

**Draft Statement of Licensing Policy – Consultation Responses Received During the Public Consultation Processes.**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
AMY POTTER	PUBLIC HEALTH CONSULTANT	<b>SEE ATTACHED REPORTS</b>
OLD WIMBLEDONIANS ASSOCIATION	MEMBERS CLUB	<b>SEE ATTACHED LETTER</b>
SIERIEN RAZAK	PUBLIC HEALTH CONSULTANT (HOUNSLOW)	<b>SEE ATTACHED LETTER</b>
TOM WILKES	DPS OF NIGHTCLUB	<p>Dear Sirs.</p> <p>We write with reference to the current consultation about a new Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003.</p> <p>We are the operators of The Watershed, 267 Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1SD.</p> <p>We wish to make the following submissions:</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impact Zones in Wimbledon and Wimbledon Village</b></p> <p>These Cumulative Impact Zones should remain: there are many more licensed premises than there used to be in Wimbledon and the cumulative impact of the ones who operate late into the night because they can, rather than they should, is often clear to see.</p> <p><b>Late Night Levy</b></p> <p>Further, we would also suggest that London Borough of Merton consider a Late Night Levy on all licensed premises opening after midnight. We understand from anecdotal feedback that such schemes have been beneficial in other areas and helped to cover costs of policing and organising the night-time economy.</p>

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		<p>Links to more information:</p> <p><a href="http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07100">http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07100</a></p> <p><a href="http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07100/SN07100.pdf">http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07100/SN07100.pdf</a></p> <p>Yours sincerely, Tom/Richard</p>
SUE COOPER	RESIDENT	<p>Dear Sir</p> <p>I would like to register my support for the proposed Cumulative Impact Zone relating to alcohol sales in the central Mitcham area and give Merton Council my absolute support in this.</p> <p>My neighbours and I, resident in the Three Kings area, where the pond became a magnet for drinkers, have experienced problems due to late night drinking on many occasions, and have had to contact the police many times in the early hours due to alcohol-fueled disturbances of noise and anti-social behaviour, witnessing activities such as fighting, use of the pond and any vegetation in the area as a lavatory (one neighbour trimmed back vegetation, so disgusted was he with its use as a lavatory at all times of day), and the garbage left by these people. It has been stressful and vile.</p> <p>This behaviour has not been limited to night time, as on several occasions drunken individuals have been seen in the day, around the pond and in the town center, including vomiting and urination etc. On a few occasions the state of the perpetrators has been so bad that ambulances have had to be called by the police, placing yet more strain on an already stretched NHS.</p> <p>The supermarkets already sell the brands of beer and spirits favored by these individuals, but these outlets close relatively early. Other stores are open later, for example the 'convenience stores' which can provide late night drinkers with alcohol supplies after the</p>

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		<p>supermarkets have closed, and we are aware that certain enterprises would stay open throughout the night if allowed. Noting an burgeoning business opportunity, other stores have applied for new alcohol licenses, for example one food store clearly seeking to exploit its position close to Three Kings Pond, which, thankfully, and after protests from local residents, was refused.</p> <p>As a positive note, the situation, particularly around the pond appears to have improved considerably recently. Whether this will continue we do not know, but actions from the Council and the Police have been very effective so I would like to thank both parties for their efforts.</p> <p>To increase the opportunity to purchase drink, would surely increase the attractiveness of Mitcham to those people who abuse it, and further problems would ensue. Therefore - and particularly as somebody who has previously sustained Actual Bodily Harm from a drunk who was vandalizing my car, I would totally support the introduction of a CIZ in central Mitcham. On speaking to neighbours, they are almost entirely in agreement with the CIZ proposal, so any steps the council take to lessen the endless drinking that goes on around here will be generally well received.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Sue Cooper</p>
OWEN JAMES	RESIDENT	<p>Dear Sir,</p> <p>I write with regard to the above Public Consultation.</p> <p><b>CUMULATIVE IMPACT ZONE FOR MITCHAM</b></p> <p>I wish to add my wholehearted support to the proposals to restrict the sale of alcohol in the Mitcham and Graveney area.</p> <p>I have lived on Links Road, SW17 for c.10 years and during that time I have seen a huge rise in the problems of street drinking, much of it associated with the huge rise in EU</p>

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		<p>migrants into the area during this period of time.</p> <p>Problems associated with this street drinking include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- a huge increase in litter, including broken bottles</li><li>- the intimidating atmosphere created by young men standing around in large groups, getting drunk on the street</li><li>- regular instances of street-drinkers urinating in residential areas</li><li>- instances of aggression from street drinkers to members of the public (including myself, and I have reported instances of this aggression to the police in the past).</li></ul> <p>I firmly believe that restricting both new AND CURRENT off-licenses in the area from selling alcohol would make an important contribution to reducing what has become a high volume, highly visible and pernicious problem in the area.</p> <p>There are so many off-licenses in my local area that I feel firm action is required as soon as possible. And to reiterate, it is my strong belief that this CIZ should operate to restrict existing licenses to sell alcohol, as well as new ones, because the concentration of existing off-licenses is already far too high.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, my concerns do not extend to the sale of alcohol for consumption on licensed premises in pubs, cafes and restaurants. On the contrary, I feel such local businesses should be supported to the extent they encourage people to consume alcohol in a social environment, somewhere other than residential street corners and public highways.</p> <p>The implementation of a CIZ would support our pubs and restaurants by restricting the sale of cut-price alcohol elsewhere, and this is another reason why I support the proposals.</p> <p>Yours faithfully, Owen James, 51 Links Road, London SW17 9EE</p>
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<p>SUE THOMAS</p>	<p>RESIDENT</p>	<p>I have received the information regarding the draft changes to the licensing policy and as a resident would like to offer my full support.</p> <p>I have lived in Melrose Avenue for over 30 years and have seriously contemplated moving because of the lack of control over street drinkers in the area. Both my daughter and my mother (aged 89) as pedestrians, have constantly witnessed the street drinkers at the top of Melrose Avenue, Streatham Road and a Elmhurst Avenue, whilst walking home in the early afternoon and evening. They do not consider going out at night without us arranging to pick them up, purely because of the intimidation by the drinkers who buy their alcohol and openly consume it along Streatham Road.</p> <p>It has always been a mystery to me how Tesco's, co.op, general grocers shops, newsagents and even the post office have received a license to sell alcohol, when they are all in such close proximity to each other.</p> <p>As a resident I am constantly picking up empty cans and quarter vodka bottles from the pavement, kerbside and around trees and putting them in my own household rubbish. Cans and bottles are always left in Edgehill Road outside the 2 garages and the gates which join Garden Ave. The drinkers also gather in the North Mitcham playground area where young children play.</p> <p>I personally witnessed a drunk who was urinating, quite openly, leaving nothing to the imagination, the other Sunday morning at 11:30am, at the top of Links Road SW17. The 2 men and a woman were absolutely 'legless' and one man and the woman looked on laughing whilst the other man openly urinated. Again they had purchased alcohol, whilst already drunk, from the local grocers and were openly drinking and staggering along the road.</p> <p>This level of anti social behaviour is totally unacceptable in a residential area and I am unaware what impact the CDZ has had in terms of prosecution, but I have not noticed any changes.</p> <p>At least a Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ) for Mitcham and all roads leading into Mitcham,</p>
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		<p>would have some control over the refusal of further applications for licenses to sell alcohol.</p> <p>I would also like it to have some impact where licenses come up for renewal, again, due to the close proximity to the shops who all sell alcohol.</p> <p>Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any way I can give any further support to the proposal, or you need any further information.</p> <p>Susan Thomas</p>
MR & MRS RYAN	RESIDENTS	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,</p> <p>We have lived in Mitcham for over 38 years and are appalled at the state of the streets due to the increase of street drinking.</p> <p>The drinkers make the streets dirty, not only with bottles and cans but by urinating and defecating here there and everywhere. It is very intimidating to anyone walking past as they are usually in big groups. We are also on a school route so not a good thing for children to have to see. We have no problem with restaurants having a licence to sell drink with meals as people are inside and not making a nuisance of themselves in the street. We would like to see the whole of Mitcham a CIZ zone as only having it on main roads just pushes them into the side roads and outside peoples houses.</p> <p>Mr &amp; Mrs Ryan - Elmhurst Avenue.</p>
D HILDRETH	RESIDENT	<p>Dear Councillors,</p> <p>As you aware, We have a no drinking zone in place for Figges Marsh but this is still flouted on a regular basis by the non English speaking communities.</p> <p>Until you can enforce the laws already in place I don't see how bringing new ones will help reduce the problem.</p> <p>Regards,</p>

