

Merton Council

Council

6 April 2016

Supplementary agenda

5	Public questions to Cabinet Members and the responses	1 - 12
6	Councillors' ordinary priority questions to cabinet members and the responses	13 - 20
7a	Strategic theme: Councillors' questions to cabinet members and the responses	21 - 28
16	Labour Amendment to Item 7c	29 - 30
17	Labour Amendment to Item 12	31 - 34

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS RECEIVED FOR COUNCIL 6 APRIL 2016

From: Matteo Baccaglini
To the Cabinet Member for Finance

Question: The Merton Youth Parliament aims to represent views of young people in Merton – one of the largest politically-unrepresented groups. It recently held elections and is looking to become a self-sufficient campaigning organisation; will the Council consider supplying it its own space within the Civic Centre for its operations?”

Reply: Council officers have already begun and are committed to continuing a dialogue with the task group from the youth parliament to clarify what their needs are and how the council might be able to meet them. Due to reductions in our funding from central government the council has had to maximise its use of office space, with staff from a number of outlying buildings being re-located to the Civic Centre in order to save money. Any un-used space is expected to bring in a commercial income to contribute to the council’s budget gap. However we are keen to look at solutions that might assist the youth parliament in reaching their potential as a campaigning organisation for all young people, not just those who are already politically active. We will continue discussions, bearing in mind both the limitations and possibilities available and I am hopeful that a solution can be reached.

From: Diane Kathryn Neil Mills
To the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

Question: With regards to right of light, with whom does the responsibility lie in terms of assessing compliance with the council's policy on this matter?

Reply: There is often some confusion regarding the term ‘rights of light’. There is the civil matter of ‘rights of light’ between building owners and is not a matter governed by the Council. There is also the Town Planning assessment of the impacts of development on daylight and sunlight which is sometimes referred to as ‘rights of light’ but should not be confused with the civil version mentioned above. Planning officers are trained to assess such impacts and there is a tool officer’s use called the ‘aspect value test’ to consider mainly small scale relationships with neighbours. For larger schemes, developer will often commission an independent expert to submit an assessment (based on Building Research Establishment tests) which can aid officers who make conclusions based on consideration of the relative impacts. Like most Local Plans, Merton’s statutory development plan contains a policy addressing daylight and sunlight for all development: DM.D2 Design considerations in all development in Merton’s Sites and Policies Plan 2014, (v) Ensure provision of appropriate levels of sunlight and daylight, quality of living conditions, amenity space and privacy, to both proposed and adjoining buildings and gardens; www.merton.gov.uk/merton_sites_and_policies_part_1_policies_jul14.pdf

From: Sandra Vogel

To the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

Question: Regarding the Mitcham Fair Green bus street - will Merton Council commit to a) start monitoring air quality at Fair Green asap and before the bus street is in place b) publish results at its web site in realtime c) commit to taking mitigating action if air quality degrades.

Reply: The London Road bus lane is part of a wider strategic project across Mitcham. We do not, as a matter of course monitor air quality when new schemes are implemented.

To accurately monitor in 'real-time' air pollution requires very specialist and expensive equipment. This normally comprises of a fixed monitoring station. The Council only has two of these monitoring stations and these are currently situated in areas of strategic importance to the air quality network across the whole of the borough.

A more efficient alternative which the Council will consider will be the installation of chemical diffusion tubes to carry out monitoring of an area. It should be noted however that the data collected will be 'long term' and will need to be 'averaged' over a one year period.

This year Merton will be reviewing its air quality action plan (AQAP) which will cover the steps the Council intends taking to address poor air quality in the borough.

The Council will consider mitigating action if deemed appropriate.

From: Giles Bailey

To the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

Question: With pending CIL funds being released by developments in Raynes Park, will funds be used to provide proper cycle facilities and trees along Kingston Road from RP station to the pathway to Wimbledon at Lower Downs Road. This includes improved safety at the Kingston Road / Lower Downs Road junction.

Reply: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure across the borough including school places, health facilities, parks and open spaces, public realm improvements and cycle lanes. 15% of CIL funding is available to local communities to suggest projects that can be used in the five local areas of Colliers Wood, Mitcham, Morden, Raynes Park and Wimbledon but this depends on development starting in their neighbourhood. As CIL is relatively new and funding is only payable when development has started (not when planning permission is granted) only £4,000 CIL funding has been received to date for local projects in Raynes Park. While we will be carrying out more consultation this year as to what this could be spent on, it is unlikely to cover infrastructure at present.

In 2013, driven from requests by local businesses and local ward councillors, sections of cycle lane on the south side of Kingston Road (between RP station and the junction with Lower Downs Road) were removed to accommodate half footway 'pay and display' bays to allow car parking outside local shops..

It was felt justified to removed sections of cycle lane on Kingston Road because there is a fully segregated cycle facility in the adjacent Bushy Road and a cycle lane on the north side of Kingston Road.

Unfortunately, whether or not more funding becomes available, it will not be possible to reinstate the sections of removed cycle lane on Kingston Road without removing the shoppers' car parking from outside the businesses. If removing the car parking and reinstating the cycle lane is raised by the local community as a priority for future CIL neighbourhood funding spending in Raynes Park, we will consider this again.

