additional support to manage online risks. This should feed into schools e-safety policies and action plans (paragraph 6.18).	Cabinet/MSCB
Recommendation 10 – That the council encourage schools to include e-safety on every school council meeting agenda, as a standard item, to enable young people to raise any issues or concerns and for schools to then respond appropriately (paragraph 7.3).	Schools

<p>Recommendation 11 - That Cabinet explore, with schools, the possibility of rolling out existing mechanisms to enable young people to raise concerns anonymously in the first instance to then allow a decision to be taken on how best to respond (paragraph 7.3).</p>	<p>Cabinet/Schools/MSCB</p>
<p>Recommendation 12 – That schools encourage young people to become e-safety champions and to provide support and/or mentor other pupils to provide advice and guidance on any e-safety issues they are encountering (paragraph 7.8)</p>	<p>Cabinet/Schools/MSCB</p>

Final Report of the Task Group

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, at its meeting on 3 July 2014, agreed to establish a Task Group review of online strategies and e-safety in schools. The Panel appointed a small number of Members to the Task Group for a short, very specific review into e-safety that would take 3 months to gather evidence and report accordingly. This length of task group review was being trialled by the Panel to look at how more specific issue and topics might be looked at in greater depth over a shorter time period, to enable the Panel to undertake more work during its annual work programme.

What is e-safety?

- 1.2 E-Safety is a term which encompasses not only the internet but other ways in which young people communicate using electronic media, for example, smart phones or gaming consoles. It means ensuring that children and young people are protected from harm and supported to achieve the maximum benefit from new and developing technologies, without risk to themselves or others.¹

Rationale

- 1.3 As noted in the Byron Review (2008), commissioned by the Government as an independent review of the risks children face on the internet, technology offers extraordinary opportunities for all of society.²
- 1.4 It is recognised that technology offers positive opportunities and is constantly evolving. Access is currently becoming universal and increasingly more mobile. However, pupils are using technology at an ever earlier age and older children are spending more time online. OFSTED noted that children aged 12–15 years are also more likely to mostly use the internet in their bedrooms alone. Furthermore, children are going online via a wider range of devices: Internet access via a PC, laptop or netbook is increasingly being supplemented by access via other devices³.
- 1.5 Children's online experiences play a crucial role in many developmental aspects of their lives, such as in exploring their identity and sexuality, building relationships with peers or romantic relationships.⁴ However, there is also a generational digital divide between parents and children which means that many parents do not feel

¹ Merton Safeguarding Children Board – Supporting Merton's Young People to stay safe online: An e-Safety Strategy (2014-2015). http://www.merton.gov.uk/merton_e-safety_strategy_2014-15.pdf

² The Byron Review (2008) *Safer Children in a Digital World*. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20101021152907/http://publications.education.gov.uk/eorderingdownload/dcsf-00334-2008.pdf>

³ OFSTED (2014) *Inspecting e-safety in schools*. <http://webfronter.com/surreymle/Esafety/other/OFSTED-Inspecting-e-safety-January-2014.pdf>

⁴ Vandoninck, S; Leen, d'Haenens & Smahel, D. (2014) *Preventative measures – how youngsters avoid online risks*, EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

empowered to manage risks in the digital world in the same way that they do in the 'real' world⁵.

- 1.6 The UK Council for Child Internet Safety have advocated that sound harm-prevention policies for children's internet use be developed in response to potential areas of vulnerability in the broader context of children's lives and that the focus should be on building protective environments for young people⁶.
- 1.7 Technology use and e-safety issues therefore go hand in hand. Many incidents happen beyond the physical geography of the school and yet can impact on pupils or staff. This makes it vitally important that pupils and staff are fully prepared and supported to use these technologies responsibly⁷.
- 1.8 Members expressed concerns about how best to manage children and young people's experiences of online activities and were keen to explore both the positives and negatives of internet use and how they might be managed or promoted to ensure the safe development of young people in the borough.

Purpose

1.9 The overarching aims for the review were established as follows:

- To understand modern day challenges, opportunities and risks online experiences are providing to young people and establish how they are managed and mitigated;
- To ensure that we are safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children when online;
- To enable children to independently use the internet safely and responsibly

1.10 The following Terms of Reference for the Task Group review were agreed:

- To determine what policies and procedures schools have in place to protect children when online;
- To determine if awareness raising is happening in schools with pupils about online safety;
- To determine how online risks are identified and managed in schools;
- To determine how schools can better educate young people to ensure that they maintain a positive online presence;

⁵ The Byron Review (2008) *Safer Children in a Digital World*.

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20101021152907/http://publications.education.gov.uk/eorderingdownload/dcsf-00334-2008.pdf>

⁶ UKCCIS (2013) *What do 17,000 Children in London Tell Us About Online Safety? The London Esafety Report*, www.saferinternet.org.uk

⁷ OFSTED (2014) *Inspecting e-safety in schools*. <http://webfronter.com/surreymle/Esafety/other/OFSTED-Inspecting-e-safety-January-2014.pdf>

- To identify what training staff receive about their online presence and the reputational impact for schools;
- To identify what action is being taken by schools to tackle and prevent online bullying; and
- To determine how the council can better support schools, parents and young people in this area

2. Legal and Inspection framework governing E-safety

2.1 Members reviewed the policy and legislative framework that safeguards children and young people from risk online. E- safety falls within the broad responsibility for safeguarding covered by the following legislation;

- Children’s Act 1989, 2004, 2010; and
- The Children and Families Act 2014

2.2 A more detailed outline of additional national policy that schools and councils must adhere to is outlined in **Appendix 3**. The Byron Review (2008) has also been central to the way that e-safety is legislated for and inspected in schools and other agencies.

2.3 The broadest safeguarding responsibility is integrated into the curriculum and involves parents, starting from key stage two onwards to guide children on basic safety. Schools are therefore held accountable for ensuring a safe online environment for their pupils and educating and raising awareness of risks with children and parents.

2.4 E-safety is governed and inspected in schools by OFSTED and overseen and supported by the Merton Safeguarding Children Board at a local level. OFSTED were made responsible by the Government for evaluating the extent to which schools teach pupils to adopt safe and responsible practices in using new technologies, describing e-safety as the school’s ability:

- To protect and educate pupils and staff in their use of technology; and
- To have the appropriate mechanisms to intervene and support any incident, where appropriate

2.5 OFSTED categorise the issues classified within e-safety into three areas of risk: Content, Contact and Conduct (with examples given as to these types of risk below):

Risk Type	Definition	Examples
Content	Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure to inappropriate content, including online pornography, ignoring age ratings in games (exposure to violence associated with often racist language), substance abuse • lifestyle websites, for example pro-anorexia/self-harm/suicide sites • Hate sites • content validation: how to check authenticity and accuracy of online content

Contact	Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grooming cyber-bullying in all forms identity theft (including 'frape' (hacking Facebook profiles)) and sharing passwords
Conduct	Personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> privacy issues, including disclosure of personal information digital footprint and online reputation health and well-being (amount of time spent online (internet or gaming)) sexting (sending and receiving of personally intimate images) also referred to as SGII (self generated indecent images) copyright (little care or consideration for intellectual property and ownership – such as music and film)

2.6 OFSTED guidance on key features of good and outstanding practice for e-safety is attached as **Appendix 4**.

2.7 Members noted that both the London Grid for Learning and OFSTED have compiled advice for schools on the measures that they should adopt regarding e-safety at schools, and they should encourage at home, on the safe use of new technologies⁸. These measures can be incorporated in to schools e-safety strategies and cover;

- Provision and responsibility for e-safety being shared by all staff in schools and agreement to act responsibly within and outside the school premises;
- School's expectations for parents being articulated clearly;
- Provision of staff safeguarding training and guidance on how to respond to e-safety incidents/disclosures;
- Schools ensuring that children know how to report e-safety concerns;
- Assemblies, tutorial time, personal, social, health and education lessons, and an age-appropriate curriculum for e-safety to help pupils to become safe and responsible users of new technologies;
- 'Managed' systems to ensure young people have a better knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe, assess and manage risk for themselves;
- Senior leaders, governors, staff and families developing that schools strategy for e-safety together which can be reviewed regularly in

⁸ *The safe use of new technologies* (2010), OFSTED.

<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/1098/1/The%20safe%20use%20of%20new%20technologies.pdf>

light of technological developments.

3. Local Policy and Safeguarding in Merton

What role does the Local Authority play in safeguarding and e-safety?

3.1 Responsibility for e-safety sits within Merton Anti-bullying and E-safety Operational Group. In line with Merton's e-safety strategy, the council have continued to work with adults, young people and schools to raise awareness of e-safety and cyberbullying. The council have also developed links and worked with:

- Merton Schools Council;
- Head Teachers;
- School Business Managers Forum; and
- Safer Schools Police Team

3.2 Members were pleased to hear that training courses have been developed and now form part of a continuing professional development (CPD) offer delivered in partnership with Sutton and Merton CPD (SAMS). The council, working with the Merton Safeguarding Board (MSCB), have also developed an e-safety audit tool, provide guidance on developing an e-safety strategy and provide IT support to schools.