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		Mrs D.Hildreth, 12 Manship Road Mitcham CR4 2AY
ZUL HANAFIAH	RESIDENT	<p>Dear Merton council</p> <p>I live in Garden Avenue. There are many local shops selling alcohol near my house. There are also the COOP and Tesco's.</p> <p>As a result, in the evenings, there are groups of 10 or more Sri Lankan youths hanging around the street corners, drinking or dealing drugs. Although they are not violent to me, they are intimidating.</p> <p>If you can reduce the number of small off-licences in the area, that may help solve a lot of problems.</p> <p>Kind regards, Zul hanafiah</p>
WALTER PICANO	RESIDENT	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I'm in favour of allowing local restaurants to serve alcohol with food, but revoke all those that sell alcohol as a spin-off to boost their sales. Off licence shops are ok with me. We have enough premises that sell alcohol, in fact alcohol is more freely available than petrol in Mitcham.</p> <p>Regards Walter Picano Chairperson - Merton NHW Association</p>

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<p>MIKE NELSON</p>	<p>RESIDENT</p>	<p>I am a resident of Graveney ward and have noticed a huge increase in anti-social behaviour related to drinking. We already have a no drinking zone, but this is impossible to police and we suffer from cans and bottles of beer and spirits being discarded on walls and in our gardens. My 25 years old son recently experienced racist abuse from drunk eastern Europeans in the shop at the end of our road and called me to meet with him as he was fearful of being attacked. The 2 very drunk individuals, who had been allowed to purchase even more alcohol, despite staggering, threatened both of us when we indicated we would call the police. All of this at 2pm on a Sunday afternoon!</p> <p>The problem certainly seems more pronounced at weekends during the day and we would urge Merton to implement a Cumulative Impact Zone for Mitcham as identified on the published map.</p> <p><b>Best Regards</b> <b>Mike Nelson</b></p>
<p>MAGS ALEXANDER</p>	<p>RESIDENT</p>	<p>Hi</p> <p>I have been lobbying my Councillors for many years regarding this issue.</p> <p>I live in Montrose Gardens, Mitcham which is the only residential road to run directly on to the Fair Green. We are never free of alcohol related problems. These include, anti-social behaviour such as shouting, swearing and fighting and urination due to too much alcohol and no public toilet.</p> <p>Barclays Bank has a small wall around its Car Park. This wall is used daily by men as a meeting area. They sit on the wall, drink and then leave the containers strewn all over the pavement. Often they will sit with outstretched legs and refuse to move for pedestrians attempting to walk by – I have often been forced into the road!</p> <p>Groups stand around drinking and shouting, often just at each other, but it is intimidating</p>



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		<p>especially for older and more vulnerable people and creates an atmosphere of unpleasantness particularly at evening time.</p> <p>I believe that alcohol is too freely available at all hours of the day and night. I have tenants in the house opposite me who go out at 7:00 am and return with carrier bags full of cans. It seems unbelievable that people can buy beer at this time of the day. There is no reason for so many of the retail outlets to have alcohol licences at all and CCTV should be used far more to monitor and prosecute anti-social alcohol related behaviour.</p> <p>I am more than happy to be contacted again.</p> <p>Mags Alexander 33 Montrose Gardens CR4 2PJ</p>
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Dear Licensing team,

Please find attached the Public Health response to the Statement of Licensing Policy consultation.

Also attached are:

- Healthwatch Merton 'healthy high streets' consultation report
- Youth Inspectors 'healthy high streets' survey report (a summary of the alcohol-related data from this report is provided in Appendix C of the PH Response – this is the full report which includes findings about fast food, litter etc)

Many thanks to Caroline Land and the Youth Inspectors, and to Healthwatch for their support in developing this Public Health response.

Amy

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## MERTON STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY REVIEW 2015 – LB MERTON PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE

Having reviewed the proposed changes to the Statement of Licensing Policy document, we are pleased to see a number of additions that acknowledge the impact of alcohol on health as it relates to the licensing objectives and the role that Public Health now plays in the licensing process. In particular, we welcome the inclusion of;

- Reference to the national Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy (4.2.1)
- Reference to the Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the influence of the licensing process on the strategy's aims (4.2.5)
- Reference to the role of the Director of Public Health as a responsible authority and the regular partnership meetings now held (4.5)

We support the additions in Section 8.3 (Consideration of adequacy of measures to deal with crime and disorder) as we believe this will serve to encourage consideration of responsible practice by applicants.

Similarly we are also pleased to note the reference to the Schedule of Model Conditions in Section 3.5. We believe this is likely to improve the quality of applications and further support applicants to consider adoption of responsible practices that promote the licensing objectives. We strongly recommend that the full Schedule is made available and a link to the Schedule is provided in the policy document for ease of reference. If the Schedule is not available at the time of publishing, we recommend including a locally developed set of conditions based on best practice. The Public Health team would be happy to liaise with the Licensing Authority and other Responsible Authorities to agree this list.

### **Additional points for consideration**

Further to the proposed changes, we strongly suggest the Committee to consider the inclusion of a number of additional points and believe that the revision of the SLP presents an opportunity to be more ambitious in setting the context for licensing practice in Merton, with appropriate regard for the legal framework underpinning the policy;

"The SLP provides the vision for the local area and a statement of intent that can provide a clear way forward to guide practice... [the SLP] can invite [applicants] to consider local issues and set out how they can contribute to positively addressing them... [and provides] an important opportunity to incorporate relevant local public health concerns within the wider policy context of the local licensing authority."<sup>1</sup>

We believe that the policy should set out a clear Merton vision for balancing a vibrant local economy while prioritising the health and wellbeing of residents, which it does not currently do. This could be in the form of an introductory vision statement for the approach to licensing in Merton, developed jointly by the Responsible Authorities. As an example, the Merton Public Health team currently includes the following text as part of our representations to the Licensing Committee, setting out our framework for alcohol:

Tackling alcohol misuse is central to achieving the outcomes in Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy: giving every child a healthy start in life, supporting people to improve their health, improving wellbeing, resilience and connectedness, and reducing the gap in life expectancy between the east and west of the borough. We want to create an environment and a culture in the borough that prevents problem drinking from starting and provides early help for people who are struggling. One of the ways we will be doing this is ensuring health and wellbeing considerations are presented for consideration in licensing decisions, in order to tackle alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour, ensure public safety and prevent harm to children.

This could be amended to reflect a joint vision for the borough.

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<sup>1</sup> PHE & LGA (2013) Public Health and the Licensing Act 2013 – guidance note on effective participation by public health teams

In addition, we would like to see the following:

## 1) Embedding health in the policy

- We would like to see a specific section on alcohol and health, which we have drafted and include in our response for the Committee's consideration (Appendix A). This could be included as an appendix to the policy. With the significant and widely recognised impact of alcohol on health, we believe that the inclusion of this additional information would serve to strengthen the link between the SLP and the wider strategic aims of the borough. While not impacting on the legal basis of the SLP, this would enable applicants to consider the influence they have on these aims and ways in which they may act not only to reduce the negative impact of their licence on these issues but also to positively promote the strategic aims of the borough.
- We would like to see the following additions to the wording of the policy;
  - Section 1.4 – 'The Council's strategic objectives include ***promoting health and wellbeing and improving the quality...***'
  - Section 1.9 – Add to the end of the section; '***The policy therefore aims to encourage a vibrant local economy while promoting a safe, sociable and healthy environment.***'
  - Section 4.1 – 'to ensure proper integration of local crime prevention, ***health and wellbeing***, planning, transport...'
  - Section 4.2.1 – Add an additional bullet point;
    - '***utilising health and other data to inform licensing policy and decisions***'
  - Section 13.7 – 'eg. police ***or Public Health*** representations relating to crime and disorder'
  - Section 16.6 – Add
    - '***Public Health – health as it relates to the four licensing objectives***'