From: Derek Manning

To the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

Question: Does the council agree the importance of local businesses behaving as responsible neighbours and respecting the rights of local residents to enjoy their homes in peace and quiet? If so, will it take enforcement action to ensure this will be the case with the Nelson Trading Estate in South Wimbledon?

Reply: The Council's Pollution Team has formal powers to regulate businesses and their impact on residents through the use of statutory nuisance legislation. A statutory nuisance is determined by a number of factors including the time of day, the frequency of noise, its duration and its impact.

I can confirm that pollution officers are currently investigating complaints from local residents about noise from late night vehicle deliveries and refuse collections and I understand that local councillors and residents have been kept up to date with developments by the investigating officer.

With regards to taking formal enforcement action, pollution officers can only take formal action if the noise is so bad that it amounts to a statutory nuisance. The current position is that officers take the view that they do not yet have sufficient evidence to take formal action and amongst other matters they are considering installing noise recording equipment in resident's properties to gather evidence.

The investigation of noise complaints is a complex matter and often circumstances change over a period of time i.e. complaints can be infrequent, noise can be intermittent and sound levels can go up and down. We are trying hard to resolve residents' complaints and negotiations are still continuing with local businesses. It is hoped that the matter can be resolved informally and to the mutual satisfaction of both the businesses and residents. If that does not happen and evidence is obtained that amounts to a continuing nuisance then I shall be pressing for enforcement action to be taken.

From: Joan Keddie
To the Cabinet Member for Environmental Cleanliness and Parking

Question: Will Merton Council undertake a review of the visual impact on the street scene consequent upon Borough-wide installation of wheelie bins, with particular reference to Conservation Areas? Subsequently publishing the result together with an assessment of costs and benefits of alternative options.

Reply: At present no decision has been made regarding any changes to the current waste collection service. As part of the South London Waste Partnership, waste services are currently in the process of jointly procuring a range of environmental services including waste collection. Recommendations of preferred bidder are due to be presented to Cabinet for consideration in July 2016.

From: Tony Burton
To the Cabinet Member for Finance

Question:

Please list for each of the last five years, by year (a) all issues reviewed by overview and scrutiny panels; (b) all the public suggestions submitted to the Scrutiny Team as issues to be reviewed and (c) the issues suggested by the public which were taken forward for review.

Reply: Overview and Scrutiny is independent of the council's Cabinet and sets its own work programme. Each year the scrutiny team undertake a campaign to gather suggestions for issues to scrutinise either as agenda items or task group reviews.

Overview and scrutiny cannot deal with individual complaints or look at issues dealt with by another council committee (for example Planning/Licensing), unless the issue deals with procedure.

The agenda papers for the first meeting of Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and each Panel in June/July each year contain the full description of suggestions plus a note from the workshop setting out the decision taken on each of the suggestions. The Commission and each Panel review these and take a formal decision on their work programme for the year ahead.

The scrutiny team writes to all the people who sent in suggestions to inform them of the Commission or Panel's decision on the suggestion.

The lists below set out all issues reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Panels in the municipal year 2015/16, including information on who suggested the issue for scrutiny. At the end of the list there are details of suggestions for 2015/16 that were received by the public and not prioritised for inclusion in the work programme, including the reason why they were not prioritised.

As all the information that has been requested is already in the public domain, the lists prior to 2015/16 have not been produced in response to this question. The source information can be accessed through published agendas on the council's website: <http://democracy.merton.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1&simple=1>

Overview and scrutiny work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year

Panel/Commission and date	Suggested by:
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel	
1 July 2015	
Elected Member & Departmental Portfolio Priorities	Scrutiny Panel
Agreeing the Work Programme 2015/16	Scrutiny Panel
Draft Final Report – Online Strategies in Schools Task Group	Scrutiny Panel
Performance Report	Management Team (DMT)
21 October 2015	
Looked after children and corporate parenting report	Panel & DMT
Annual report and business plan of Merton's Safeguarding Children Board	Panel & DMT
Update Report	Scrutiny Panel
Performance Report	Scrutiny Panel
Housing and employment offer for care leavers task group	DMT + Chair
Educational attainment of disabled children and young people task group	Merton CIL
3 November 2015	
CSF Budget Proposals (Round 1)	Constitution
Executive Response and Action Plan – Online Strategies in Schools Task Group	Scrutiny Panel
Performance Report	DMT
Transfer of public health functions to the local authority and broader engagement of health in service provision - task group	DMT
13 January 2016	
CSF Budget Proposals (Round 2)	Constitution
Transforming families	Scrutiny Panel
Merton youth justice service	Scrutiny Panel
Update Report	Scrutiny Panel
Performance Report	DMT
10 February 2015	
School Standards	Scrutiny Panel
Briefing- School Standards Committee	Scrutiny Panel
Progress Update - School leadership succession planning task group	Scrutiny Panel
Progress Update – online strategies in schools task group	Scrutiny Panel
Update Report	Scrutiny Panel
Performance Report	DMT
22 March 2016	
Looked after children and corporate parenting report	Merton CIL, Panel and DMT
Task group update – focus on vulnerable groups	Scrutiny Panel
Update Report	Scrutiny Panel

