

# Merton Council

## Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel



Date: Wednesday 17 April 2013  
Time: 7.15 p.m.  
Venue: Committee Rooms B, C and D  
Merton Civic Centre, London Road,  
Morden SM4 5DX

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### AGENDA

Page Number

1.	Declarations of interest See note 1	-
2.	Apologies for absence	-
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2013	3
4.	Matters arising from the minutes	-
5.	Merton LINK final update	9
6.	Costs for Better Services Better Value Review	11
7.	Community and Housing levels of debt	21
8.	Safeguarding Older People Task Group – Department Action Plan	24
9.	Planning the Panel's 2013/14 Work Programme	40

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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.**

For more information about the work of this and other overview and scrutiny panels, please contact, Stella Akintan, Scrutiny Officer, on 020 8545 3390 or e-mail [stella.akintan@merton.gov.uk](mailto:stella.akintan@merton.gov.uk). Alternatively, visit [www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny)

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## Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Membership

### Full Members:

Councillor Suzanne Evans (Chairman)  
Councillor Peter McCabe (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Brenda Fraser  
Councillor Maurice Groves  
Councillor Logie Lohendran  
Councillor Dennis Pearce  
Councillor Linda Taylor  
Councillor Greg Udeh

### Substitute Members:

Councillor Laxmi Attawar  
Councillor Janice Howard  
Councillor Sam Thomas  
Vacancy

### Co-opted Representatives

Myrtle Agutter  
Laura Johnson  
Sheila Knight  
Barbara Price  
Saleem Sheikh

### Note 1

Members are reminded of the need to have regard to the items published with this agenda and, where necessary to declare at this meeting any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined in the The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 ) 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 Council's Assistant Director of Corporate Governance.

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### *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.

Overview and Scrutiny's main roles are:

- holding the Cabinet to account
- improving and developing council policies
- examining decisions before they are implemented
- engaging with members of the public
- monitoring performance of the council and its partners

Scrutiny can look into services provided by other agencies and other matters of importance to the people of the borough. Scrutiny has legal powers to monitor and hold to account local health services (Health and Social Care Act 2001) and to scrutinise crime reduction and community safety issues (Police and Justice Act 2006).

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.

For more information, please contact the Scrutiny Team on 020 8545 3390 or by e-mail on [scrutiny@merton.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@merton.gov.uk). Alternatively, visit [www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny) .

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL

12 FEBRUARY 2013

7.15pm-9.20pm

PRESENT: Councillors: Suzanne Evans (chair), Peter McCabe, Margaret Brierly, Brenda Fraser, Maurice Groves, Logie Lohendran, Dennis Pearce, Greg Udeh.

Co-opted members: Laura Johnson, Sheila Knight, Saleem Sheikh,

ALSO PRESENT: Simon Williams, Director of Community and Housing, Geraldine Abram, Performance Manager Adult Social Care, Kris Witherington, Consultation and Community Engagement Manager, Dr Val Day, Interim Director of Public Health, Stella Akintan, Scrutiny Officer.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from co-opted members Myrtle Agutter and Barbara Price

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 16 JANUARY

The Chair highlighted that Page nine paragraph three should read “underspend” rather than “overspend”

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was concern that some residents are having difficulties accessing the drop in mental health services as they are located primary in Wimbledon and service users live in Mitcham. The Panel asked for more information about where service users live.

The Chair said that any issues regarding the additional information circulated after the budget discussion, should be raised by panel members at the meeting in April.

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL  
12 FEBRUARY 2013

5 PUBLICATION OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE LOCAL ACCOUNT 2011-12

Simon Williams the Director for Community and Housing reported that this is the second year that Merton has published a local account. Although this is not a mandatory requirement; central government want local authorities to be transparent and accountable to local people. The Panel were asked to comment on how clear and readable the document is.

A panel member said that in the graph on page forty nine on 'older people residential care - cost per person per week', should reflect the fact that self funders pay more for their residential care.

A panel member pointed out that there are stark differences across local authorities on costs for older people costs for nursing care, is this due to the fact that quality is not assessed, making it difficult to make meaningful comparisons? The Director confirmed that this was the case.

A panel member pointed out that some people will not be able to access this information and also when reading this data may be driven by affordability rather than quality, what are we doing to address this?

The Director reported that we are building a local resource through Merton-i. There is information so people can assess quality. We are hoping that people will be able to access this at GP Surgeries in the future.

A panel member asked if the low cost of day care services is due to lack of activities exercise and stimulation.