3.3 The task group heard that other initiatives that the council have supported and jointly delivered with the Merton Safeguarding Children Board include the following:

Internet Matters

3.4 In May a new child internet safety organisation founded by four of the UK's biggest broadband providers, (BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin) to act as a single authoritative resource for child online safety was launched. Internet Matters will encourage the wider technology industry, experts, policy makers and parents to work together to establish world-leading resources. It is intended as a one-stop hub, directing parents to valuable help and advice from the leading experts at organisations and charities in the child internet safety field. The council, working with the MSCB, will aim to promote this initiative in Merton to equip parents with the information they need to make informed decisions.

Digital Footprint

3.5 The enforcement of the Right to be forgotten by the European courts has placed an emphasis on individual privacy and young people's management of their digital footprints, particularly in relation to social media. Awareness raising with all young people will take place to make them aware that:

- Employers regularly trawl social media accounts and it is likely that higher education establishments may also undertake this activity;
- Embarrassing posts may incite bullying; and
- Police in several states of the USA have successfully prosecuted students who possess indecent images on mobile devices including self-generated

sexually explicit selfies. There have been no prosecutions in the UK yet but these images can be construed as illegal.

- 3.6 The Local Authority also acts as a specialist adviser to support the work of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board. A small team internally support the Board, all with relevant safeguarding experience.

Recommendation 1 - That Council work with schools that do not currently have an e-safety strategy to develop this policy, providing advice and guidance and signposting to resources online where appropriate.

Merton Safeguarding Children Board

- 3.7 Helping children and young people to stay safe online is a priority for the MSCB. The role of the MSCB is to provide strategic leadership, guidance and inform front line practitioners in order to:

- Guide children, young people and others to the best sources of information and support and not duplicate the great range of advice and resources already available;
- Help organisations to develop their own solutions, and incorporate the principles and priorities of the MSCB into their policies;
- Identify those young people that are potentially vulnerable;
- Make sure that risk is assessed and managed effectively; and
- Make sure that young people understand their own risks in using online services

- 3.8 Members considered that as technology changes so new risks appear. The task group also recognised that this can be a source of anxiety to parents and those responsible for the welfare of young people. The MSCB therefore work with a range of partner agencies to keep up with such a rapidly moving scene. The delivery and guidance on e-safety is the responsibility of various groups of professionals and partners that work with schools and in other young people' settings, with the support of, LB Merton Schools ICT Support Team (SMISST), the MSCB and the Anti-Bullying & e-safety working group.

- 3.9 The MSCB have also developed an e-safety strategy which is designed to provide guidance and support to organisations such as schools, youth providers, voluntary and community sector groups in developing their own responses to the risks to the young people they deal with, and to particularly ensure the most vulnerable are protected from harm.

- 3.10 The MSCB e-safety strategy covers the following aspects of e-safety:

- Cyber-bullying, including sexual bullying;
- Safe use of social networking;
- Pornography and violent images (accessibility and inappropriate use by young people);
- Grooming by strangers and inappropriate contacts, including trusted adults;

- Real time communications including texts, e.g. 'sexting', chat rooms, email, instant messaging, video chat etc.;
- Support for parents and carers and their role and responsibilities;
- Support for young people, particularly the more vulnerable; and, ensuring that young people are aware of the risks and do not endanger their 'online reputation' by their activity;
- Training for professionals and practitioners; and
- Communications infrastructure (working to developing managed online environments for young people rather than blanket blocking policies).

3.11 The MSCB also supports and encourages in schools and at home the Zip It, Block It, Flag It initiative – the Click Clever, Click Safe Code for children and young people which encourages privacy, blocking nasty messages and enabled issues to be flagged up:



4. How do schools promote and ensure e-safety?

- 4.1 Schools and other young people's organisations are encouraged and supported to ensure that e-safety is at the heart of their efforts to safeguard young people, including identification of those who may be vulnerable.
- 4.2 Members met with both primary and secondary school head teachers to explore the role that schools play in educating, informing young people about e-safety and ensuring they are safe when online. Members heard that schools have strong filters in place. There are email filters for all schools across London and children are taught to zip their personal information, block unknown people, and flag issues of concern.
- 4.3 The task group learned that the number of incidents of children being at risk in online settings in schools is low. However, heads stated that this does not necessarily mean that e-safety is not an issue as children have access outside of school and within the home. This also means an increased role for parents in safeguarding and monitoring their children's online activity.
- 4.4 Schools provide a range of training sessions on e-safety for governors, staff, pupils and parents and have e-safety policies in place which are managed and monitored internally. Also, in many schools IT working parties have been set up which involve the provider, heads and governors to ensure e-safety is effectively monitored.
- 4.5 Furthermore, schools put in place an acceptable user agreement which all pupils, parents and staff sign up to and deliver e-safety sessions, both as part of the curriculum and during key periods, such as during anti bullying week. School Staff

are trained on e-safety and when interviewed are asked about their online presence (digital footprint) and the potential impact on the reputation of the school.

- 4.6 Aside from the support received from the council and Merton Safeguarding Children Board, schools utilise a range of resources available online through websites such as CEOP, Childnet, Think you know, NSPCC and London Grid for Learning.
- 4.7 Schools seek to raise awareness of e-safety issues with parents when they come into school and also provide formal training and awareness raising sessions. Heads informed the task group that getting parents involved is key to ensuring that young people remain safe online and that parental controls are utilised within the home.

Recommendation 2 – That the council and schools provide more regular training for parents and carers to educate them on the risks that young people face, how to manage these and on the safe use of new technologies and discuss what training and awareness raising is required/appropriate, for example, bulletins.

Recommendation 3 – That schools and the council equip children and their families to remain safe online by signposting to, and providing, information and resources on new and potential risks to young people when online.

- 4.8 Heads emphasised the importance of being mindful that children are sharing more online now and parents don't often realise or acknowledge the extent of their online activity and therefore, do not monitor it as proactively as they perhaps should. Children have Facebook accounts and use social media at a very young age and it can be a challenge to get them to understand the risks of sharing information and views online.
- 4.9 Heads advised that children need to be made to feel as though they are being equipped with the knowledge to act responsibly, but also that should they access something they deem to be of concern, that they feel comfortable enough raising it with a teacher or parent.
- 4.10 Heads proposed the following actions needed to be taken to ensure that e-safety messages were reinforced:
- awareness raising at young age with children in schools and with parents;
 - encourage use of parental controls in the home;
 - encourage internet providers to more widely publicise internet controls available on mobile devices; and
 - ensure lines of communication are available for children and parents to raise issues

Recommendation 4 – That schools brief new students on the positives and negatives surrounding the use of the internet, for example, profiles on social media sites and potential impact on future employment and educational opportunities, when they sign up to the schools acceptable user agreement.

Recommendation 5 – That Cabinet engage with the council's corporate communications team to consider how best to raise awareness of e-safety issues and how schools and parents can best support young people when online.

Recommendation 6 – That Cabinet explore the use of existing volunteers in libraries being asked to include raising awareness amongst parents and young people on e-safety issues and measures to their role.

Recommendation 7 - That Cabinet identify schools that are exemplars of good practice in relation to e-safety to provide peer support to schools that require guidance, advice and support on e-safety issues or policy.

How do Governors monitor e-safety and how could they be better supported?

- 4.9 The task group consulted Governors on their role in ensuring schools had appropriate e-safety measures in place that were robust and effective. Members learned that Governors receive annual training on IT and e-safety from schools and are responsible for approving e-safety and acceptable use policies, as well as ensuring that the correct infrastructure is in place in schools.
- 4.10 Governors can oversee contracts to IT providers and performance monitor IT and e-safety policies within schools. E-safety is a standard agenda item for some school governing bodies and it is viewed as a whole school issue with all staff and governors receiving training and subsequent refresher training, at appropriate intervals.
- 4.11 Governors felt confident that schools were doing all they could to support young people to be safe when online. Emphasis was again placed on the need to shift responsibility to parents to be more involved in preventing, managing and educating young people about online risks. The role that the school could play in supporting parents was also highlighted by governors and felt necessary. It was proposed to the task group that this could be achieved through briefings that promote e-safety or be embedded in other information sessions schools provide to parents.
- 4.12 The task group also heard that communication and education was central to educating young people and parents and that, in some schools, a review of the information made available on the schools website regarding e-safety could be undertaken and the curriculum widened to reinforce e-safety messages, for example, through PSHE and citizenship lessons etc.
- 4.13 The Governors consulted also required further communication and promotion of some of the tools and support that councils provide to schools to ensure that they are utilising this, for example, the use of an annual e-safety audit as developed by the council, with the MSCB.

Recommendation 8 – All schools should be encouraged to undertake the e-safety audit developed by the council annually to ensure that their e-safety strategies and measures are effective.