Performance Report	DMT
Topic Suggestions for 2016/17	Scrutiny Panel
Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel	
2 July 2015	
Epsom and St Helier University NHS Trust – update on current priorities	Scrutiny Panel
Merton mental health step down accommodation	Local resident
Work Programme	
3 September 2015	
Healthy Child 0-5 Transfer	DMT
Preventing incontinence task group update report	Scrutiny Panel
Work Programme	
22 October 2015	
Adult Social Care Savings	Local residents/ Merton CIL
Use of Volunteers in day centres	Local resident
Preventing ill health	Scrutiny Panel
10 November 2015	
Update on the Care Act	Scrutiny Panel
Budget	Constitution
12 January 2015	
Budget	Constitution
9 February 2016	
St Georges report on substantial variation to a local Urogynaecology clinic.	Local resident
Physical activity for the fifty five plus	Scrutiny Panel
17 March 2016	
Update from Epsom and St Helier Hospital on Estates Strategy Community Consultation	Scrutiny Panel
Making Merton a Dementia Friendly Borough	Scrutiny Panel
Work Programme	
Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel	
11 June 2015	
Priorities for 2014/15 – Cabinet Member/Director presentation	Scrutiny Panel
Agreeing the 2014/15 work programme	Scrutiny Panel
Morden Leisure Centre Update	Scrutiny Panel
Circle Housing Merton Priory (Performance Monitoring)	Councillors
Performance Reporting(including focus on waste management and street scene)	Residents and Scrutiny Panel
2 September 2015	
Creating a Tourist Industry in Merton	Cabinet Member
Merton Adult Education	Resident
Draft Final Report – Housing Supply Task Group Report	Residents and Scrutiny Panel
Commercial Services - opportunities to maximise resources	DMT
Climate Change and Green Deal Task Group Progress	Scrutiny Panel

Report	
Performance Reporting(including focus on waste management and street scene)	Residents and Scrutiny Panel
11 November	
Budget/Business Plan Scrutiny (round 1)	Constitution
Results of the wheeled bin pilot	Residents and councillors
Morden Leisure Centre Verbal Update	Scrutiny Panel
Performance Reporting(including focus on waste management and street scene)	Residents and Scrutiny Panel
January 2016	
Budget and business plan scrutiny (round 2)	Constitution
Scoping Report – Commercial Services Task Group	DMT
Circle Housing Merton Priory – performance monitoring	Councillors
Executive Response and Action Plan – Housing Supply Task Group	Residents and Scrutiny Panel
Performance Reporting (including focus on waste management and street scene)	Residents and Scrutiny Panel
February 2016	
Morden Leisure Centre	Scrutiny Panel
Cycle Routes	Residents
Phase C Procurement programme (including parks, grounds, maintenance and waste)	Residents and DMT
Town Centre Regeneration Update (including updates on developments re: developing cycling provision)	Resident
Libraries Annual Report	Scrutiny Panel
Performance Reporting: environment and regeneration (including focus on waste management and street scene)	Residents and Scrutiny Panel
March 2016	
Morden Leisure Centre Verbal update	Scrutiny Panel
Climate Change and Green Deal Task Group	Wimbledon Society, Scrutiny Panel
Shared Services	DMT
Adult Skills and Employability Task Group – Progress on implementation of action plan	Scrutiny Panel
Cllr Holmes (Member Champion) To performance monitor delivery of the action plan resulting from the task groups review of adult skills and employability.	Scrutiny Panel
Commercialisation task group Update	DMT
Topic Suggestions 2016/17	Scrutiny Panel
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	
14 July 2015	
Borough Commander	Commission
Stop and Search	Councillor
Ensuring Council has positive impact on public health	Director Public Health
Report of the Immunisation Scrutiny Task Group	Healthier Communities O&S Panel
Report of the Shared Services Scrutiny Task Group	Commission

Analysis of Members' annual scrutiny survey 2015	Commission
Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme 2015/16	Commission
Financial monitoring task group	Commission
15 September 2015	
Leader and Chief Executive – vision, key priorities & challenges for 2015/16	Commission
Customer contact programme	Commission
Overview of enforcement	Residents and councillor
Financial monitoring task group	Commission
24 November 2015	
Business Plan 2016/20 -information pertaining to round one of budget scrutiny	Constitution
Violence against women and girls	Commission
Travellers unauthorised encampment protocol	DMT
Financial monitoring task group	Commission
Health & Wellbeing Board response to recommendations of the Immunisation task group	Commission
28 January 2016	
Business Plan 2016/20	Constitution
Discussion of questions for the Borough Commander	Commission
23 March 2016	
Borough Commander	Commission
ASB Police and Crime Act	Resident and DMT
Volunteering	Commission
Funding the voluntary sector	MVSC
Financial monitoring task group	Commission
5 April 2016	
Scrutiny of the departmental savings weightings	Council
Monitoring the Council's equalities commitments	Commission
Customer contact programme	Commission
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Commission
Review of arrangements for co-opted members	Commission

Topic suggestions for 2015/16 municipal year from public that were not included in the work programme, with an explanation from the committee clerk where available:

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

School Run and Travel Plans

Suggested by the Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage. Scrutiny Panel decided to not take this forward for scrutiny due to the limited influence that scrutiny could have on traffic congestion via schools and parents.