## 2) Promoting the licensing objectives

- We believe the SLP should be clearer in setting out the expectation on applicants to actively support the licensing objectives and promote a safe sociable drinking culture in Merton. Therefore we believe it would be beneficial to add a statement in Section 3.5 such as that proposed below;
  - '***The Licensing Authority expects applicants and licence holders to have due regard to the promotion of the licensing objectives and take active measures to contribute to this aim. The operating schedule should be used to set out a detailed explanation of how applicants will promote each of the four objectives. The Licensing Authority would particularly encourage active involvement in best practice initiatives such as local pubwatch schemes and proof of age schemes such as Challenge 25. We would also expect all people applying for licences to install and maintain good quality closed circuit television (CCTV) in the interests of public safety and security.***'
- We also believe that it would be beneficial to develop a 'Code of Good Conduct' for licensed premises, encouraging applicants to adopt a range of voluntary measures that promote the licensing objectives. We recognise that this may be something to explore subsequent to the publication of the revised SLP, however the intention could be referenced in an additional bullet point at the bottom of Section 4.2.1;
  - '***Explore the implementation of voluntary code of good conduct schemes with on and off licence holders***'
- We would support greater emphasis on the protection of children from harm and suggest an opening statement to Section 11;
  - '***Licensed premises may present a risk of physical, moral or psychological harm to children, therefore the Licensing Authority expects applicants to consider measures to protect children from harm where relevant to the type of premises and the activities relating to the licence.***'

We would also like to see a second statement referring to underage sales;

- ***'Where licences cover the sale of alcohol, the Licensing Authority expects strict controls to be in place to prevent underage sales. Measures that should be considered by applicants to manage this include refusal logs, training of staff on use of IDs and age verification schemes.'***

- Where the role of the DPS is mentioned in Section 16.2, we would suggest adding a short statement on recommendations of requirements for a DPS. While we recognise that the act does not place additional duties on a DPS, there is an opportunity to recommend training or measures that help to promote the licensing objectives and the responsible management of premises, such as awareness of first aid, provision and storage of CCTV and ensuring the safe departure of customers.

### **3) Cumulative Impact Policy**

- Public Health conducted an analysis of local data in May 2015 to inform the decision both on the implementation of a new cumulative impact zone (CIZ) in Mitcham Town and the area of the zone. This analysis provides evidence to strongly support the proposal and is included as an appendix to our response (Appendix B). If the proposal is accepted, this data could be included in an appendix to the revised SLP.

Two further pieces of work were also conducted to further inform this decision

- A team of Youth Inspectors (YIs) conducted an audit of 165 shops and premises in the proposed Mitcham Town CIZ in August 2015. The YIs concluded that overall, they felt that the high streets were unhealthy due to the amount of alcohol and unhealthy food for sale in the area. A significant number of convenience stores or supermarkets in the area sold alcohol, a majority of which sold super strength alcohol (i.e. beer or cider of 6.5% ABV or more). Over four fifths of the stores also sold alcohol in single cans. Just over a third of stores had significant advertising of alcohol outside, in the window, or clearly visible from outside the store. A further summary of the research can be found in Appendix C.
- Healthwatch Merton also conducted consultation work with local residents in early September 2015 to gather people's views on the area of the proposed CIZ in Mitcham Town using an online survey, two 'pop up cafes' in Mitcham Town Centre and a drop-in at Cricket Green Medical Practice. A total of 192 people participated in the consultation through these mechanisms. One third of respondents (64) felt that Mitcham Town Centre has too many alcohol shops. Among responses directly relating to the alcohol environment were concerns about street drinkers, with reports of alcohol being consumed on the streets, giving 'Mitcham a bad name' and making 'the area look bad'. Over half of respondents also felt that the area was littered, with comments regarding broken glass and beer cans on the streets. There was significant mention of anti-social behaviour and crime and safety during the night, with 117 and 94 respondents respectively reporting these as a concern. Several respondents noted a desire for restrictions to be placed on alcohol, fast food and betting shops in the Town Centre. The Healthwatch report is included along with this consultation response.

We believe that the information gathered in both of these exercises further supports acceptance of the proposal for the CIZ in Mitcham Town Centre, showing a clear influence of alcohol on negative perceptions of the local area and a concern for many residents.

Additionally;

- We would suggest inclusion of an additional statement after Section 7.15 setting out steps that could be considered by licence holders operating within a CIZ to reduce the impact of the licence;
  - ***'There are a number of measures that licence holders of existing premises within these cumulative impact zones can take to further promote the licensing objectives. These include the use of door supervisors, radio schemes and participation in local pubwatch or responsible retailer schemes.'***

- Section 7.1 – When examining the zone, we could not find a Steel Road as referred to in the outline of the Mitcham Town CIZ. We assume this is supposed to be Seely Road. ('London Road to **Steel** Road as far as Tooting Over Ground Station and borough boundary')
- Section 7.6 – Referring to the Wimbledon Town Centre CIZ, the opening paragraph of this section states in brackets that '(part of this area is also a Controlled Drinking Zone)'. It is our understanding that the whole borough is now a Controlled Drinking Zone, therefore this statement would need to be removed.

#### 4) Evaluation

- It is important to be able to assess and demonstrate the effectiveness of the policy in order to monitor impacts and provide evidence to support and inform future policy revisions. We would therefore recommend including a section prior to Section 22 detailing methods that will be used to evaluate the SLP. Public Health would be happy to provide support in the ongoing evaluation of the SLP using the data available to us.
- We propose the following wording for this section;
  - ***'The Licensing Authority will monitor the effectiveness of the Policy in order to provide evidence to support and inform future policy revisions. This will be done from two perspectives;***
    - ***Monitoring the process; including quality of applications, number and locations of applications received, approved and rejected, number of reviews and appeals and outcomes.***
    - ***Evaluating the impact; including data on levels of crime and disorder and numbers of complaints, and underage alcohol use through ambulance and test purchase data, particularly in relation to the Mitcham CIZ'***

11 September 2015

Consultation response prepared by Public Health Merton, on behalf of the Director of Public Health

Contact: [publichealth@merton.gov.uk](mailto:publichealth@merton.gov.uk)

Web: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/publichealth>

## Appendix A – Alcohol and Health in Merton

The Public Health White Paper, *'Healthy Lives, Healthy People'* (2010) identified reducing harm from alcohol misuse and encouraging sensible drinking as important priorities. The negative health impacts of alcohol are well documented, with associations with cancers of the oral cavity and pharynx, larynx, oesophagus and liver. Excessive alcohol intake can also be directly linked to ill health and death from liver cirrhosis and circulatory disease. Alcohol misuse is also associated with a wide range of criminal offences including drink driving, criminal damage, assault and domestic violence. The availability of alcohol sales outlets, and their hours, is also linked to levels of harm. Many of these impact significantly on the health of those affected, with recent research pointing to high levels of harm in England caused to individuals by other people's drinking.<sup>2</sup> These harms include being harassed or insulted and being kept awake at night. Among young people, risky drinking behaviour is frequently linked to anti-social behaviour and teenage conceptions.

### **Health and the licensing objectives**

The Director of Public Health (DPH) is able to make representations where they are relevant to promotion of the licensing objectives, using local health data such as that recorded by the London Ambulance Service to assess the potential impact of an application on the four objectives.

The local data available is particularly pertinent to the **prevention of crime and disorder**. A 2010 report published by NICE that looked at the prevention of harmful drinking estimated the total annual cost of crime and anti-social behaviour linked to alcohol misuse in England to be over £8billion.<sup>3</sup> Health data indicating patterns of alcohol-related crime and disorder can therefore indicate areas where there are particularly high levels of incidents where alcohol consumption has contributed to violence and injury. Public Health will also consider evidence relating to **public safety** and the **prevention of nuisance** where these are deemed to have an impact on, or pose a risk to, the health of local residents and the environment within which they live.

The fourth objective, the **protection of children from harm**, is directly related to the strategic aims of the borough, with partners working to give every child the best start in life. A wide range of outcomes are associated with alcohol consumption among children and young people, from immediate impacts such as increased likelihood of sustaining injuries and being the victims of crime, to longer term effects such as long-lasting cognitive deficits and impacts on educational performance.<sup>4</sup> Prevention of underage drinking is therefore of paramount importance alongside the consideration of the harm that may be caused to children as a result of alcohol consumption in adults with whom they have contact.