- 4.14 The Governors consulted felt that there was a greater role for schools to play in the following ways:
- To address gender issues in terms of provision of advice, support and guidance on e-safety;
 - Provide an online forum to support young people and parents;
 - Provide more training for parents;

- To raise awareness and educate young people as early as possible about e-safety and potential risks;
- To provide more in-depth training for governors on safeguarding issues

5. Parental mediation

- 5.1 Members agreed that parents have a key role to play in managing children's access to online material that may put them at risk or be inappropriate. There is a need to empower parents to support children's online safety from a young age and to ensure that the range of technical tools that can help parents do this, are employed and that parents understand them.
- 5.2 The task group acknowledge that restricting children's access to harmful and inappropriate material is not just a question of what parents can do to protect children but also what children can do to protect themselves.
- 5.3 Parents play many roles to a greater or lesser relation in terms of their children's internet use. Some are restrictive, some share of the online experience, some talk about the internet and are involved in their child's online activities (whether in their presence or later).⁹
- 5.4 A study conducted by the LSE and EU Kids Online found that:
- Parents of children with psychological difficulties feel less able to help;
 - Parents who do not use the internet do not feel able to help; and
 - Children from minority/discriminated groups have parents who are more likely to doubt their ability to support their child;
 - Children that have more psychological difficulties have parents who get a little less information on e-safety;
 - Parents who speak a minority language at home get a little less information on e-safety¹⁰.
- 5.6 EU Kids Online also reported that parents with younger children (9-12 years) are a little more likely to get advice from their child's school. As children get older, parents get less safety information from their child's school and more from their child. Parents who don't use the internet, and those whose children use the internet infrequently, are also unsurprisingly less likely to gain safety information from their Internet Service Provider or from dedicated websites.
- 5.7 Members found that the London E-Safety Report (2013) proposed that parents should be encouraged by schools and the relevant agencies to:
- Talk with their child about what they do online;

⁹ Livingstone, S; Gorzig, A & Olafsson, K (2011) *Disadvantaged children and online risk*, EU Kids Online <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/39385>

¹⁰ Livingstone, S; Gorzig, A & Olafsson, K (2011) *Disadvantaged children and online risk*, EU Kids Online

- Monitor usage of games, videos and social media and check that they are age appropriate;
 - Not assume that there is less risk because children are younger;
 - Enable parental controls; and
 - Seek help from school staff and online parental support¹¹
- 5.8 Analysis by EU Kids Online and the LSE shows that when parents actively mediate their child's internet use, this too is associated with lower risk and, most importantly, lower harm.¹²
- 5.9 Active mediation is therefore key and refers to when parents talk to their child about the internet, stay nearby or sit with them while they go online, encourage them to explore the internet, and share online activities with them. These activities, the findings of the EU Kids Online show, tend to reduce children's exposure to online risks without reducing online opportunities, and they also reduce young children's (9-12 years) reports of being upset when they encounter online risks¹³.
- 5.10 However, parents' active mediation of safety (e.g. giving safety or online behaviour advice), and their monitoring of the child's internet use, are generally used after a child has experienced something upsetting online¹⁴
- 5.11 Given that children's exposure to online risks decreases the more parents use restrictive mediation, it should be actively encouraged by schools and other relevant agencies. New analysis by EU Kids Online also shows that:
- Parental restrictive mediation leads to a significantly smaller probability of being bothered or upset online (at any age);
 - Active mediation of use tends to decrease the experience of harm between 9 and 12 years, though there is no effect for 13 to 16 year olds;
 - Active mediation of safety significantly increases being bothered or upset from online risks among 9-10 year olds and 15-16 year olds (with a similar tendency between these ages which is not statistically significant); and
 - Monitoring is not significantly linked to feeling bothered or upset at 9-10 or 15-16 but is associated with increased harm between 11-14

6. What risks do young people face online?

- 6.1 During consultation with young people, teachers and governors, the task group learned that the risks that young people were aware of or had been exposed to in

¹¹ UKCCIS (2013) *What do 17,000 Children in London Tell Us About Online Safety? The London Esafety Report*, www.saferinternet.org.uk

¹² Duerager, A & Livingstone, S (2012) *How can parents support children's internet safety?* EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

¹³ Duerager, A & Livingstone, S (2012) *How can parents support children's internet safety?* EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

¹⁴ Duerager, A & Livingstone, S (2012) *How can parents support children's internet safety?* EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

their use of the internet primarily occurring outside of school systems which has significant safeguards in place. The risks that were apparent resulted from young peoples use of the internet on hand held devices, mobile phones and also in the home. These risks included:

- Online bullying;
- Inappropriate language use and pressure felt when participating in online gaming with people who may not be the same age;
- Being asked to share personal information;
- Receiving or being asked to send inappropriate sexual content, also known as 'sexting'. 'Sexting' is defined as: Swapping sexual images by picture message, email, app or social network¹⁵.

6.2 Similarly, research into the risks of internet use and how they are perceived, experienced and managed demonstrates that online experiences can be both positive and negative for young people.

Which children and young people are more vulnerable to online risks?

6.3 The Byron Review (2008) highlighted the need to take into account children's individual strengths and vulnerabilities in their online activity, because the factors that can discriminate a 'beneficial' from a 'harmful' experience online are often individual. The very same content can be useful to a child at a certain point in their life and development and may be equally damaging to another child. The Byron Review (2008) also acknowledges that there are vast individual differences that will impact on a child's experience when online, especially considering the wider context in which they have developed and in which they experience that technology¹⁶.

6.4 The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) also found that many factors combine to render some children vulnerable to online risk, under particular circumstances, and with diverse consequences¹⁷.

6.5 Members sought to explore which young people were more vulnerable through existing research and reports and through consultation events. The task group met governors, police cadets, teachers, head teachers, safer schools police officers and young people throughout the review. The task group explored vulnerabilities that may be increased by:

- Gender;

¹⁵ London Grid for Learning (2013) 1 Minute Guide - 'Sexting' <http://www.lgfl.net/esafety/Pages/policies-acceptable-use.aspx?tab=4>

¹⁶ The Byron Review (2008) *Safer Children in a Digital World*. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20101021152907/http://publications.education.gov.uk/eorderingdownload/dcsf-00334-2008.pdf>

¹⁷ UKCCIS (2013) *What do 17,000 Children in London Tell Us About Online Safety? The London Esafety Report*, www.saferinternet.org.uk

- Disability;
 - Special educational needs; and
 - Socio economic background
- 6.6 The Task Group utilised the findings of an EU Kids Online study of online bullying and disadvantaged children. They found that online bullies and those being bullied online are those children who are mostly also vulnerable offline. This includes children who have psychological difficulties, are socially excluded; engage in unhealthy attention seeking behaviours or are in some way or another, members of a vulnerable group.¹⁸ Among those involved in online bullying, girls, younger children and those from a low socio-demographic background report more often being victims of bullying than those with a higher socio-demographic background.¹⁹
- 6.7 The Task Group also considered the findings of three Youth Internet Surveys that were undertaken over a 10 year period to examine the online bullying experiences of young people. Online bullying or cyber bullying is when a person or a group of people uses online digital technology to threaten, tease, harass, upset or humiliate someone else. In many cases, a single act can go viral resulting in a feeling of ‘repeated’ bullying as wider audiences are involved. The victim’s privacy can also be invaded at all times²⁰.
- 6.8 Members learned and expressed concerns that cyber bullying can cause young people to feel humiliated, to feel isolated from friends, to play truant or self harm and in more severe cases, commit suicide. This highlights the significance of taking the appropriate measures to ensure that young people are safe online and feel comfortable and confident enough to report any issues, concerns or experiences.
- 6.9 The surveys undertaken specifically examined victimisation and perpetration behaviours. The data collected sought to establish how these behaviours changed across the three survey points and whether demographics and internet use patterns had changed for all youth internet users, compared with those that had experienced online bullying.
- 6.10 Members considered the findings from the Surveys which were as follows:
- Those experiencing online bullying increased to 11% in 2010;
 - More serious online bullying or repeated incidents were only experienced by 5% of young people;
 - The rate of female versus male victims of online bullying changed significantly throughout the course of the survey;
 - 13-15 year olds make up the largest proportion of young people bullied in all three cohorts;
 - The percentage of girls engaging in online bullying increased to 48% by 2010;

¹⁸ Gorzig, A (2011) *Who bullies and who is bullied online? : a study of 9-16 year old internet users in 25 European countries*. EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

¹⁹ Gorzig, A (2011) *Who bullies and who is bullied online? : a study of 9-16 year old internet users in 25 European countries*. EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

²⁰ London Grid for Learning (2013) *1 Minute Guide – Cyberbullying*. <http://www.lgfl.net/esafety/Pages/policies-acceptable-use.aspx?tab=4>

- Disclosure to school staff increased to 12% by 2010²¹
- 6.11 When consulting with young people about when they felt that online activities could turn into problematic or harmful situations, the survey identified the following risks, which have also been noted in research undertaken by EU Kids Online study in 2014. The types of risk identified related to:
- online bullying;
 - unwelcome contact from strangers;
 - misuse of personal information;
 - issues related to sexual content or communication;
 - commercial content²²
- 6.12 The prevalence of social networking sites in young people's lives ultimately plays a role in increasing the occurrence of the risks identified above. However, young people will not necessarily stop engaging with these sites as they are a means by which to maintain friendships and to be culturally aware²³. Social networking has become one of the most popular activities online. However, whilst age restrictions apply, these are only partially effective. By combining chat, messaging, photo albums and blogging, social network sites integrate online activities more seamlessly than ever. This offers children many opportunities but also many risks.²⁴
- 6.13 Members acknowledged that, given the possible risks, as well as the many opportunities afforded by social networking, and since much usage occurs away from adult supervision, children's own digital skills are crucial. This includes children's ability to use the safety features embedded in these sites.²⁵
- 6.14 The consultation undertaken by the Group found that young people have experienced:
- unwelcome contact on social networking sites;
 - abusive language when online gaming;
 - pressure to engage in 'sexting' (sending images or messages of an explicit nature and sexual content); and
 - Bullying through social media
- 6.15 Members also consulted young people and recent research to explore the impact that gender had on how vulnerable young people were to online risks. The task group

²¹ UKCCIS (2013) *Online Harassment in Context: Trends from Three Youth Internet Safety Surveys (2000-2010)* www.education.gov.uk/ukccis/

²² Vandoninck, S; Leen, d'Haenens & Smahel, D. (2014) *Preventative measures – how youngsters avoid online risks*, EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

²³ Vandoninck, S; Leen, d'Haenens & Smahel, D. (2014) *Preventative measures – how youngsters avoid online risks*, EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

²⁴ Livingston, S, Olafsson, K & Staksrud, E (2011) *Social Networking, age and privacy*, EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

²⁵ Livingston, S, Olafsson, K & Staksrud, E (2011) *Social Networking, age and privacy*, EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

found that girls and boys engage and cope with what they encounter online slightly differently²⁶. However, many of the young people engaged noted that their ability to cope with such incidents, respond and determine whether to report these was down to individual resilience and peer support/network in school, not gender.