Transition between child and adult social care and health services

Suggested by Merton Centre for Independent Living. Scrutiny Panel noted that this would be a big issue to scrutinise in full. Panel 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. It also agreed to use the themed meeting on improving health outcomes to consider transition between child and adult health services.

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Public Toilets

Suggested by a resident. Panel agreed to include it in the work programme but it was subsequently dropped.

20 mph Zones/Limits

Suggested by a resident. Panel agreed to not include because it had previously considered this issue as part of its 2013/14 and 2014/15 work programmes.

Fox control

Suggested by residents. Panel decided not to scrutinise because it is the council's policy to not take any action on urban foxes. The council does not carry out a treatment or service for foxes. This policy has been in place for many years and is in line with neighbouring local authorities in that it follows the guidance laid out by central government.

Planning

A number of topic suggestions have been received in relation to planning processes and planning law. Further topic suggestions have also been received in relation to planning and enforcement.

The Panel was mindful that some of the issues raised fall within the remit of the Planning Committee and therefore it may not be appropriate for the Panel to undertake a Scrutiny Review in this area. It therefore agreed that the issues raised should be forwarded to the department to respond to.

Public Transport

A number of topic suggestions were received in relation to public transport. The panel agreed to refer these issues to the Public Transport Liaison Committee to respond to as they fall within the remit of that Committee and may be more effectively dealt with in this forum, in discussion with Transport for London.

Basement conversions/dwellings

Suggested by members of the Wimbledon Society. Agreed not to scrutinise because this is a planning issue.

Converting commercial buildings to residential properties

Suggested by members of the Wimbledon Society. The Panel agreed to not review this item again as any applications for conversion would be considered by officers and the Planning Committee, if appropriate

Community Facilities

Suggested by members of the Wimbledon Society. The panel agreed that this was not a priority for inclusion in its work programme.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Equality Impact Assessments

Merton Centre for Independent Living raised concerns about a lack of consistency in the equality impact assessments that were provided as part of the budget process last year. The Commission asked the Head of Democracy Services and the Interim Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships to work together to review how equality impact assessments are prepared for the budget process and report to the Director of Corporate Services on proposals for improvement.

Consultation – accessibility to disabled people

Merton Centre for Independent Living raised concerns about the accessibility of the council's consultations to disabled people. The Commission agreed to await the outcome of the Judicial Review and take no further action at present.

Procurement

Suggested by Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage. The Commission noted that the particular issue raised would be addressed through pre-decision scrutiny of such decisions in future and therefore agreed to not take forward for further scrutiny at that time.

Healthier Communities and Older People

The Panel aimed to incorporate all the topic suggestions into the work programme. However a significant number of issues arose during the year that had to be considered as a matter of urgency. As a result the following items were not considered due to insufficient space on the agenda:

Adult Safeguarding processes – Merton Centre for Independent Living

How do we support older people with physical and mental disabilities in the community – Suggested by Merton Centre for Independent Living.

**From Mike Circelli
To the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration**

Question: Why, over 10 months since the issue was first raised with the Council and site owners (Segro), are residents and children of The Path in Wimbledon being deprived of sleep on a nightly basis because of the poor management of noise and anti-social behaviour on the Nelson Trading Estate?

Reply: This relates to Question 4 and the ongoing case of noise from the Trading Estate.

The Council's Pollution Team has formal powers to regulate businesses and their impact on residents through the use of statutory nuisance legislation. A statutory nuisance is determined by a number of factors including the time of day, the frequency of noise, its duration and its impact.

I can confirm that pollution officers are currently investigating complaints from local residents about noise from late night vehicle deliveries and refuse collections and I understand that local councillors and residents have been kept up to date with developments by the investigating officer.

With regards to taking formal enforcement action, pollution officers can only take formal action if the noise is so bad that it amounts to a statutory nuisance. The current position is that officers take the view that they do not yet have sufficient evidence to take formal action and amongst other matters they are considering installing noise recording equipment in resident's properties to gather evidence.

The investigation of noise complaints is a complex matter and often circumstances change over a period of time i.e. complaints can be infrequent, noise can be intermittent and sound levels can go up and down. We are trying hard to resolve residents' complaints and negotiations are still continuing with local businesses. It is hoped that the matter can be resolved informally and to the mutual satisfaction of both the businesses and residents. If that does not happen and evidence is obtained that amounts to a continuing nuisance then I shall be pressing for enforcement action to be taken.

**From Andrew Boyce
To Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance**

Question: Does Council agree the importance of ward councillors, Cabinet members and Council officers listening to residents' concerns and requests, and acting on those in a timely, meaningful and effective manner?

Reply: Without doubt, Merton's 60 elected ward councillors, its cabinet members who look after specific portfolios and council officers play a critical role in listening to residents' concerns and requests and in responding to the issues they raise in a timely manner. The council has already set out its commitment to doing this in its engagement strategy in which it acknowledges the importance of connecting decision makers at the council with the communities it serves. Engagement with residents increases the council's understanding of their needs and helps to better shape the decisions of councillors and officers.

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PRIORITY COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL 6 APRIL 2016

Councillor Linda Kirby to the Cabinet Member for Education

Could the Cabinet Member update me on the performance of our primary schools?