### **The local picture**

The Local Alcohol Profile for Merton<sup>5</sup> indicates that, while Merton compares favourably to local authorities nationally, there remains a significant impact of alcohol locally. Merton had an alcohol-related mortality rate of 38.3 per 100,000 people in 2013 and a total of 1,866 alcohol-related hospital admissions in 2013/14. While alcohol-related admission rates in Merton have historically been lower than rates in London and across England, these have increased in recent years, suggesting changes in drinking behaviour in Merton.

Issues relating to alcohol have also been identified as a source of worry for local residents with alcohol-related disorder representing a significant concern for participants in Safer Merton's Strategic Assessment Consultation undertaken in 2012. 27% of respondents to the 2013 Merton Annual Residents Survey felt that there were too many alcohol outlets in their local area and 41% of respondents to the 2014 survey reported being fairly or very worried about people being drunk and rowdy.

Balancing the benefits of a healthy economy with the health impacts of the alcohol environment on local residents and visitors is therefore key to the creation of a safe and sociable borough.

Further information can be found in the Merton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, online at [www.merton.gov.uk/health-social-care/publichealth/jsna/lifestyle-risk-factors/adults-substance-misuse/alcohol-jsna.htm](http://www.merton.gov.uk/health-social-care/publichealth/jsna/lifestyle-risk-factors/adults-substance-misuse/alcohol-jsna.htm) and [www.merton.gov.uk/health-social-care/publichealth/jsna/lifestyle-risk-factors/young-peoples-substance-misuse.htm](http://www.merton.gov.uk/health-social-care/publichealth/jsna/lifestyle-risk-factors/young-peoples-substance-misuse.htm)

<sup>2</sup> [www.ias.org.uk/uploads/pdf/IAS%20reports/rp18072015.pdf](http://www.ias.org.uk/uploads/pdf/IAS%20reports/rp18072015.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph24/resources/alcoholuse-disorders-preventing-harmful-drinking-costing-report2](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph24/resources/alcoholuse-disorders-preventing-harmful-drinking-costing-report2)

<sup>4</sup> [www.ias.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Factsheets/Underage%20drinking%20factsheet%20December%202013.pdf](http://www.ias.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Factsheets/Underage%20drinking%20factsheet%20December%202013.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [www.nepho.org.uk/pdfs/local-alcohol-profiles/E09000024.pdf](http://www.nepho.org.uk/pdfs/local-alcohol-profiles/E09000024.pdf)



## Appendix B – Cumulative Impact Zones

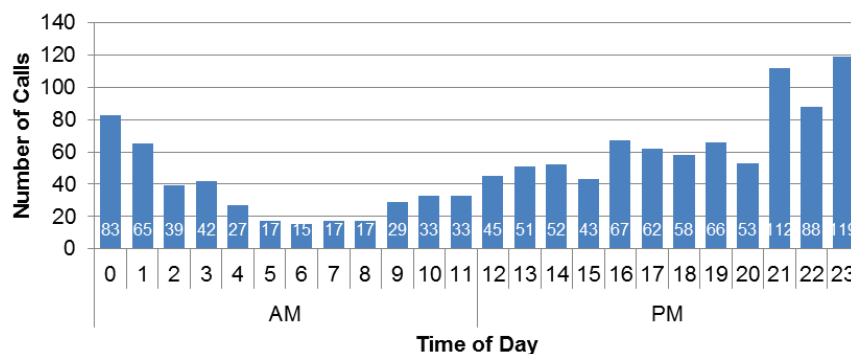
In May 2015, Public Health analysed local data to assess alcohol-related harm in Merton and the need for an additional Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ) in Mitcham Town. The data analysed included international research evidence and local data; that recorded by the Metropolitan Police, London Ambulance Service and Transport for London in addition to local surveys of Merton residents.

A high concentration of alcohol outlets and increased hours or days of alcohol sales has been linked to higher levels of alcohol related harms. The number of alcohol –related ambulance call-outs in Merton varies by time of day, which may indicate a link with the hours of alcohol sales.

Figure 1. Number of alcohol-related ambulance call-outs in Merton by time of day, Jan-Dec 2014

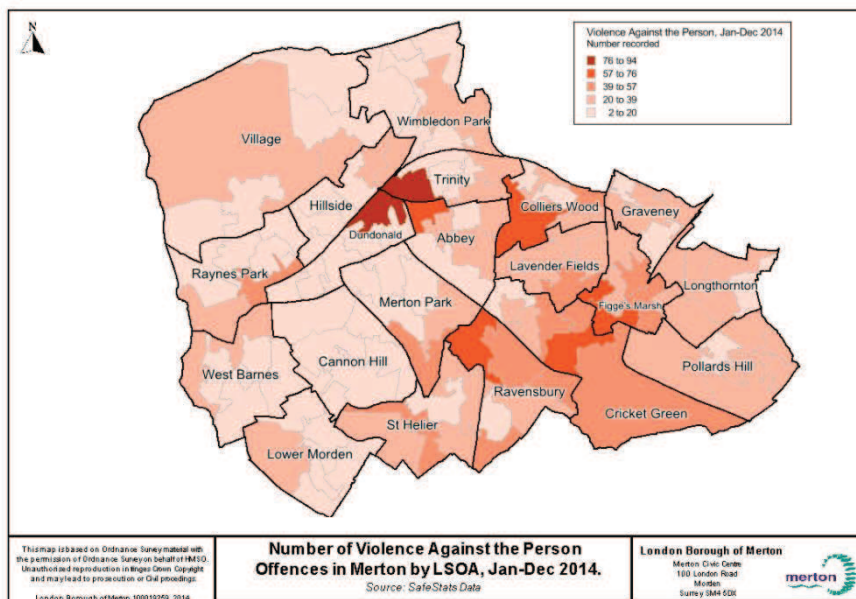
### Number of Alcohol-related Ambulance Call-outs in Merton by Time of Day, Jan-Dec 2014.

Source: SafeStats Data



The areas of the existing Wimbledon Town Centre CIZ and the proposed Mitcham Town Centre CIZ were seen to have high levels of violence against the person offences in 2014 (Fig 2). This data included murder, common assault, offensive weapon, harassment, other violence, assault with injury and wounding/grievous bodily harm.

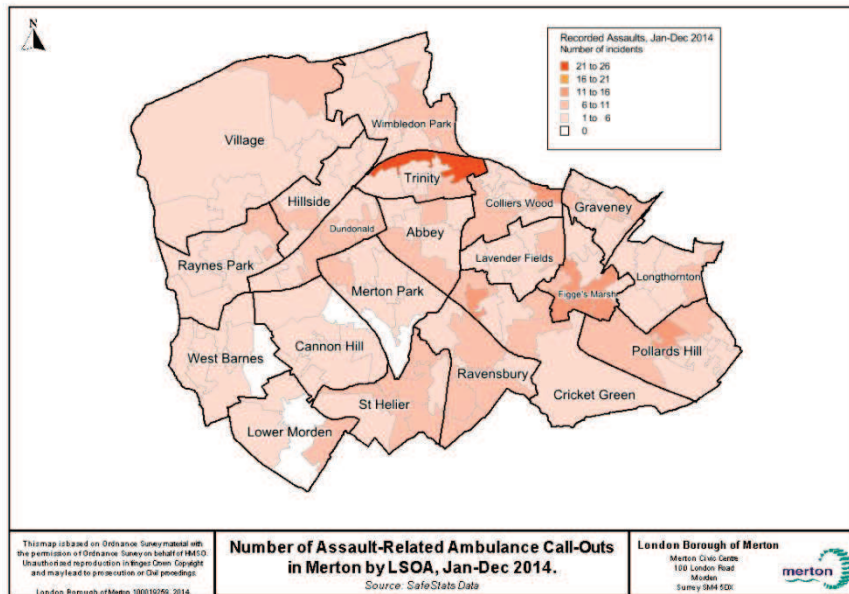
Figure 2. Violence against the person offences by LSOA, Jan-Dec 2014



The areas bordering Mitcham Town Centre and Wimbledon Town Centre also had a high number of assault-related ambulance call-outs (Fig 3). These figures both indicate high levels of crime in the area, which the evidence shows is often related to alcohol use.