- 6.16 Young people stated that boys and girls were both likely to report incidents and be victims of online bullying or have received inappropriate sexual messages or images on their phones/social networking sites.
- 6.17 Members also raised questions regarding the ability of disadvantaged children to cope with online risks. EU Kids Online and the LSE considered the educational/economic; psychological and social disadvantage that young people faced and the potentially negative impact these factors might have when engaging in online activities.²⁷
- 6.18 It was reported by EU Kids Online that when it comes to being bullied online:
- Girls are more likely to tell than boys, often a friend. Boys will still report incidents however;
 - Younger children are more likely to tell a parent or sibling when they are upset because they are being bullied online, while older teenagers are least likely to tell a teacher;
 - Parents who are aware of a child having been upset by something online are, unsurprisingly, more likely to have a child who tells their parents what happened to them; and
 - Those from discriminated against groups or who speak a minority language at home are much more likely to tell someone than are other children, especially a parent.²⁸

Recommendation 9 – That schools notify the council’s MASH team regarding any safeguarding issues concerning e-safety and that the MASH team analyse that data to determine if any vulnerable groups or demographics require additional support to manage online risks. This should feed into schools e-safety policies and action plans.

7. Young peoples knowledge of effective preventative measures

- 7.1 The task group agreed that digital literacy plays a vital role in children’s use of the internet, both resulting from and further stimulating the range and depth of children’s online activities. It is widely hoped that, as children become more digitally literate,

²⁶ Livingstone, S; Gorzig, A & Olafsson, K (2011) *Disadvantaged children and online risk*, EU Kids Online <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/39385>

²⁷ Livingstone, S; Gorzig, A & Olafsson, K (2011) *Disadvantaged children and online risk*, EU Kids Online <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/39385>

²⁸ Livingstone, S; Gorzig, A & Olafsson, K (2011) *Disadvantaged children and online risk*, EU Kids Online <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/39385>

the more they will gain from the internet while also being better prepared to avoid or cope with online risks.²⁹

- 7.2 The task group learned that young people are less fearful of online risks when they feel they are able to handle them or have appropriate mechanisms that they feel comfortable accessing to raise these issues. Predominantly, young people turn to their peers for support and would talk to a teacher secondly and a parent last. Young people however, do need to know where they can go for confidential advice and support.
- 7.2 The issue of embarrassment and shame was highlighted by some young people when asked why parents are not approached about online risks and incidents. Many young people are concerned that schools will inform parents of any issues which they may prefer them not to know about.
- 7.3 School mechanisms, such as the Youth That Care team (YTC), a service managed by pupils within a school to provide support and advice, are not used often. This is because young people have concerns about confidentiality and issues being reported to parents. It was also suggested that school councils do not spend enough time looking at e-safety and considering issues. Young people engaged stated that teachers need to ensure that they listen and implement recommendations from young people when they report e-safety concerns.

Recommendation 10 – That the council encourage schools to include e-safety on every school council meeting agenda, as a standard item, to enable young people to raise any issues or concerns and for schools to then respond appropriately.

Recommendation 11 - That Cabinet explore, with schools, the possibility of rolling out existing mechanisms to enable young people to raise concerns anonymously in the first instance to then allow a decision to be taken on how best to respond.

- 7.4 Young people consulted as part of this review also proposed that schools block internet access and remove phones from pupils; others suggested that moderate internet access should be allowed on hand held devices/mobile phones in schools.
- 7.5 The following preventative strategies adopted by young people were identified and captured into the following categories by EU Kids Online:
- Employ problem solving strategies such as speaking to peers to determine how to respond to an incident;
 - Plan and reflect upon how to deal with potential risks;
 - Seek information to increase knowledge or skills about online safety;
 - Seek support to obtain advice or aid that should help prevent an incident³⁰

²⁹ Livingstone, S; Gorzig, A & Olafsson, K (2011) *Disadvantaged children and online risk*, EU Kids Online <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/39385>

³⁰ Vandoninck, S; Leen, d’Haenens & Smahel, D. (2014) *Preventative measures – how youngsters avoid online risks*, EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

7.6 The strategies employed by the young people consulted by the task group fit within those identified by EU Kids Online which are as follows:

Instrumental action – deleting, unfriending or blocking certain people;

Self monitoring – limiting their online activities;

Behavioural avoidance – in situations of unpleasant sexual issues, children do not perceive limiting their online activities as useful. As EU Kids Online have noted, young people avoid unpleasant sexual content or communication by turning away from the situation or making sure one does not get involved.³¹

7.7 Young people also highlighted that they should be involved sooner in meeting with other children and other young people to talk to them about online safety. They noted that young people only tend to hear about extreme experience of e-safety such as when someone is murdered by a stranger or a young person commits suicide because of cyber bullying. There tends to be less information about peoples regular experiences.

7.8 The task group feel that the best people to support young people to be safe online are other young people; as they understand the risks and issues, and know what young people are actually doing online. A forum or mechanism for young people to engage with other young people should be explored.

Recommendation 12 – That schools encourage young people to become e-safety champions and to provide support and/or mentor other pupils to provide advice and guidance on any e-safety issues they are encountering.

³¹ Vandoninck, S; Leen, d’Haenens & Smahel, D. (2014) *Preventative measures – how youngsters avoid online risks*, EU Kids Online www.eukidsonline.net

5. Concluding Remarks

- 5.1 The task group were very clear at the outset of this review that children have the right to protection and safety online and that the role of safeguarding agencies, the local authority, schools and parents should be further strengthened and effective to achieve this.
- 5.2 The task group also acknowledge that no amount of effort to reduce potential risks to children when online will eliminate those risks completely. The internet cannot be made entirely safe. New means of internet access are also less open to adult supervision and technical solutions are one element of a broader strategy on e safety³².
- 5.3 We must therefore work in partnership to build children's *resilience* to the material to which they may be exposed so that they have the confidence and skills to navigate these risks.³³ Children and young people need to be encouraged to develop self governing behaviour and to take greater responsibility. We need to focus on how kids manage their safety in their own personal space and provide guidance to children as both victims and potential perpetrators.
- 5.4 When awareness raising, the council, schools, MSCB and parents should emphasise empowerment rather than restriction, and appropriate, responsible behaviour with regard to technology use. Nevertheless, young people still need to know where to go to report any issues or concerns. This is of the utmost importance.
- 5.5 The task group also felt that communicating online opportunities and positive experiences should be encouraged. Schools should continue to provide educational support for increasing digital literacy and support the mitigation of digital exclusion amongst vulnerable groups. Inequalities in digital skills persist in terms of socio-economic background, age and to a lesser extent and gender. Efforts to overcome these are needed.
- 5.6 A careful balancing act is therefore required in our approach to e-safety across schools, the MSCB and by parents and carers at home. There must be recognition of both the risks and opportunities of online activity and that children's online experiences 'in the round' are vital.
- 5.7 The recommendations of the task group seek to highlight the significance of:
- Appropriate, sensitive responses to online and offline bullying;
 - On-going dialogue about new risks young people are experiencing;
 - Addressing risks associated with peer to peer conduct;
 - Informing parents and young people on effective coping strategies;

³² O'Neill, B, Livingstone, S & McLaughlin, S (2011) *Final recommendations for policy, methodology and research*, EU Kids Online. <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/39410/>

³³ The Byron Review (2008) *Safer Children in a Digital World*. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20101021152907/http://publications.education.gov.uk/eorderingdownload/dcsf-00334-2008.pdf>

- Enhancing the role that schools and governors play in monitoring and managing e-safety in schools; and
- Practical mediation skills for parents as part of the overall effort to build awareness of risks and safety online.