The Director reported that Merton offers all day opportunities; we keep a good number at affordable prices, rather than fewer that are more expensive.

A panel member highlighted that the recent resident's survey shows that people think that adult social care services in Merton are getting worse.

The Community and Engagement Manager reported that there is a 16% decline in satisfaction with adult social care; this is similar to trends across London. This figure is also obtained from a small cohort of people. The departments own survey found

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL  
12 FEBRUARY 2013

high satisfaction amongst carers and users.

A panel member asked if the voluntary sector is represented in the Local Account figures.

The Director reported that figures include the commissioned voluntary sector; unit costs are a mixture of what we provide and commission.

A panel member said they would like to see a distinction between local authority and private provision. It was also asked how we check up on providers to avoid some of the service failures that have happened elsewhere?

The Director reported that the commissioning team is being restructured to ensure that we have more monitoring officers. The CM2000 software will also help to monitor quality.

A panel member asked how we can be more transparent about our failings. The Director said we could include a section on 'learning when things go wrong'. A panel member pointed out that we need to be open and transparent but we must also be balanced in reporting.

A panel member pointed out the re-ablement grant from the Department of Health is given to people discharged from hospital. Merton Council made the decision not to include people discharged from mental health hospitals.

The Director reported that the council has not made that decision; we have low levels of delayed discharge in Merton. If there is a problem we will use this funding.

6 TRANSITION OF PUBLIC HEALTH TO THE LONDON BOROUGH OF  
MERTON

The Chair asked Dr Val Day, interim Director of Public Health to update the panel on the latest developments with the transition. The Director reported that they are now dealing with the final details of the transfer such as staff contracts and intellectual property. The Public Health grant announced on the 10 January means that the council has £1 million more than expected.

A panel member queried why targets are set for diagnosing 2,400 cases of chlamydia per 100,000 and why we were funded accordingly: surely it is better if less

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL  
12 FEBRUARY 2013

people who are diagnosed out of those tested?

Dr Day reported that the numbers diagnosed are those we could expect given what we know about the disease, so we need to target and screen enough people to ensure that we identify a good number of sufferers. The funding we receive was based on screening a lower percentage of the local population than the previous national target, but with the new target based on diagnosis levels it is hoped the planned funding will be sufficient if the programme runs efficiently.

A panel member asked if we can set our own targets for smoking cessation as we need a scientific and robust measure,

Dr Day reported that the measure has been the four week quit rate and we have a local measure of six months. The problem with long term follow-up is locating people as they have often moved on. There is a public health outcomes framework which sets out local information on Merton; it will take a full year to get the full Merton only data.

A panel member asked how we measure the success of the objectives/targets.

Dr Day reported that they vary according to the aspect of health. For each there is a measure based on the best evidence of what is achievable. This is based on comparisons across the country.

The Chair expressed disappointment that the Panel's comments were not incorporated into the final draft of the health and wellbeing strategy.

Dr Day reported that they had tried to take account of all comments as a result they had increased number of cross cutting themes from five to six. Dr Day agreed to look at it again.

A panel member pointed out that there was no indication of direction of travel in the risk register.

Dr Day pointed out that this is a snap shot as it is moving from the PCT to the council; It will be updated after the transition.

## COMMISSIONING A LOACL HEALTHWATCH IN MERTON

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL  
12 FEBRUARY 2013

Kris Witherington the Consultation and Community Engagement Manager reported that there had been an open tender process and five bids had been submitted. Hounslow is tendering for the complaints service on behalf of twenty six boroughs.

A panel member asked how a service on behalf of twenty six boroughs will be monitored? The Consultation and Community Engagement Manager reported that the contracts stipulates that monitoring will be conducted by each individual borough as well collectively

A panel member asked if Healthwatch Merton will be an independent body, The present Link has membership from organisations funded by the council, who will make the final decision about the tenders?

It was reported that Healthwatch will be an independent legal entity. Conflicts of interest are detailed in the specification. The governance structure under has not been specified but they will be required to develop an open and transparent model. The Director and Cabinet Member will make the final decision.

#### GP FUNDING REVIEW

The Chair again expressed her concern that for the third time the panel had not been given the information requested about the re-allocation of funds. Panel members asked again for ward based information about individual surgeries and changes to their funding stream.

#### WORK PROGRAMME

A panel member suggested that we look at CQC's new mental health assessment.

The scrutiny officer informed the panel that members of the task group looking at supported housing for people with mental health problems has requested a meeting with officers to discuss progress with implementing the recommendations. The panel agreed that an informal meeting is a good idea and all panel members should be invited to attend.