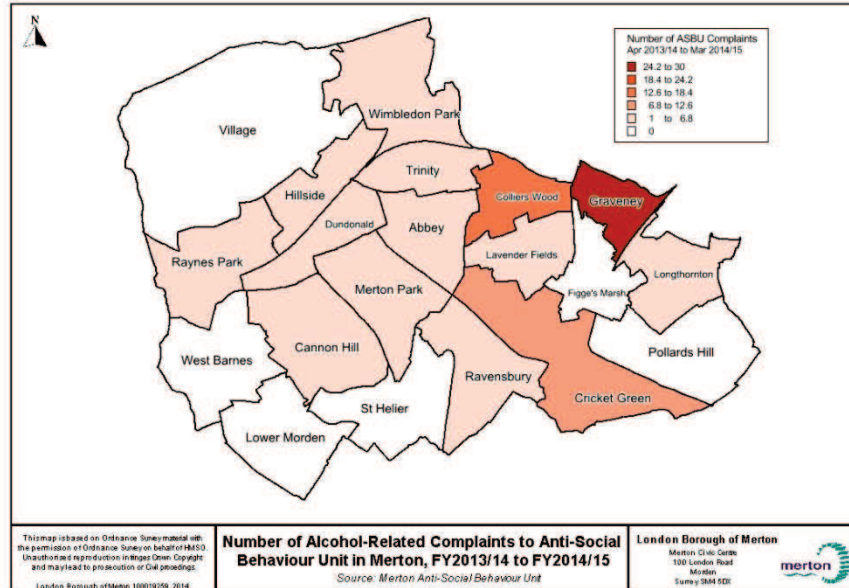


Figure 3. Number of assault-related ambulance call-outs in Merton by LSOA, Jan-Dec 2014



Where residents have been asked for their views on anti-social behaviour as part of Merton’s Annual Residents Survey, approximately 40% of respondents in areas relating to the Mitcham Town CIZ reported being fairly or very worried about people being drunk and rowdy. Alcohol-related complaints received by the anti-social behaviour unit were also found to be high in Cricket Green Ward and Graveney Ward, both of which have part of the proposed CIZ within them.

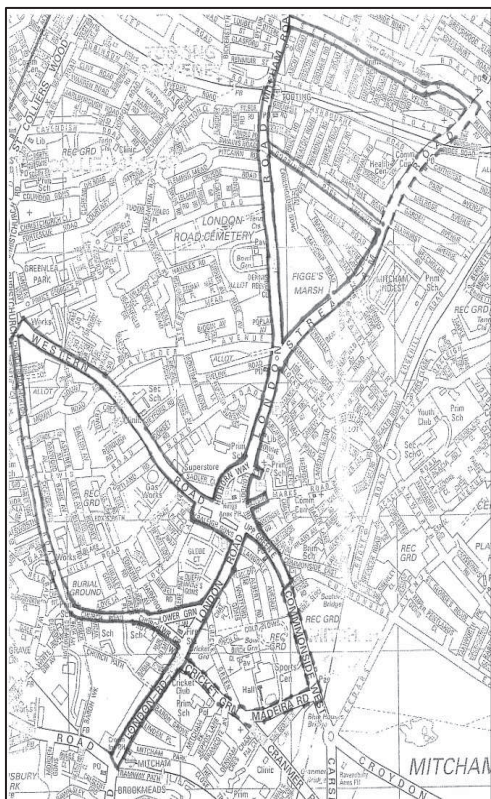
Figure 4. Number of Alcohol-Related Complaints to Merton Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, FY2013/14-2014/15



Due to the evidence presented above, and other available data, Public Health therefore strongly supports the acceptance of the proposed CIZ in Mitcham Town Centre and surrounding areas, including Figges Marsh and the surrounds, as we believe this would serve to limit the already high levels of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour demonstrated in this area. We believe the CIZ should apply to both on- and off-licences; however food-led establishments would be looked on with preference if appropriate steps are outlined to promote the licensing objectives. We believe that if the proposal is accepted, further analysis should be undertaken to monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy going forward.

## Appendix C - Youth Inspector 'healthy high streets' research

On 19/20 August 2015, a team of Youth Inspectors (YIs) walked the area covered by the proposed Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ) around Mitcham (see map). They noted whether premises they passed sold alcohol or fast food, and the appearance of stores and streets, noting any antisocial behaviour or litter.



*"I think Mitcham overall is quite a unhealthy high street, there was a high number of fast food shops and restaurants that sold mostly fried food. The shops were very similar in terms of appearance and the way they promoted their food. For example, having posters of price deals displayed. Although there was a variety of different kinds of shops, such as Chinese/Caribbean/South Asian I feel that young people have limited options, particularly when it comes to healthy meals. Also we came across a number of off license shops which had alcohol advertised either on display or could be seen through the window which could encourage purchase."* Youth Inspector

*"I think Mitcham is a very unhealthy high street. I would not come to shop here as there are not many shops that interest me. There appears to be a very large number of off-licences and fast food shops which aids in attracting binge drinkers and consequently causes anti social behaviour. Mitcham also seems very dirty and run down with a lot of litter and cigarette butts."* Youth Inspector

*"Overall, I think Mitcham is an unhealthy high street...due to the high percentage of corner shops selling single cans of extra strong alcohol, which is often advertised or visible from the window. Also, there are many food outlets but the vast majority were fast food establishments which offered no healthy options. In some areas there was a lot of litter (mostly cigarette butts), outside betting shops and near bus stops in the town centre. However, many of the pavements were very well kept and clean. Litter seemed to occur in small concentrated areas. Most of the shops seemed well kept and tidy. It is due to the amount of alcohol and unhealthy food that is for sale in area that make it an unhealthy high street."* Youth Inspector

### Summary of findings

Youth Inspectors noted 165 premises in the Mitcham Cumulative Impact Zone area. Of these, 44 (27%) were places to buy food ingredients, 26 (16%) were fast food outlets, 3 (2%) were restaurants, 6 (4%) were cafes, 6 (4%) were pubs, 6 (4%) were betting shops and 2 (1%) were payday loan shops. The rest (72, 44%) were a mix of other uses, for example estate agents, hairdressers, garages.

	Youth Inspectors survey
<b>Total number of premises in Mitcham CIZ area</b>	165
<b>Number of restaurants or cafes</b>	9
<b>Number of hot food takeaways</b>	26
<b>Number of pubs or bars</b>	6
<b>Convenience store or similar<sup>6</sup></b>	44
<b>Payday loan company</b>	2
<b>Pawnbroker</b>	0
<b>Betting shop</b>	6

<sup>6</sup> E.g. somewhere selling food ingredients and other commodities (grocer, deli, off-license, supermarket, fishmonger etc)

### Findings about availability of alcohol in the proposed Mitcham CIZ area

The YIs noted 44 places to buy food ingredients (i.e. convenience stores, corner shops, grocers, off-licenses, supermarkets); of these, at least 80% (35/44) appeared to sell alcohol. Alcohol is therefore available in at least a fifth (21%, 35/165) of all premises noted by the YIs. They also noted 6 pubs in the proposed CIZ area.

Of the 35 convenience stores or supermarkets that sold alcohol:

- At least 57% (20/35) sold super strength alcohol (i.e. beer or cider of 6.5% ABV or more). A third (31%, 11/35) did not (4 unknown). The majority (83%, 29/35) sold single cans (5 did not, 1 unknown).

Of the 35 stores selling alcohol:	Number of stores (n=35)		
	Yes	No	Unknown
Store sells super strength alcohol	20	11	4
Store sells single cans	29	5	1

- The YIs estimated what proportion of each store was allocated for alcohol. The **majority** (69%) of the 35 stores selling alcohol had a quarter of their retail space set aside for alcohol:

Proportion of stock that is alcohol		Number of stores (n=35)
Less than a quarter		1
Quarter		24
Half		5
Other:	“entire aisle”	1
	“everywhere”	1
Not noted		3

- The YIs noted that a minority (23%, 8/35) of premises had alcohol at the back (6/35) or hidden from view (2/35). A quarter (26%, 9/35) had alcohol at the front, most visible from the window, and a quarter in the middle of the store:

Location of alcohol stock	Number of stores (n=35)
Front / visible from window	9
Middle	9
Back	6
Everywhere	3
Hidden	2
Behind counter	4
Unknown	2

- Two fifths of stores (14/35) did not have any external advertising of alcohol. A similar amount did have alcohol advertising: 12/35 had significant advertising of alcohol outside, in the window, or clearly visible from outside, an additional 3/35 had alcohol advertising within the store:

Alcohol advertising	Number of stores (n=35)
External / visible from outside	12
Within the store	3
No advertising	14
Unknown	6

### **Findings about availability of cigarettes in the proposed Mitcham CIZ area**

- The majority (70%, 31/44) convenience stores sold cigarettes. 5 did not. 8 unknown.