6. What Happens Next?

- 6.1 This report will be presented to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 1 July 2015 for the Panel's approval.
- 6.2 The Panel will then send the report to the Council's Cabinet meeting in September 2015 for discussion and to seek agreement to the recommendations presented.
- 6.3 The Cabinet will be asked to provide a formal Executive Response and Action Plan to the Panel within two months of the submission of the report to its meeting in November 2015. The Cabinet will be asked to respond to each of the task group's recommendations, setting out whether the recommendation is accepted and how and when it will be implemented. If the Cabinet is unable to support and implement some of the recommendations, then it is expected that clearly stated reasons would be provided for each.
- 6.4 The lead Cabinet Member (or officer to whom this work is delegated) should ensure that other organisations, to which recommendations have been directed, are contacted and that their response to those recommendations is included in the Executive Response and Action Plan.
- 6.5 The Panel will seek a further report six months after the Cabinet response has been received, giving an update on progress with implementation of the recommendations.

Appendix 1

Whom we spoke to

External Organisations:

Gary Hipple – Governor, Ursuline High School
Tim Mann – Met Police
Police Cadets: Shiva Hetheecharan, Shane Dye, Sam Watson, Georgia Milner

Members of:
Scouts
Girl Guides
Children in Care council
Youth Parliament

Primary Heads Group

Secondary Heads Group

Keith Makin – Chair of Merton Safeguarding Children Board

Officers:

Paul Ballatt
Lee Hopkins
Derek Crabtree
Caroline Land
Bev Selway

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Martin Whelton
Councillor Maxi Martin

**Appendix 2
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) template
Initial Screening**



This form should be completed in line with the Equality Impact Assessment guidance available on the [intranet](#)
The blue text below is included to help those completing the template and should be overwritten.

EqIA completed by: (Give name and job title)	Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer
EqIA to be signed off by: (Give name and job title)	<i>Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services</i>
Department/ Division	Corporate Services, Democracy Services
Team	The Scrutiny Team
EqIA completed on:	23 June 2015
Date of Challenge Review (if you have one):	N/A
Date review of this EqIA is due (no later than 3 years from date of completion):	TBC

What are you assessing? (Tick as appropriate)

Policy: A policy is an adopted approach by the Council to a specific issue or position, usually in the long term. It provides a set of ideas or principles that together form a framework for decision making and implementation.¹ A policy may be written or unwritten, formal or informal. For example, the Corporate Equality Scheme.

Strategy: A strategy sets out the activities and actions that have been identified as most likely and cost-effective to achieve the aims and objectives of a council policy e.g. the Consultation Strategy.

Procedure: A procedure sets out the way in which practices and actions are to be undertaken at an individual level in order to achieve the policy in local situations, for example using a flow chart approach. Procedures also outline who will take responsibility on a day to day basis for decisions in the implementation of the policy.² For example, this procedure for carrying out an EqIA.

Function: A function is an action or activity that the Council is required to carry out for example emergency planning arrangements.

Service: A service is a facility or provision made by the Council for its residents or staff for example the Library service or Translation service.

1. Title of policy, strategy, procedure, function or service

Support for e-safety advice and guidance to schools, role of police and safer schools police officers, role of schools in relation to ensuring e-safety policies are in place and issues managed, as well as awareness raising with governors, parents and pupils./

2. For functions or services only: Does a third party or contractor provide the function or service? If so, who?

Yes. Partner agencies within Merton Safeguarding Children Board.

3. Who is the policy, strategy, procedure, function or service intended to benefit?

Schools, parents, governors, children and young people

4. Who else might be affected?

-

5. What is known about the demographic make up of the people you have included in your answers to questions 4 and 5?

Profiles of children and young people within Merton schools held by the relevant team within CSF.

6. Have you already consulted on this policy, strategy, procedure, function or service? If so, how?

Consultation undertaken throughout task group review.

¹ See the Council's Policy Handbook http://intranet/policy_handbook_final_agreed_nov_07-2.doc

² As above

7. How will you measure the success of your policy, strategy, procedure, function or service?

Performance monitor delivery of the agreed recommendations through the executive response and action plan and going forward on a six monthly basis at Panel meetings. A Member Champion will also be appointed.

8. How often will the policy, strategy, procedure, function or service be reviewed?

See above.

9. When will the policy, strategy, procedure, function or service next be reviewed?

November 2015 when the Executive Response and Action Plan is received by the Scrutiny Panel.

10. Please complete the following table and give reasons for where:

- (a) The policy function or service could have a positive impact on any of the equality groups.
- (b) The policy function or service could have a potential negative impact on any of the equality groups.

Think about where there is evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, concerns or priorities in relation to this policy, strategy, procedure, function or service.

Equality group	Positive impact		Potential negative impact		Reason
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Gender (inc. Transgender)	✓			✓	All of the recommendations seek to both support and empower young people and their parents to manage the child's online activity and associated risks in a supportive environment both in school and at home. Mechanisms are recommended and strengthened in these recommendations to ensure online risks are well managed and responded to and that parental awareness and skills are raised and developed to deal with these risks.
Race/ Ethnicity/ Nationality	✓			✓	
Disability	✓			✓	
Age	✓			✓	
Sexual orientation	✓			✓	
Religion/ belief	✓			✓	
Socio-economic status	✓			✓	

11. Did you have sufficient data to help you answer the above questions?

Yes

No

If there is a potential negative impact on one or more groups, or there was insufficient data to help you answer the above questions, you should complete a full EqIA

12. Is a full Impact Assessment required?

Yes

No

EqIA signed off by:	Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services.
Signature:	
Date:	

Appendix 3

The Legal Framework surrounding e-safety

This section is designed to inform users of legal issues relevant to the use of electronic communications. For older students, discussion of current legislation could be incorporated into the curriculum as part of ICT, PSHE or Citizenship. It might also be useful to make reference to this when dealing with e-safety infringements to reinforce the seriousness of issues arising.

Communications Act (2003) (section 127)

Sending by means of the internet a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or sending a false message by means of or persistently making use of the internet for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety is guilty of an offence liable, on conviction, to imprisonment.

This wording is important because an offence is committed as soon as the message has been sent: there is no need to prove any intent or purpose.

The Computer Misuse Act (1990) (sections 1 – 3)

Regardless of an individual's motivation, the Act makes it a criminal offence to:

- gain access to computer files or software without permission (for example using someone else's password to access files);
- gain unauthorised access, as above, in order to commit a further criminal act (such as fraud); or
- impair the operation of a computer or program (for example caused by viruses or denial of service attacks).

UK citizens or residents may be extradited to another country if they are suspected of committing any of the above offences.

Copyright, Design and Patents Act (1988)

Copyright is the right to prevent others from copying or using his or her "work" without permission.

The material to which copyright may attach (known in the business as "work") must be the author's own creation and the result of some skill and judgement. It comes about when an individual expresses an idea in a tangible form. Works such as text, music, sound, film and programs all qualify for copyright protection. The author of the work is usually the copyright owner, but if it was created during the course of employment it belongs to the employer.

It is an infringement of copyright to copy all or a substantial part of anyone's work without obtaining the author's permission. Usually a licence associated with the work will allow a user to copy or use it for limited purposes. It is advisable always to read the terms of a licence before you copy or use someone else's material.

It is also illegal to adapt or use software without a licence or in ways prohibited by the terms of the software licence.

Data Protection Act (1998)

The Act requires anyone who handles personal information to notify the Information Commissioner's Office of the type of processing it administers, and must comply with important data protection principles when treating personal data relating to any living individual. The Act also grants individuals rights of access to their personal data, compensation and prevention of processing.

Education Act (2011), sections 2 to 4, provides further clarification on statutory staff powers to discipline pupils for inappropriate behaviour or not for following instructions, both on and off school premises. Further details for Free schools can be found in section 36 and for Academies in Part 6, sections 55 to 65.

Education and Inspections Act 2006, sections 90 and 91, provide statutory powers for staff to discipline pupils for inappropriate behaviour or for not following instructions, both on and off school premises. **Section 94** also gives schools the power to confiscate items from pupils as a disciplinary penalty. These powers may be particularly important when dealing with e-safety issues: online bullying may take place both inside and outside school, and this legislation gives schools the legal power to intervene should incidents occur. It also gives teachers the power to confiscate mobile phones, and other personal devices, if they suspect that they are being used to compromise the well-being and safety of others.

Malicious Communications Act (1988) (section 1)

This legislation makes it a criminal offence to send an electronic message (e-mail) that conveys indecent, grossly offensive, threatening material or information that is false; or is of an indecent or grossly offensive nature if the purpose was to cause a recipient to suffer distress or anxiety.

Obscene Publications Act 1959 and 1964 Publishing an "obscene" article is a criminal offence. Publishing includes electronic transmission.

Public Order Act (1986) (sections 17 – 29)

This Act makes it a criminal offence to stir up racial hatred by displaying, publishing or distributing written material which is threatening. Like the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 it also makes the possession of inflammatory material with a view of releasing it a criminal offence.

Protection of Children Act (1978) (Section 1)

It is an offence to take, permit to be taken, make, possess, show, distribute or advertise indecent images of children in the United Kingdom. A child for these purposes is anyone under the age of 18. Viewing an indecent image of a child on your computer means that you have made a digital image. An image of a child also covers pseudo-photographs (digitally collated or otherwise). A person convicted of such an offence may face up to 10 years in prison.

Protection from Harassment Act (1997)

A person must not pursue a course of conduct, which amounts to harassment of another, and which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.

A person whose course of conduct causes another to fear, on at least two occasions, that violence will be used against him is guilty of an offence if he knows or ought to know that his course of conduct will cause the other so to fear on each of those occasions.