Reply: As at March 2016, 85% of our primary aged pupils are attending good or outstanding provision as designated by Ofsted. This compares to 84% nationally and 88% in London. Our headline Key Stage 2 performance (pupils reaching level 4+ in reading writing and maths) has risen from 78% in 2013 to 82% in 2015. This is currently above the national average (80%) but slightly below the London average (84%). Our recently published Standards Report (February 2016) provides more extensive details on the performance of our schools as well as on our work both to raise standards and narrow the gap in outcomes between our most advantaged pupils and some of the groups which have historically done less well, nationally and locally.

I would commend colleagues to read the detailed report, to acknowledge the good work being done locally by the very strong partnership which exists between the local authority and primary schools, a partnership we all hold dear. I am sure my Labour colleagues, and indeed I know some of my opposition colleagues, believe that whilst there should be diversity of provision the LA should hold a role as the democratically elected accountable local body in leading the standards agenda locally as well as advocating for the needs of all pupils and in particular the most vulnerable pupils.

Councillor Suzanne Grocott to the Cabinet Member for Finance:

When is the Council's new website expected to be launched?

Reply: Our current website is fit for purpose and has frequently been judged one of the best local government websites, including being judged the top London borough website for customer satisfaction last year. We are therefore determined not to rush into implementing a new system before we are ready and intend to take a careful approach to implementing a replacement system to ensure it provides lasting benefits to residents and the council.

Officers are currently working with General Dynamics IT Ltd (the contractor delivering the new website and associated technology to support the Customer Contact programme) to establish a launch date for the new website.

The website itself as a set of designed pages within an agreed structure is virtually complete. We took the decision, however, that to launch it without some of the associated functionality that made it possible for customers to complete new end-to-end transactions would be of little benefit to our residents.

For this reason we've delayed the release of the new site until the automation of processes within the waste service is complete so that the new site can be tested and used with some meaningful transactions.

General Dynamics have encountered a number of unanticipated connectivity issues in developing the technology which have delayed the programme generally. The automation of waste processes has also taken longer than expected by General Dynamics – this is because we took the decision to move all the processes and data into the new contact management solution so a greater degree of rework was needed. We believe this will be of benefit to residents (through smoother and more transparent transactions) and the council (through reduced system integrations) in the longer term but it has had a short term impact on timescales. We are using the levers within our contract with General Dynamics to ensure that these delays are corrected and the council is not financially disadvantaged.

Taking all this into account, we are currently working towards a tentative soft launch in April. But this is subject to user testing and relies upon there being no further connectivity or technology issues.

Councillor Sally Kenny to the Leader of the Council

Could he update me on how the council as a whole is responding to the public health agenda?

Reply: The Council has responded positively and comprehensively to the opportunities that have arisen since many aspects of public health transferred to local authorities in April 2013.

The main statutory duties for public health that were conferred on local authorities by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 include the following:

1. Strategic leadership and advocacy for health and wellbeing
2. Commissioners of services including sexual health, substance misuse and NHS Health Checks
3. Commissioning support to the local NHS
4. Oversight for health protection
5. Production of an independent Annual Public Health Report (APHR) and membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board

Merton's second Annual Public Health Report was published in autumn 2015, titled 'The Time for Prevention is Now: Keeping People Healthy Reduces Health Inequalities'. It celebrates the progress made in improving public health since the transition of public health from the NHS to local government, as well as the challenges that remain to embed prevention across the business of the council and partners in order to reduce health inequalities.

The council with its partners established the Health and Wellbeing Board, and took the opportunity to have a peer review of this function in the autumn of 2013, with a positive outcome. This Board has published two Health and Wellbeing strategies (2013 and 2015) since then, and at the heart of these strategies has been a

determination to use all parts of the council and the wider Merton Partnership to have a positive impact on people's health, increasing life expectancy and reducing health inequalities. The refreshed 2015 strategy was entitled Merton the Place for a Good Life, and had a strong emphasis on all determinants of health. Examples of how the council is playing a leading role include:

- Public health working with planning and licensing officers to shape the availability of healthy options on our high streets
- Work across parts of the council on a whole systems approach to obesity, with support from public health across London
- Public health working with early years officers to reshape our pre-school offer and ensure a co-ordinated approach between the council and the NHS.
- Using the opportunity of the commissioning model for adult education to ensure that this model can increase access to learning for more disadvantaged people and thus reduce health inequalities in the longer term
- Working with officers in Future Merton to ensure that regeneration opportunities are health enhancing
- Work on volunteering with pilots such as the Good Neighbour Scheme

The council has been positively supporting the emerging east Merton model of health and wellbeing. Whilst this has been largely led and resourced by the CCG, there is a shared understanding that improving health and wellbeing requires much more than an NHS reactive response, and therefore the council with other partners has been engaged in shaping these broader interventions. This is now a key area of focus for the health and wellbeing board.

The council has taken on responsibility for commissioning a range of mandated services including sexual health, drug and alcohol services, smoking cessation, and children's services. The public health team has worked with officers across the council to ensure effectiveness and value for money in these services, with some active re-commissioning having taken place.