### **Other aspects of the high street**

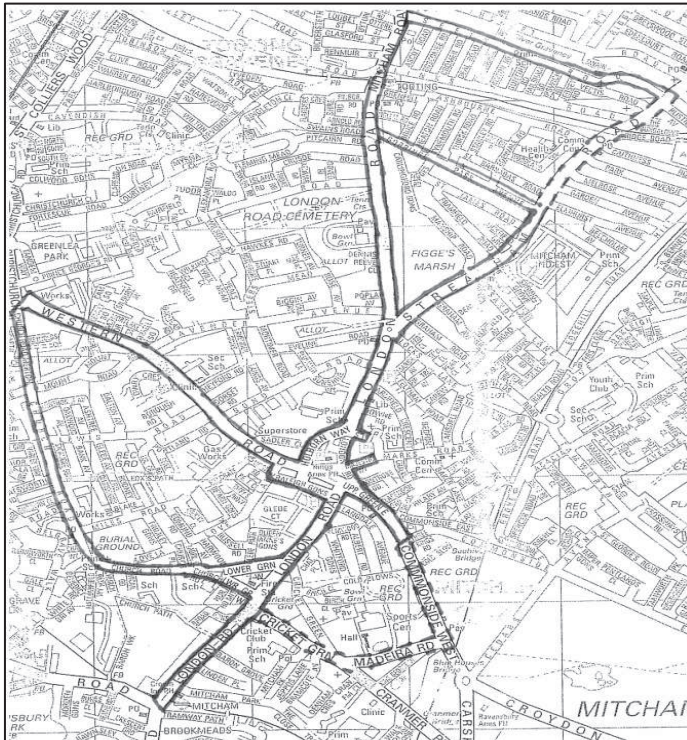
The YIs noted that 18/165 (11%) stores were not clean or well kept. Litter was seen outside 34/165 (21%). In the majority (27/35, 77%) the litter was smoking-related (cigarette butts, packaging); in 4/35 (11%) there was fast food packaging; in 1/35 (3%) the litter was alcohol-related (a spirit bottle). They specifically noted that flowers outside two of the 6 pubs made them look attractive. The YIs noted 76/165 (46%) premises that they felt made the high street more healthy, and 61/165 (37%) premises that they felt made it less healthy:

- The types of store noted as *healthy* were mainly supermarkets, cafes, health-related shops (e.g. dentists and pharmacies), as well as other outlets such as hairdressers, charity shops, estate agents. Comments included “*More healthy – sells fish*”, “*More healthy - sells variety of fruit and veg*”.
- The types of premises noted as *less healthy* were fast food outlets, supermarkets/convenience stores (e.g. a food and wine shop was noted as “*Less healthy - does have fruits but very low stock*”, and “*Fruits were rotten/expired*”; a convenience store as “*Less healthy – just sweets and fizzy drinks*”) and betting shops. YIs unanimously felt that betting shops and payday loans shops made the high street less healthy. Litter was noted outside half (3/6) of the betting shops (cigarette pack and spirit bottle; fast food packaging; cigarette butts), and half (1/2) of the payday loan shops (cigarette butts). One betting shop had signs outside saying that ASB will not be tolerated and drinking is not permitted.



## Youth Inspector 'healthy high streets' research to inform the Statement of Licensing Policy review

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### Findings about availability of cigarettes in the proposed Mitcham CIZ area

- The majority (70%, 31/44) convenience stores sold cigarettes. 5 did not. 8 unknown.

### Findings about availability of fresh fruit and vegetables in the proposed Mitcham CIZ area

- The YIs noted that fresh fruit/veg were on sale in at least 60% (26/44) of the premises that sold food ingredients (convenience stores, corner shops, grocers, off-licenses, supermarkets etc). No fruit/veg was on sale in just over a quarter (27%, 12/44); the presence of fruit/veg was not recorded in a further 6.
- Of those stores selling fruit/veg, the produce on sale in 15% (4/26) of premises was noted to be low stock or poor quality. The fruit and veg was found at the front of the store in 42% (11/26) of premises, and at the back or hidden in 12% (3/26).

Stock of fresh fruit/vegetables?		Number of stores (n=44)	
No		12	
Yes	Yes – quantity not given	20	26
	Yes – high stock / variety	2	
	Yes – low stock / minimal	4	
Not noted		6	

### Findings about access to healthy options and availability of fast food in the proposed Mitcham CIZ area

- The YIs noted 35 places to eat (i.e. cafes, restaurants or fast food outlets). Fast food outlets make up 74% (26/35) of the available food provision. YIs generally felt that fast food outlets made the high street less healthy: of the 26 outlets, they thought that only one made the high street more healthy (a pizza takeaway); they felt that the other 25/26 (96%) made the high street less healthy.
- They noted that all the cafes and all the restaurants sold healthy options, but only 15% (4/26) of fast food outlets had any healthy options available and more than 60% (16/26) did not. A further 6 premises (23%) were unrecorded as to their healthy options.

Type of food outlet	“Does this store make high street more or less healthy”		“Does it sell healthy options”		Total
	More	Less	Yes	No	
Café	6	0	6	0	6
Restaurant	2	1	3	0	3
Fast food	1	25	4*	16*	26
Total	9	26	13	16	35

\*This does not add up to 26, as a further 6/26 premises' healthy options were not recorded

### Other aspects of the high street

The YIs noted that 18/165 (11%) stores were not clean or well kept. Litter was seen outside 34/165 (21%). In the majority (27/35, 77%) the litter was smoking-related (cigarette butts, packaging); in 4/35 (11%) there was fast food packaging; in 1/35 (3%) the litter was alcohol-related (a spirit bottle). They specifically noted that flowers outside two of the 6 pubs made them look attractive. The YIs noted 76/165 (46%) premises that they felt made the high street more healthy, and 61/165 (37%) premises that they felt made it less healthy:

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## HEALTHY HIGH STREETS CONSULTATION: SUMMARY REPORT





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## INTRODUCTION

As part of an ongoing consultation to help shape the Councils licensing policy statement in a part of east Merton, Healthwatch Merton worked in partnership with Public Health Merton to support this work. The licensing policy sets out how the Council plans to use its powers to shape provision of alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment in Merton.

Healthwatch Merton gathered people's views of the kind of high street/town centre they would like to have in their community as well as finding out if people feel there are too many betting shops, places to buy alcohol and fast food outlets in the Mitcham area.

Further information on the statement of licencing policy can be found on the following website <http://news.merton.gov.uk/2015/07/02/residents-to-have-say-on-mertons-licensing-policy/>

## METHODOLOGY

Healthwatch Merton used a range of methods for this research:

### Survey

Using questions provided by Public Health Merton, Healthwatch Merton designed a survey that was circulated through the Merton Voluntary Services Council (MVSC) database as well as promoting on the Healthwatch Merton website and through social media.

The survey was also sent to targeted audiences, including local GP practices, local councillors and the Mitcham Town Centre Police team.

The survey was live online for three weeks from Monday 17 August 2015 and a total of 87 online surveys were completed.

### Outreach

Healthwatch Merton hosted two 'pop up cafes' in Mitcham Town Centre on Tuesday 1 September 2015 and Thursday 3 September 2015. The Healthwatch Merton Information and Outreach Officer, along with volunteers spoke with residents and passers-by to find out their views of the local area and used the survey as prompts for discussion. A total of 90 people spoke with Healthwatch Merton across the two days. Participants also had the opportunity to design their own healthy high street by choosing from a variety of pictures and also added ideas of their own by writing on a blank picture.

The Healthwatch Merton Information and Outreach Officer spent time at Cricket Green Medical Practice on Wednesday 2 September and spoke with 15 people including patients and staff, again using the survey as prompts for conversations.



Healthwatch Merton engaged with a wide range of people from different ages (ranging from 7-90), ethnicities and backgrounds to ensure that a fair snapshot of people’s views were captured.

## FINDINGS

A total of 192 people participated and shared their views on Mitcham Town Centre and local area.