The Equality Act (2010)

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It defines that schools cannot discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and orientation. Protection is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing reassignment. However, schools that are already complying with the law should there be major differences in what they need to do.

This Act makes it a criminal offence to threaten people because of their faith, or to stir up religious hatred by displaying, publishing or distributing written material which is threatening. Other laws already protect people from abuse based on their race, nationality or ethnic background.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000)

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIP) regulates the interception of communications and makes it an offence to intercept or monitor communications without

the consent of the parties involved in the communication. The RIP was enacted to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000, however, permit a degree of monitoring and record keeping, for example, to ensure communications are relevant to school activity or to investigate or detect unauthorised use of the network. Nevertheless, any monitoring is subject to informed consent, which means steps must have been taken to ensure that everyone who may use the system is informed that communications may be monitored.

Covert monitoring without informing users that surveillance is taking place risks breaching data protection and privacy legislation.

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

A new grooming offence is committed if you are over 18 and have communicated with a child under 16 at least twice (including by phone or using the internet) and then intentionally meet them or travel with intent to meet them anywhere in the world with the intention of committing a sexual offence.

Causing a child under 16 to watch a sexual act is illegal, including looking at images such as videos, photos or webcams, for your own gratification.

It is also an offence for a person in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with any person under 18, with whom they are in a position of trust. (Typically, teachers, social workers, health professionals, connexions staff fall in this category of trust).

Any sexual intercourse with a child under the age of 13 commits the offence of rape. Schools should already have a copy of "Children & Families: Safer from Sexual Crime" document, which is available from the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/children-safer-fr-sex-crime?view=Binary).

More information about the 2003 Act can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk

Appendix 4

OFSTED Guidance on key features of good and outstanding practice for e-safety

Whole school consistent approach	<p>All teaching and non-teaching staff can recognise and are aware of e-safety issues.</p> <p>High quality leadership and management make e-safety a priority across all areas of the school (the school may also have achieved a recognised standard, for example the e-Safety Mark).</p> <p>A high priority given to training in e-safety, extending expertise widely and building internal capacity.</p> <p>The contribution of pupils, parents and the wider school community is valued and integrated.</p>
Robust and integrated reporting routines	<p>School-based online reporting processes that are clearly understood by the whole school, allowing the pupils to report issues to nominated staff, for example SHARP.</p> <p>Report Abuse buttons, for example CEOP. Clear, signposted and respected routes to key members of staff. Effective use of peer mentoring and support.</p>
Staff	<p>All teaching and non-teaching staff receive regular and up-to-date training. At least one staff member has accredited training, for example CEOP, EPICT.</p>
Policies	<p>Rigorous e-safety policies and procedures are in place, written in plain English, contributed to by the whole school, updated regularly and ratified by governors.</p> <p>The e-safety policy should be integrated with other relevant policies such as behaviour, safeguarding and anti-bullying.</p> <p>The e-safety policy should incorporate an Acceptable Usage Policy that is signed by pupils and/or parents as well as all staff and respected by all.</p>
Education	<p>A progressive curriculum that is flexible, relevant and engages pupils' interest; that is used to promote e-safety through teaching pupils how to stay safe, how to protect themselves from harm and how to take responsibility for their own and others' safety.</p> <p>Positive rewards are used to cultivate positive and responsible use. Peer mentoring programmes.</p>
Infrastructure	<p>Recognised Internet Service Provider or RBC together with age/maturity related filtering that is actively monitored.</p>
Monitoring and Evaluation	<p>Risk assessment taken seriously and used to good effect in promoting e-safety.</p> <p>Using data effectively to assess the impact of e-safety practice and how this informs strategy.</p>
Management of Personal Data	<p>The impact level of personal data is understood and data is managed securely and in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.</p>

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Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 1 July 2015

Agenda item: 8

Wards: All wards

Subject: Performance monitoring:
2014/15 year-end report and 2015/16 progress: May 2015

Lead officer: Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Performance, Children Schools and Families

Lead member(s): Councillor Maxi Martin; Councillor Martin Whelton.

Forward Plan reference number: n/a

Contact officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Service Manager Policy, Planning and Performance.

Recommendations: That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel;

A. Note the year end performance report of 2014/15 and the current performance as at May 2015

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1. To provide the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel (CYP panel) with a regular update on the performance of the Children, Schools and Families Department and key partners.

1.2. Data provided in appendix one reports the year ending 2014/15

1.3. Data provided in appendix two against a new dataset as agreed by the Scrutiny panel reports as at the end of May 2015.

2. **DETAILS**

2.1. At a Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in June 2007 it was agreed that the Children Schools and Families department would submit a regular performance report on a range of key performance indicators.

2.2. The dataset reported on is periodically reviewed and revised by Members. A new more comprehensive dataset was agreed at the January 2015 Scrutiny meeting to be implemented from April 2015 inline with the new financial year.

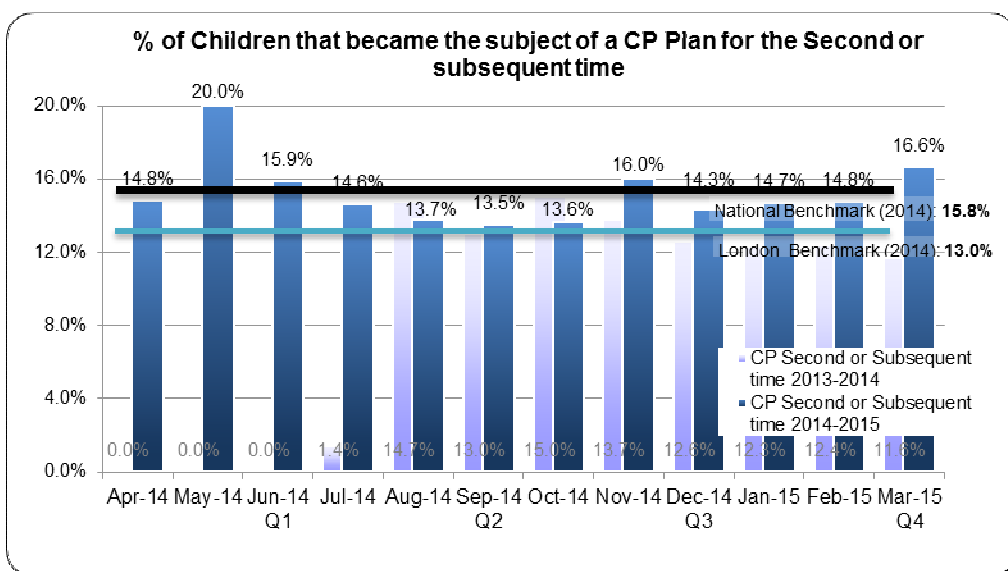
2.3. This performance report acts as a 'health check' and complements the more detailed thematic reports scheduled to the Panel which relate to specific areas of activities such as the annual Schools Standards report, Corporate Parenting Report, safeguarding performance report etc.

2.4. **2014/15 year end performance commentary**

2.5. Appendix one presents the performance dataset for 2014/15, management comments are provided below for all targets not met, as this is a year end report targets not met are reported as Red.

2.6. **Line 6: Percentage of children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time (NI 65) – Red.**

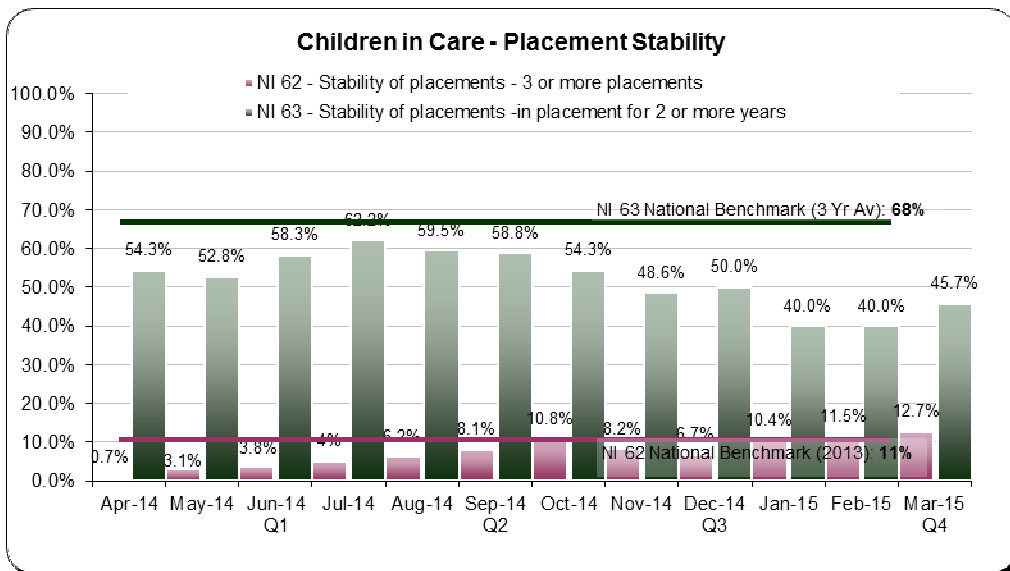
2.7. 17% of children subject to a child protection plan were the subject of a plan for the second or subsequent time. This indicator relates to 36 children with previous plans (new child protection plans started). A second plan is established where concerns which led to the original plan re-occur or where new concerns arise. It should be noted in March ten family groups represented 24 of the 36 children on a second or subsequent child protection plan. Due to the small numbers of children in this cohort one or two larger sibling groups can skew performance considerably. Although higher than Merton's norm, this indicator remains in line with the national average of 15.8% (CIN 2013/14) but above the London average 13%. Members may like to note that the national average for 2013/14 (15.8%) had increased from last year (14.9% 2012/13), 2014/15 national benchmarking data is due to be published by December 2015.