Specifically from 1st October 2015, the council took on commissioning of the Healthy Child 0-5 services, which includes health visiting and Family Nurse Partnership (more intensive support for young parents aged 19 and under), which provides an opportunity for closer working with our children's centres, and development of an integrated 0-19 pathway across the local authority and NHS. This has been taking place at the same time as the commissioning of a new provider of NHS community services for Merton (Central London Community Healthcare), where the council has worked closely with the CCG to ensure that this can lead to improvements in effectiveness for local residents.

The Director of Public Health maintains oversight for health protection, for instance assurance of cancer screening programmes, and development of an action plan to improve immunisation services in the borough which was recently reviewed at Scrutiny. This responsibility is exercised in close conjunction with officers with civil contingencies responsibilities and with the Local Resilience Forum.

Councillor John Bowcott to the Leader of the Council:

What is the difference between Merton 'taxing' local people to provide Council services and the Government 'taxing' local people to provide Council services when there is a national need to repair finances?

Reply by the Cabinet Member for Finance

Councillor Bowcott raises an interesting question about the most appropriate form of taxation for local expenditure. Under the current government, there has been a significant withdrawal of funding for councils from the government, which is now encouraging councils to raise council tax. Our primary concern is that council tax is a relatively regressive tax, compared to other alternatives, and we are one of only 8 councils in the country to have frozen our council tax under George Osborne's "precept".

We feel council tax should be set at a level that is fair, and represents the high cost of living under both the current government and the previous coalition government. We also note that these governments have sought to offer tax cuts to millionaires, have agreed paltry tax settlements from wealthy corporations such as Google and have done little to discourage tax avoidance by wealthy individuals, as exposed in the "Panama papers", while at the same time introducing measures like the bedroom tax for relatively less well off families, cutting benefits to people with disabilities, reducing local housing allowances, and so on.

Our concerns about the government's unfairness are shared by many others, including his Conservative colleague Ian Duncan Smith who acknowledged that the government's proposed cuts to disabled people's benefits are "not defensible in the way they were placed within a Budget that benefits higher earning taxpayers."

This government's ideological tax policies which benefit the rich while punishing disabled people, contrast with Merton's approach. We have kept council tax, a regressive tax which hits the poorest hardest, low and have protected those on the lowest income from the government's cuts to council tax benefit.

Councillor Fidelis Gadzama to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture

Could he update me on the new arts space in Wimbledon library?

Reply: Arts Council England has awarded Merton Council a £62,000 grant which will be spent on refurbishing the back of Wimbledon Library to create a flexible out-of-hours performance and exhibition space. The award of the grant follows a successful bid from the council's libraries and heritage service.

The space will enrich the cultural offer to the people of Merton who will benefit from a broad arts programme. The project, led by Merton Council, is working in partnership with Wimbledon College of Art, Wimbletech, Attic Theatre Company, Wimbledon Bookfest, Merton Music Foundation and a range of other community organisations.

The refurbished space will be open this summer with a programme of events expected to be published in early June.

Councillor Janice Howard to the Cabinet Member for Finance:

Will the Cabinet Member confirm how many posts and in which Departments have been filled by non-permanent staff for a) more than 12 months and b) more than 24 months (i.e. 12 to 24 months and more than 24) and at what total cost for those posts still filled on a temporary basis as at 31 March 2016 which have not been filled on a permanent basis for at least 12 months over the last two years?

Reply: Although, in most posts, staff will be recruited on a permanent basis, non-permanent staff may be appointed to fill roles in certain circumstances. For instance, non-permanent staff may be used to fill roles that need to be recruited quickly while a longer term appointment is made, roles for time-limited projects where a permanent post is not appropriate, roles that are business critical where applicants cannot be found to work on a permanent basis, and so on. Service Directors may also recruit temporary staff in the knowledge of a future restructure, in order to provide the same continuity of service while minimising redundancy costs to the council. There are also areas within the council where there are difficulties in recruiting to certain professional positions eg lawyers, engineers and Children’s social workers.

The process for recruitment, as well as for any extensions, is managed by HR, which demonstrates the need for the post, and a decision to recruit is authorised by finance, HR and the service Director.

The data below is based on agency staff, through our main contracts or other agreed HR recruitment arrangements on or over £30 per hour as at end February 2016. The estimated gross cost of these posts for the financial year 2015/16 is £1.9M, or approximately £55k per post (including employer costs), which reflects the specialist and highly qualified nature of many of the posts. Costs are met from a range of sources including contributions from schools, external organisations and external grant funding.

Department	12 months	24 months	Total (placements 12 months and above)	Note
Number of posts				
Corporate Services	8	4	12	1
Children, Schools and Families	8	5	13	2
Community and Housing	2	0	2	3

Environment and Regeneration	7	0	7	4
Total	25	9	34	

Notes

1. Includes 10 lawyers for which we have had 3 unsuccessful recruitment campaigns.
2. Social care staff, as need to maintain safe caseloads for staff, whilst undertaking rolling permanent recruitment. Working with the recruitment team in HR, there has been a successful rolling campaign in Children's Social Care to recruit permanent social workers with a dedicated micro site, golden hellos, exploring overseas appointments etc. but a number of social workers do not want to become permanent members of staff, so we work with them to ensure they are on the best contract arrangements for us. There are additional pressures because neighbouring boroughs pay more than us for permanent and agency staff.
3. No permanent recruitment as restructure planned to reduce redundancies.
4. 6 are covering engineers positions.