Out of the 192 people that engaged with Healthwatch Merton, 191 provided details of why they visit Mitcham Town Centre, and the area indicated on the map.

22 said that they visited as it ‘has everything that I need’, 128 said that ‘it is local and close to home’ and 41 said ‘it is local and close to where I work’.

Comments that people made in relation to why they visited the area included:

*‘I like to support local businesses. It’s important for maintaining community cohesion’*

*‘I avoid shopping in Mitcham due to the antisocial behaviour and lack of variety’*

*‘The main reason I go to this area is for Mitcham tram stop’*

*‘I only visit because it is close...it has a poor selection of shops’*

When asked **what people like** about the Mitcham Town Centre, there was a mixed response. All 192 respondents provided their views and could choose all that applied from a selection of statements and also add their own comments.

I don’t like anything	55
Range of shops	52
Health care, pharmacy, optician	51
Green space	49
Cultural/Library	41
Gym/Leisure centre	26
Meeting places	22
Variety of places to eat and drink	22
Walking and cycling opportunities	16

Additional comments included:

*‘It’s a shame Mitcham was a busy town centre, it lacks a mix of shops, no variety too many betting shops’*



*'The parking over Morrisons is good and affordable please don't take it away'*

*'Mitcham Town Centre used to be a pedestrian friendly area, nice to walk around and shop in the limited shops. Not now though'*

*'I feel Mitcham's green space has great potential but I don't feel very safe in the area'*

*'I like that they are rebuilding'*

*'Not many stalls on market - surprised that McDonald's closed'*

*'Only like Iceland, Morrisons and Greggs'*

*'Not a good range of shops - would like to see more health food shops, more cloths shops for kids etc'*

*'It's very accessible with lots of buses'*

*'It's ugly. I don't invite my pals to the area because there isn't anything here'*

*'Nice place, mixed community, reasonably good'*

*'Not overcrowded because not a lot to attract people. If there were quality amenities and services it might attract more people'*

*'There's a range of shops but no sit-in restaurants/coffee shops of good quality'*

When asked **what people felt best described** the Mitcham Town Centre, the most referenced feedback was *'too many betting shops'* with 125 respondents choosing this statement. Again, a selection of statements was given and respondents could choose all that applied.

Too many betting shops	125
Run down	118
Littered	106
Congested (traffic)	96
Poor quality of shops	93
Too many fast food outlets	74
No variety	73
Too many alcohol shops	64
Too many pay day loans	54
Accessible	49
Has empty shops	47



It is green	29
It is clean	11
Attractive shop fronts	1

Additional comments included:

*'It does not make the most of its historic buildings'*

*'Badly designed road infrastructure, congestion and lack of support for commercial and retails investment'*

*'Many drunks on green and or outside pub or betting shops'*

*'Too many 99p shops-why was the letting to Poundland agreed?'*

*'Too many barber shops being used for drug dealing'*

*'Too many pound shops'*

*'Would love to see more nice cafes and 'venues' that attract people to the town centre rather than fast food shops'*

*'Too many Charity Shops'*

*'Wrong sort of variety of places and shops'*

*'Most of the shops don't have anything that I want'*

*'The local drinkers and drug takers give Mitcham a bad name and make the area look bad'*

*'Barbers everywhere'*

*'Bins not empties enough - wind blows litter. Fast food outlets make litter. Some attractive shop fronts'*

*'Too many barbers - approx. 20. Too many betting shops in small areas'*

*'Not accessible - I am a wheelchair user'*

*'Not enough healthy restaurants!'*

*'Don't like alcohol being consumed on the streets'*

*'I am moving away from Mitcham as soon as possible'*

*'Disgusting - broken glass, beer cans'*

*'Poor variety of shops. No diversity represented'*



When asked what was not liked about Mitcham Town Centre, a high number of respondents felt that there was a lot of anti-social behaviour that took place in the area and that there was not enough access to toilets.

Anti-social behaviour	117
Not enough access to toilets	111
Crime, safety during the night	94
Alcohol outlets	64
Crime, safety during the day	53
I am happy with it	10

Additional comments included:

*'It is tired, run down and has no defined centre or purpose'*

*'The drug smokers and drunks do not make the Fair Green a nice place to visit'*

*'People sitting there with cans of beer, some sleeping there during the day, and groups of undesirables'*

*'It has lost its sense of identity and only shops with cheap products are visible from the road'*

*'It's run down with little to offer'*

*'I am a day-time visitor and am happy generally with public behaviour in the area'*

*'Lack of places selling nice fruit and veg, lack of venues e.g. nice cafes that draw people in from a wider area'*

*'When betting shops close there is anti-social behaviour. A lot of drunks in betting shops'*

*'Rats on roads and gardens from fast food takeaway waste'*

*'The police are nice and friendly and always around'*

*'It's not very welcoming'*

*'It's not well lit'*

*'Community police not here at night. Lots of drinking in town centre and smoking drugs'*

*'No toilets - very important problem. Too many useless changes to road works. Unnecessary and costly'*



*'Lots of drunk people and betting people, feels intimidating, makes area unappealing to look at'*

A total of 163 respondents shared their ideas about improving the local area and how to make it healthier and nicer place to live and visit. Comments included:

*'Tighter planning rules on allowing more fast food outlets, betting shops etc'*

*'More litter bins'*

*'Encourage entertainment centres (eg. general cinema/bowling centre etc) to make it a place to visit for those not local'*

*'Wider variety of shops would be good'*

*'Close down the alcohol and betting shops, improve parking, more visible policing, clean up the pavements and streets, remove graffiti'*

*'Some more vibrant colours and spaces'*

*'No more betting shops. We need some nice cafes for some cafe culture'*

*'More popular shops and a more eye catching market'*

*'More police officers patrolling the green and moving the drunks/drinkers on'*

*'Better type of shops, to encourage more visitors and spending. I.E high street fashion chain, quirky local produce, market with more interesting and choice ie local produce, crafts'*

*'Nice places to sit and eat lunch'*

*'More outdoor play equipment for kids and adults; more environmental projects/allotments/free fruit trees and herbs etc planted for us to share; 'community cafe' with space for arts and music'*

*'Better Lighting is a must'*

*'Carefully think about attracting other types of shops/market stalls into the area, either by having pop up shops/community cafes. Not everyone who lives in Mitcham wants to buy everything for 99p/£1. If there was a local bakers, greengrocers I know myself and my neighbours would use this, as fresh produce is what we try to buy locally, but have a very limited selection, so use the supermarkets instead'*

*'Rediscover Mitcham is a good project, but the community could do more to support the town centre'*

*'More community engagement, fun things to do that don't involve alcohol. Having said that, the old McDonalds provided a youth hub in the centre of the town centre, but this was due to the commitment of the manager - this model could work really effectively. Introducing more independent shops, but also some chains to attract*





*more people to shop locally - there is so much potential, lots of green spaces, lots of history, etc. Engaging the community is priority to finding out what they want'*

*'Better walking and cycling, more fresh fruit and veg, places to sit and chat, public toilets'*

*'More family friendly activities. More community focussed and cultural events to help create a safer and more inclusive atmosphere'*

*'Make the Common more accessible by trimming overhanging trees and clearing footpaths of overgrowth so we pedestrians can actually reach and enjoy our Heritage'*

*'Better variety of shops, less betting shops, pound shops and barbers, more independent shops, more coffee shops to meet friends in, less pollution'*

*'More children's areas to play and meet'*

*'A Healthy Living Hub (see Healthy Living Hub in Croydon) that provides information and support to help people follow a healthy lifestyle'*

*'A variety of good quality local restaurants to dine in'*

*'Cleanliness needs improving. People need to take responsibility and not litter'*

*'More disabled access'*

*'More healthy food shops, Turn on of our parks into track and field, more entertainment, support traders in keeping Mitcham clean. Parks need to be more accommodating in a track and field'*

*'Needs a better social community. Needs more attraction in Mitcham'*

*'Implement the law regarding anti social behaviour'*

*'Restrictions - alcohol, fast food, betting'*

## KEY THEMES

### Number of betting shops:

One of the most prominent findings was that there are *'too many betting shops'* with people strongly linking this to anti-social behaviour and crime. With 65% of people making this comment, it is clear that this is an area that people would like addressed.