2.8. **Line 12: Stability of placements of Children in Care (length of placement) – Red.**

2.9. This length of placement indicator refers to a small cohort of children under the age of 16 who have been in care for 2 and half years or more and have been in their current placement for 2 years or more.

2.10. Of the total number of children in care only 35 children meet these criteria, 46% of these relevant children had been in a single stable placement lasting two years or more years. This equates to 16 of 35 children.



2.11. Nineteen children have not been in their placements for longer than 2 years. Again, the smaller nature of our authority and therefore smaller cohorts of children can skew performance. The national three year average for this indicator for placement length is 68% (LAC 903). On an annual basis Merton is performing below the national benchmark, however in a like for like comparison of a three year rolling average we are in line with the national performance (Merton three year average 66%). It should be noted that the placement length indicator is complemented by the placement moves indicator (3 moves or more); Merton’s March performance 13% remains inline with the national benchmark 11% (2013/14).

Moving forward placement stability remains a key focus for the authority and Corporate Parenting Board, a task and finish group has been established to review and where possible improve placement stability. A placement stability analysis report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board identified which cohorts or children were most likely to disrupt, officers are working to apply this learning to placement management to improve stability figures.


2.12 **Line 14: Percentage of Children in Care participating in their reviews – Red.**

2.13 Over the year the percentage of children in care participating in their reviews has ranged from 87% to 66% which equates to 91 of 137 children at the year end. This indicator included all children looked after over the age of 5. In order to improve performance we are working to ensure that where a child or young person does not attend their LAC review or complete consultation papers prior to the meeting, social workers will meet with the child after the review to give an update and gather their wishes and feelings to inform their care plan.

2.14 We have also launched improved information for children and young people and guidance for practitioners to facilitate and support children to chair their own LAC reviews. All children now have information about chairing their own review, and practitioners in all teams have received the Good Practice Guidance, along with time schedules to help them to plan and prepare for upcoming reviews. This work will be followed up by a meeting with Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) to discuss progress and to mitigate against barriers to implementation. An audit to gather overall feedback from children and young people on the effectiveness of their involvement in their LAC review will be completed in 2015/16.

- 2.12. **Performance monitoring 2015/16: As at May 2015**
- 2.13. **Line 10: Percentage of Children subject of a CP Plan who had a 4 weekly CP visit within timescales in the last six months prior to and including the reporting month – Red.**
- 2.14. 90% of children on a child protection plan have received all 4 weekly visits in the last six months, this is a challenging rolling indicator which does not allow for performance to improve once a single visit in the period is missed. Managers have been asked to ensure four weekly visits are completed on time.
- 2.15. **Line 11: Percentage of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time– Red.**
- 2.16. 35.7% of children have become subject to a second or subsequent plan since April. This indicator is not a concern at this stage in the year as the cohorts involved are so small, (5 of 14), as the year goes on Merton would expect to see this percentage reduce and move in line to national benchmark of 15%. This cohort of children remains under review by the Quality Assurance unit to ensure that appropriate decisions are made.
- 2.17. **Line 19: Stability of placements of Looked After Children - length of placement– Red.**
- 2.18. Placement stability has improved from the year end March 2015 (46%) May 54.5%, although this performance remains below the national average (68%), the placement stability task and finish group work is ongoing.
3. **APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
- Appendix 1: CYPP performance index 2014/15 (March 2015)
- Appendix 2: CYPP performance index 2015/16 (May 2015)
4. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 4.1. CSF Performance Management Framework <http://intranet/departments/csf-index/csf-performance.htm>

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Performance Index 2014/15

No.	Performance Indicators	Target 2014-15	Polarity	% Deviation	BRAG Rating (latest Outcome Period)	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14 / Q1	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14 / Q2	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14 / Q3	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15 / Q4	
Children's Social Care																		
1	Number of CASA's	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			100			98			138			107	Quarterly (Time lag in collating CASAs from partner agencies)
2	% of Single Assessments authorised within the statutory 45 days (Year to Date) (completed)	92%	High	3%	Green	64% (92%)	63% (90%)	59.6% (88%)	57.7% (88%)	58.0% (89%)	59.6% (90%)	59.0% (91%)	59.2% (94%)	59.5% (91%)	58.8% (90%)	59.0% (90%)	59.1% (91%)	YTD
3	% of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan with an allocated Social Worker	100%	High	0%	Green	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Monthly
4	% of reviews completed within timescale for Children with Child Protection Plans (NI 67)	n/a	High	n/a	n/a	93%	92%	90%	92%	93%	93%	94%	84%	87%	95%	93%	93%	YTD (Apr-Dec figures revised Mar 2015)
5	% of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan who had a 4 weekly CP visit in timescale (child seen)	n/a	High	n/a	n/a	92%	94%	95%	93%	93%	82%	77%	74%	89%	93%	93%	92%	Monthly
6	% of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the Second or subsequent time (NI 65)	10%	Low	20%	Red	15%	20%	16%	15%	14%	13%	14%	16%	14%	15%	15%	17%	Cumulative YTD (Apr-Dec figures revised Mar 2015)
7	% of Children in Care with an allocated Social Worker	100%	High	0%	Green	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	YTD (Aug & Nov figures revised Mar 2015)
8	Children in Care rate per 10,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	31.9	35.0	34.1	34.6	35.0	34.8	36.3	37.2	35.4	33.5	33.9	34.1	End of the month snapshot
9	Number of children who ceased to be Looked After Children who were adopted	13	High	34% (1 CYP)	Green	0	0	0	2	2	3	3	3	3	6	6	8	Cumulative YTD
10	Number of agency special guardianship orders granted					1	1	4	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
11	Stability of placements of Children in Care - number of moves (3 or more moves in the year) (NI 62)	15%	Low	2%	Green	1%	3%	4%	5%	6%	8%	11%	8%	7%	10%	12%	13%	YTD
12	Stability of placements of Children in Care - length of placement (NI 63)	75%	High	5%	Red	54%	53%	58%	62%	59%	59%	54%	49%	50%	40%	40%	46%	End of the month snapshot (Jun, Nov & Dec figures revised Mar 2015)
13	Children in Care cases which were reviewed within required timescales (NI 66)	100%	High	10%	Green	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	94%	99%	96%	94%	95%	95%	95%	YTD
Page 101	% of Children in Care participating in their reviews in month	90%	High	10%	Red	87%	87%	89%	76%	75%	70%	50%	73%	58%	60%	69%	66%	Monthly with Quarter YTD (May - Jul & Oct-Dec figures revised Feb 2015)
	Timeliness of adoption placements post best interest decision (NI 61)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	YTD
	Rate of proven re-offending by young people in the youth justice system (NI 19)	1.1	n/a	n/a	Green			1.11			0.95			0.98			1.05	Quarterly
17	First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (Cumulative)	80	Low	% (1CYP)	Green	4	12	14	23	27	34	42	43	50	51	53	60	YTD
18	Young Offenders NEET rate (Not in Education, Employment or Training)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			4.8% 11 cyp			4.7% 11 cyp			3.7% 8 cyp			3.0% 7 cyp	Quarterly Q3: November 16 - 18 NEET - supervised YOTS
20	Youth Justice Caseload per worker	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			8.2			6.9			8.3			6.3	Monthly