Councillor Marsie Skeete to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

Could he update me on how the council dealt with the aftermath of Storm Katie?

Reply: The greatest material environmental impact of Storm Katie was in relation to the borough's street trees. Our arboricultural contractors were on the ground dealing with tree issues from around 3am on Easter Monday, soon after the first reports of issues were received from the Council's Highways Street Inspectors, the police and members of the public via the Council's out-of-hours emergency contact centre.

Some 20 fallen, damaged or dangerous trees were dealt with during the following 12 hours, representing the most urgent needs on the highway. Less urgent needs were processed during the following 48 hours. Some 60 trees were recorded as sufficiently affected by the storm to require professional intervention, with damage ranging from fallen trees to large fallen branches.

The Highways team received over 50 out-of-hours call outs for assistance, 26 of which related to trees on the Highway and footway. All calls were responded to by 8pm on Easter Monday. We had cleared all trees causing any obstructions on the highway and footways. The clearing of the cut trees followed on Tuesday and where arrangements for footway repairs were needed should have been completed by our highways contractor by 1st April.

A small number of damaged trees in parks were identified by Greenspaces staff. Those that were considered to pose an elevated risk to park users were made safe swiftly by our contractors. The parks staff themselves removed a number of large branches that were affecting boundary fences and footpaths.

Damage was reported to the roofs of two parks buildings as a consequence of the storm. In one case, Sherwood Recreation Ground, the park was closed pending the

structure being made safe. Both locations have subsequently been inspected by Corporate Facilities to assess what remedial action is appropriate

Councillor Linda Taylor to the Cabinet Member for Finance:

What plans does the Cabinet Member have for the Council to hold a financial interest in the new Wimbledon Stadium should the application be agreed by the Mayor of London?

Reply: The Council has no plans to hold a financial interest in the stadium

Councillor Peter McCabe to the Leader

Could he update me on what he has done to assist leaseholders on the Watermeads estate in Ravensbury?

Reply: I have worked with leaseholders and Circle Housing Merton Priory in order to address the leaseholders concerns regarding the potential costs of the planned works on their homes and the Watermeads Estate.

Following a request by myself and ward councillors, Circle have commissioned an independent report on the replacement of the roofs and communal electrics.

Remedial works will now go ahead on the roofs rather than a full replacement

Where leaseholders have previously replaced their own windows, and where those windows have the necessary certificates and approvals, those leaseholders will not now have to have their windows replaced again and will not be charged for the costs of the glazing in their neighbour's homes (however they will still be required to pay a contribution towards all frames and to the glazing in the communal areas). A final decision has still to be reached on the extent of the works on the communal electrics

I have agreed with Circle that the Section 20 Consultation process will not be finalised until the various leaseholder queries have been addressed.

Once the works and costs have been agreed, the invoicing to leaseholders will be delayed until April 2017.

Circle have agreed to continue the promise made at transfer to offer leaseholders an interest free two year period in which to pay the invoice for works. Further payment options are being explored with Circle, especially with regards to vulnerable leaseholders.

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STRATEGIC THEME PRIORITY COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL 6 APRIL 2016

Councillor Tobin Byers to the Cabinet Member for Finance

Could the Cabinet Member update me on what analysis the council has carried out of the impact of the government's bedroom tax and benefits cap on our most vulnerable residents?

Reply: We are very concerned about the additional hardship that many of our residents may face as a result of reductions in their income.

The council's welfare reform and financial resilience group, chaired by Simon Williams, regularly considers the impact of welfare reform upon our residents in conjunction with voluntary sector organisations. We have looked at the impact of different welfare reforms and how we can work together to support residents. One initiative of the group is a joint arrangement with the council and CAB to pilot an additional Welfare Disability Benefits officer to support residents with advice and applications for welfare benefits, this initiative alone will see an estimated £267,000 per year in additional income for 97 customers interviewed and helped between July 2015 and December 2015.

We have been supporting residents affected by both the benefit cap and under occupation (bedroom tax) charge through additional payments of Discretionary Housing Payments. In 2015/16 we paid just under £257,000 to affected residents. 88 families affected by the benefit cap have been helped and 272 affected by under occupation (bedroom tax).

Councillor Charlie Chirico to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration:

Can the Cabinet Member tell me what assessment was made of the impact on local community safety of the dimming of street lights after 8pm in Trinity ward? Given I have had residents in Trinity Road complain that their street is now considerably darker in the evenings and they feel less safe, what communication did the Council have with affected residents prior to this change?

Reply: A full impact assessment was made on local community safety and reported to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel before we started to roll-out LED street lighting in the Borough, which incorporated a dimming regime after the peak hours. This is in-line with the Council's policy to improve road safety, crime & the fear of crime and to increase the feeling of security during the night-time environment.

Our capital relighting programme is now solely focussed on replacing existing lighting with white LED (Light Emitting Diodes) which is more energy efficient than the current type of lighting used and virtually maintenance-free. This will significantly

reduce future energy, carbon tax and maintenance costs to help meet the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy saving targets, Merton's Community Plan objectives and the Council's Carbon Reduction Commitment & Local Climate Commitment targets to reduce CO2 emissions. All new lighting is designed and installed to meet the current BS requirements and we have installed nearly 4,000 across the borough with minimal complaints. We have in fact received a number of compliments on the new LED lights, with requests for further roll-outs.