### Number of fast food outlets:

Almost 40% of the 192 people we engaged with felt there were too many fast food outlets in the area. People said that they would like better access to healthy foods including more restaurants that provide healthy options. The



general consensus was that if there were more alternatives to fast food chains these would be regularly used and would be of great benefit to the general health of the community. Many had the view that the large quantity of fast food shops only increased the problem of Mitcham Town Centre being littered and an unpleasant environment.

#### **Number of places to buy alcohol:**

When given the opportunity to comment on what best describes Mitcham Town Centre, 33% of respondents (64 out of 192) commented that there were too many alcohol shops in the area. Also worth noting is that the same amount of people commented that this was what they did not like about Mitcham. When adding further comments, people stated that there was a strong link between the availability of alcohol in the area and people visibly drinking in public during the day and night as well as anti-social behaviour, which residents and visitors to Mitcham found intimidating.

#### **General high street/town centre environment and variety of shops:**

Overall, there were significantly more negative responses as opposed to positive about the town centre environment. Many of the additional comments centred on the area not being safe or a welcoming environment. A very high number of participants (62%) described the area as ‘run down’ and felt there was a high level of anti-social behaviour which contributed to respondents feeling unsafe and uneasy in Mitcham. When asked what people liked about Mitcham Town Centre, almost 30% answered with ‘*I don’t like anything*’. In terms of the variety and range of shops available in Mitcham Town Centre, 52 people said that they liked the range of shops compared with 73 who said there was ‘no variety’. This showed mixed views on the diversity of retail outlets. The majority of respondents felt that the area was in desperate need of improvement, and would like their high street/town centre to be much healthier than it currently is.

#### **Public Toilets:**

While the opportunity to comment on whether there are ‘*not enough access to toilets*’ was given as a quantitative statement (it being the second most referred to reason not liked about Mitcham Town Centre) it is also significant that a large number of respondents made a point to add it as an additional comment that there was not sufficient toilet facilities in the town centre.

#### **Number of barber shops:**

A surprising finding of the survey, as well as anecdotal evidence given, was that almost 10% of participants commented that there was too many barber shops in the area. This was surprising as it was not offered as an option on the survey. There was a general feeling from speaking to people that there has been a link between the increase in barber shops and crime.





### **Lack of amenities and activities for children and young people:**

A regular feature of discussion and comment was the lack of amenities and activities for children and young people in the area. From speaking with children and young people ranging from 7-25, they felt that there was very little to do. Parents and carers had concerns about activities for children and young people and older people felt that if there were more amenities/activities it would keep young people '*off the street*' and '*out of trouble*'. Many commented on the closure of McDonalds and felt that this was a focal point for socialising and often brought the community together.

### **Lack of engagement from Local Authority about the Rediscover Mitcham project:**

Another common topic for discussion was the lack of engagement by the Council with residents and visitors to the area around the Rediscover Mitcham project. General feedback was that people would have liked to have been consulted with and able to offer and share their views for improving the area. There was an uncertainty amongst people about the projects progress and outcomes. While people felt passionately about the area that they work and live in, they felt that they are not well enough informed about the on-going regeneration. Many people did comment that they were glad investment was being made and hoped that it will improve the area.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Healthwatch Merton would like to thank all those that supported and engaged with us through-out the consultation. Healthwatch Merton would also like to thank all of our volunteers that helped with the 'pop up café'.



## APPENDIX 1 - SURVEY



### Calling all Mitcham residents or visitors of Mitcham Town Centre:

Healthwatch Merton are helping Public Health Merton to gather people's views on the Mitcham High Street/Town Centre.

This is part of an ongoing consultation to help shape the Council licensing policy statement in the Mitcham area. The policy sets out how the Council plans to use its powers to shape provision of alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment in Merton. We also want to take this opportunity to broaden out the discussion wider to talk about other aspects of the Mitcham area including betting shops, fast food outlets and what people want from the Mitcham high street/town centre.

Please click view the Mitcham Town Centre map first as this will help you when completing the survey.

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#### 1. If you visit or shop in any of the areas indicated on the map, please indicate why? \*

- It has everything that I need
- It is local and close to home
- It is local and close to where I work
- Any additional comments?

#### 2. What do you like about Mitcham town centre? (please tick all that apply) \*

- Range of shops
- Variety of places to eat and drink
- Walking and cycling opportunities
- Cultural/library



- Gym/leisure centre
- Green space
- Health care, pharmacy, optician
- Meeting places
- I don't like anything
- Any additional comments?

**3. What do you feel best describes Mitcham town centre? (please tick all that apply) \***

- Littered
- Congested (traffic)
- Run down
- Poor quality of shops
- Has empty shops
- No variety
- Too many alcohol shops
- Too many fast food outlets
- Too many betting shops
- Too many pay day loans
- It is green
- It is clean
- Attractive shop fronts
- Accessible
- Any additional comments?

**4. What don't you like about Mitcham town centre? (please tick all that apply) \***

- Crime, safety - during day



- Crime, safety - during night
- Alcohol outlets
- Anti-social behaviour (Drunks, fighting, drinking)
- Not enough access to toilets
- I am happy with it
- Any additional comments?

**5. Do you have any ideas about making Mitcham town centre healthier or a nicer place to visit? \***





## HEALTHY HIGH STREETS CONSULTATION: SUMMARY REPORT

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September 2015





## The Old Wimbledonians Association

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9<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Mr. Barry Croft  
Licensing Manager,  
London Borough of Merton,  
Merton Civic Centre,  
Morden, Surrey SM4 5DX

Dear Barry,

This is a short note to thank you for sending me information on the review of the London Borough of Merton's licensing policy statement.

The Old Wimbledonians Association supports the four licensing objectives and understand the redrafting of the policy statement to accommodate both the legal and social changes that have taken place since the previous statement was produced.

We look forward to seeing final version of this statement when it is published next year; I assume that we will be notified once this is published and available on line.

Yours sincerely,

Michael O'Brien

**OWA Secretary**

## Statement of licensing policy

LiveWell Merton has reviewed the policy and Public Health Merton Response to it.

We will be giving our views on sections that are related to of the following policy objectives, they are:

- Public Health
- Protecting children from harm.

We would add the following suggestions:

In section 3.8,

- LiveWell Merton need to be included on the list of organisations consulted.

In section 4.2.5

- Currently, LiveWell Merton is working on one of the five keys themes within the Strategy. Accomplishing this by working in close collaboration with Public Health Merton in order to achieve Good Health target. Accordingly, participation within the Health and Well-being Strategy would bring a mutual benefit.
- In the same section, and on issue of ' Protecting children from Alcohol-related crime....etc' the provision of early family/school intervention will be important to have this issue fully addressed.

In section 4.5/4.4

- Where 'Community plan' was mentioned, it will be important to include/consult LiveWell organisation in developing it as it is one of the key players.
- It will be good to recognize the collaborative work between organisation like LiveWell and Merton police in addressing alcohol abuse and the need to do more collaborative with other organisations in Merton like Alcohol Concern.

### **Public Health Merton Response**

We would like to stress that LiveWell is in full agreement with the proposed changes suggested by Public Health Merton and we are happy that public health is playing an important role in the licensing process,

It will be of importance to pay attention to issues mentioned in Merton JSNA in particular those related to Health and Demography on the Licensing Policy. This will give some back ground information to each area in Merton and would give clear picture for any area in Merton, which is under consideration for licensing policy.

We would like to stress also that the following points mentioned in the 'Additional Points' section from Public Health Merton Response, will need to be paid some consideration, these are as follow:

- It will be very beneficial to have a specific section on alcohol and health and it will be important to include Appendix A in the policy. It shows the profound cost of alcohol abuse on many public health services in the borough.

- The changes in drinking behaviour might necessitate more partnership work with many partners organisations so as to raise awareness of its impact on health and economy. This might include training of many leaders in organisations/premises owners especially where licensing may present a physical, moral or psychological harm to children. The training will give a clear picture of why the authority is so strict in the licensing process and its effect on Children safety. This will include the point of sell of alcohol, where the owner need to be vigilant as young people are aware of the age restriction and they might ask an adult to buy alcohol to them, so CCTV deterrent in these situations, will be vital.
- In the 'Evaluation' part, LiveWell will agree that the Monitoring the process and Evaluating the impact are important but mentioning time scale will be necessary, this might be annual or biannual review to provide evidence to support and provide a clear picture for the future policy revisions.

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