Education *For Attendance and Exclusion indicators the Merton 2012-2013 relates to academic year 2011-2012; National & London benchmarks may for previous academic years.																		
19	Youth service participation rate	2,000	High	0%	Green												3234	Annual Measure
21	Secondary School Persistent absence (LA) 15% threshold	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a												4.6%	Annual Measure 2.5 terms, internal data, 5 schools
22	Secondary persistent absenteeism (15% absence)	8%	n/a	n/a	Green												4.5%	Annual Measure 2.5 terms DfE Published SFR maintained and academies
23	Secondary fixed term exclusions (percentage of pupils on roll)	10%	Low	2%	Green												5.31%	Annual Measure Provisional AY 2013-2014, internal data, maintained and academies
24	% of BAME Pupil Exclusions Fixed - Secondary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a												2.76%	Annual Measure Provisional AY 2013-2014, internal data, maintained and academies
25	Primary fixed term exclusions (percentage of pupils on roll)	0.6%	Low	0.5%	Green												0.79%	Annual Measure Provisional AY 2013-2014, internal data, maintained and academies
26	% of BAME Pupil Exclusions Fixed - Primary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a												0.46%	Annual Measure Provisional AY 2013-2014, internal data, maintained and academies
27	Secondary permanent exclusions (Number YTD Acad. Yr)	19	Low	4 children per quarter	Green	2	2	2	5	7	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	August End of Acad. Yr YTD. September start of the new Acad. Yr.
28	Number/% of BAME Pupil Exclusions Permanent - Secondary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a												3 cyp/43% exclusions, 0.05% of BME pop	Annual Measure Provisional AY 2013-2014, internal data, maintained and academies
29	Primary permanent exclusions (Number YTD Acad. Yr)	0	Low	1 child	Green	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	August End of Acad. Yr YTD (August data interim until November). September start of the new Acad. Yr.
30	Number/% of BAME Pupil Exclusions Permanent - Primary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a												0	
31	Number of managed moves - Primary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			1			1			1			1	Cumulative YTD Academic Year
Page 102	All SEN statements issued in 26 weeks (without exceptions)	n/a	High	n/a	n/a	100%	96%	97%	94%	95%								Cumulative YTD Academic Year
	All SEN statements issued in 26 weeks (with and without exceptions)	95%	High	5%	n/a	100%	83%	85%	85%	87%								Cumulative YTD Academic Year
	Education, Health and Care plans issued within timescale (20 weeks)	TBC	High	TBC	new measure										50%	50%	50%	Cumulative YTD Academic Year, from 1 September 2014 only to be reported in January 2015.
35	SEN Statements Issued	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			87			31							Cumulative YTD, up until 1 September only
35b	Education, Health and Care plans issued (new)	n/a	High	n/a	n/a								1				16	Cumulative YTD, from 1 September 2014
36	% outcome of all Children Centre Ofsted inspections good or outstanding	100%	High	0%	Green			100%			100%			100%			100%	Cumulative YTD
37	% of total 0-4 year estimated ACORN estimated population from areas of deprivation (IDACI 30%) whose families have accessed children's centre services	75%	High	n/a	Green			39.2%			55.7%			66.6%			77.7%	Cumulative YTD
Road Accidents																		
38	CYP Road accidents - reported incidents Fatal/Serious/Slight	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a												68 Total 0 Fatal / 12 serious / 56 slight	Calendar Year annual measure. 2014 data provided May 2015

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Performance Index 2015/16



No.	Performance Indicators	Target 2015/16	Deviation	Polarity	Benchmarking and trend				BRAG rating	Merton 2015/16 performance												Notes			
					Merton 2013/14	Merton 2014/15	England 2013/14*	London 2013/14*		Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15 / Q1	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15 / Q2	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15 / Q3	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16 / Q4				
1	Number of Common and Shared Assessments undertaken (CASAs)	Not a target measure	n/a	High	707	443	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available	Not a target measure																Quarterly (Time lag in collating CASAs from partner agencies) YTD
2	% of Single Assessments completed within the statutory 45 days	82% (National)	2.5%	High	81%	91%	82%	78%	Green	93%	92%													Year to Date	
3	% of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20 week timescale (including exceptions)	85%	2.5%	High	100% (SEN2)	Due in Jan 2016	61.5% (SEN2)	64.0% (SEN2)																Cumulative YTD Academic Year, from 1 September 2014 only to be reported in January 2015.	
Child protection																									
4	Child Protection Plans rate per 10,000	Not a target measure	n/a	n/a	39	42	37	34	Not a target measure	36	36													Monthly - as at the end of the month	
5	Number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan	Not a target measure	n/a	n/a	182	180	No relevant benchmarking available	No relevant benchmarking available	Not a target measure	165	164													Monthly - as at the end of the month	
6	Number of family groups subject of Child protection plans	Not a target measure	n/a	n/a	86	84	No relevant benchmarking available	No relevant benchmarking available	Not a target measure	94	96%													Monthly - as at the end of the month	
7	% of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan with an allocated Social Worker	100%	n/a	High	100%	100%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available	Green	100%	100%													Monthly - as at the end of the month	
8	% of quorate attendance at child protection conferences	95%	2.5%	High	93%	91%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available																Monthly - as at the end of the month	
9	% of reviews completed within timescale for Children with Child Protection Plans	96% (National)	n/a	High	93%	93%	96%	98%	Green	100%	100%													Year To Date (NI 67)	
10	% of Children subject of a CP Plan who had a 4 weekly CP visit within timescales in the last six months prior to and including the reporting month	94.6% (National)	2.5%	High	93%	CIN Census August 2015	94.6%	97.2%	Red	88%	90%													Monthly - within timescales in the last six months prior to and including the reporting month	
11	% of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time	13% (London)	20%	Low	11%	17%	14%	13%	Red	22.2%	35.7%													Year To Date (NI 65)	
Looked After Children																									
12	Looked After Children rate per 10,000	Not a target measure	n/a	n/a	33	34.1	60	55	Not a target measure	34.3	34.8													End of the month snapshot	
13	Number of Looked After Children	Not a target measure	n/a	n/a	150	157	No relevant benchmarking available	No relevant benchmarking available	Not a target measure	158	160													End of the month snapshot	
14	% of Looked After Children with an allocated Social Worker	100%	n/a	High	100%	100%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available	Green	100%	100%													Year to Date	
15	Average number of weeks taken to complete Care proceedings against a national target of 26 weeks	37 weeks	8%	Low	29	24 weeks (Q4)	33	No benchmarking available																Quarterly	
16	% of Looked After Children cases which were reviewed within required timescales	100%	n/a	High	97%	95%	Not published	Not published	Green	99.4%	100%													Year To Date (NI 66)	
17	% of Looked After Children participating in their reviews in month	90%	n/a	High	87%	66%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available	Green	96.8%	96.9%													Monthly with Quarter YTD	
18	Stability of placements of Looked After Children - number of moves (3 moves or more in the year)	15%	n/a	Low	13%	13%	11%	No benchmarking available	Green	0.0%	1.9%													Year To Date (NI 62)	
19	Stability of placements of Looked After Children - length of placement	68%	n/a	High	58%	46%	67%	No benchmarking available	Red	45.7%	54.5%													End of the month snapshot (NI 63)	
20	%of Looked After Children placed with agency foster carers	46%	12%	Low	50%	41.8%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available																Quarterly	
21	Number of in-house foster carers recruited	20	10%	High	14	10	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available																Quarterly	
22	Number of Looked After Children who were adopted and agency Special Guardianship Orders granted	13	8%	High	15	16	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available	Green	2	4													Year to Date	

No.	Performance Indicators	Target 2015/16	Deviation	Polarity	Benchmarking and trend				BRAG rating	Merton 2015/16 performance										Notes
					Merton 2013/14	Merton 2014/15	England 2013/14*	London 2013/14*		Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15 / Q1	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15 / Q2	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15 / Q3	Jan-16	
Childrens Centres and Schools																				
23	% outcome of all Children Centre Ofsted inspections good or outstanding (overall effectiveness)	100%	0%	High	100%	100%	69%	76%												Year to Date
24	% of total 0-4 year estimated ACORN estimated population from areas of deprivation (IDACI 30%) whose families have accessed children's centre services	75%	n/a	High	78%	77.7%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available												Year to Date
25	% outcome of School Ofsted inspections good or outstanding (overall effectiveness)	86%	2.5%	High	87%	85%	79%	86%												Year to Date
26	Number of Primary permanent exclusions (Number YTD Academic year)	0	n/a	Low	0 (Academic Year 2012-2013)	0 (Academic Year 2013-2014)	n/a	n/a	Green	0	0									August End of Acad. Yr. YTD (August data interim until November). September start of the new Acad. Yr.
27	Number of Secondary permanent exclusions (Number YTD Academic year)	19	n/a	Low	12 (Academic Year 2012-2013)	7 (Academic Year 2013-2014)	n/a	n/a	Green	10	12									August End of Acad. Yr. YTD. September start of the new Acad. Yr.
28	% of Secondary persistent absenteeism (15% absence)	5%	n/a	Low	5.8% (2013)	4.5% (2014)	5.2% (2014)	4.1% (2014)												Annual Measure 2.5 terms DfE Published SFR maintained and academies
29	% of Reception year surplus places	5%	n/a	Low	3.8%	1.10%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available												Annual measure
30	% of Secondary school (Year 7) surplus places inc. Academies	5%	n/a	Low	12.3%	11.32%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available												Annual measure
Young People and Services																				
31	Youth service participation rate	1,800	n/a	High	2032	3,234	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available												Annual Measure
32	% of CYP (16 - 18 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET)	5%	20%	Low	4.0%	4.6%	5.3%	3.8%	Green	4.2%	4.2%									Monthly
33	% of CYP (16 - 18 year olds) education, employment or training status 'not known'	Not a target measure	n/a	Low	9.8%	12.4%	9.2%	12.7%	Not a target measure	4.9%	5%									Monthly
34	Rate of proven re-offending by young people in the youth justice system	1.10	n/a	Low	1.10	1.05	1.04 (2013)	1.10 (2013)												Quarterly (NI 19)
35	Number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17	80	5%	Low	88	60	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available												Year to Date
36	Number of 'Troubled families' turned around (Transforming families programme)	378	n/a	High	185 TD	326/370 88%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available												Quarterly
37	% of commissioned services for which quarterly monitoring was completed	100%	2%	High	100%	100%	No benchmarking available	No benchmarking available												Quarterly
* Benchmarking data for England and London 2014/15 will be available once published by the DfE this is anticipated from October to December 2015 for Social Care indicators (2014/15) and January 2015 for Education indicators (September 2015)																				