The new LED lighting in Trinity Road has a very good colour rendition, which will allow drivers and pedestrians to see objects and hazards in their true form and colour. (For example, the old orange lights mean that you see objects in greyscale) . The White LEDs provide a clearer spectrum of light. It also has reduced glare as the light is directed downwards onto the road and pavement where it's required. The previous lighting had wasted light (light pollution) and directed light upwards giving the perception that the road was brighter but this is not energy efficient.

There is no statutory requirement to consult with residents on new lighting, but as with the other roads where new LED lighting has been installed, a night-time visit to Trinity Road was done at the beginning of February and our informed opinion is that it is very well lit.

Councillor Katy Neep to the Cabinet Member for Education

In terms of the diversity of schools governing bodies, could the Cabinet member update us on the re-constitution of school governing bodies in line with the government's decision to reduce local authority representation.

Reply: All Merton maintained schools have reconstituted and each continues to have a Local Authority nominated governor representative. Following the recent announcement from central government of the proposed academisation of all schools, officers have begun to work through details of the implications for school governance and the future of Local Authority representation on governing bodies.

Councillor Adam Bush to the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities:

Can the Cabinet Member tell me what the Council is doing to respond to the Government's recent announcement about tackling inequalities across the public sector, in particular with regard to the recommendations from the Bridge Group on socio-economic diversity in the civil service and the introduction of an 'inequality index' and name blind recruitment?

Reply by The Cabinet Member For Finance

The Bridge Group report (commissioned by the Cabinet Office and published in Feb 2016) entitled 'Socio-economic diversity in the Fast Stream' looked into social mobility in the Civil Service in relation to graduate recruitment.

A number of measures were announced by Matt Hancock, Minister for the Cabinet Office in response to the report, including:

- Rolling out name-blind recruitment across the public sector to make sure that jobs are awarded on merit alone – the NHS and Civil Service will roll out name-blind recruitment (i.e. names of candidates redacted) by 2020
- Publishing the pay ratio of the salaries between the median and highest paid employees – this 'inequality index' will allow taxpayers to hold the government to account
- Creating over 200,000 apprenticeships in the public sector by 2020, of which over 30,000 will be in the Civil Service
- Taking graduate recruitment outside of London by establishing regional assessment centres
- Urging Britain's major employers to take a similar approach to inequality

The current position at Merton is:

- The Council doesn't undertake a name-blind recruitment process at present. There is the opportunity to include such a process in a new recruitment system currently being procured.
- Pay ratios are already published on the internet via the Council's annual Pay Policy Statement, approved by full Council each year. Merton's current information is:
 - o Pay ratio of 1:11 between highest and lowest paid. Sadly the government have not yet made the civil service pay ratio public.
 - o Median pay ratio of 1:7
 - o Gender gap ratio is -2% or £539 (i.e. females earn on average more than men)
- The Council already operates an apprenticeship scheme. As part of the scheme priority is given to Merton's Looked After young people and young people that reside in the borough. We are reviewing recently announced legislative changes including an apprentice levy and apprenticeship targets for public sector bodies, to see how Merton might best respond.
- The taking of graduate recruitment outside of London is to address specific issues within the Civil Service who have working locations across the UK. Merton currently sources its graduate recruitment via the National Graduate Programme.
- Merton currently pays its staff the London Living Wage of £9.40 an hour
- The Council's recruitment process is designed to be non-discriminatory.

Councillor Laxmi Attawar to the Interim Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Could the Cabinet Member update me on how she has been ensuring we continue to focus on delivering quality children's services those of our children most in need?

Reply: Merton's Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services were last inspected in January 2012. The overall effectiveness of these services and our capacity for improvement were both graded Good by Ofsted. Since 2012 our own

local expectations and those of the government and our regulators have risen. In a challenging contextual environment over the last 4 years Merton's Safeguarding Board (MSCB) partners and the council have remained committed to our continuous improvement journey to ensure we are making the most difference for the most vulnerable children and young people.

Over the last 4 years we have made a number of significant changes to deliver performance and practice improvements and to ensure that we remain fit for purpose. Our continuous improvement achievements include:

- Strengthening MSCB governance with a stronger focus on driving improvement with more robust challenge to all agencies, to provide an increased focus on delivery, performance and impact.
- Refreshing our Children and Young People's Plan with continued prioritisation of improving outcomes for Merton's most vulnerable groups of children and young people.
- Establishing a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) with key partner agencies.
- Delivering an effective Transforming Families programme which is successfully 'turning around' families with multiple challenges.
- Achieving strong partner and parent/carer engagement in delivering wideranging Children and Families Act reforms.
- Maintaining a strong relationship with Merton's CCG including jointly re-commissioning community health services for children with NHS and Public Health colleagues, strengthening the service offer for more vulnerable children and young people.
- Undertaking a Child Sexual Exploitation peer review, refreshing our CSE strategy, guidance and support tools and implementing our improvement action plan.
- Achieving strong partnership engagement with the 'Prevent' agenda involving key partners including police, schools, early years settings and faith communities.
- Maintaining our strong focus on children and young people: informing case work, practice and strategic planning through our User Voice Strategy.

Over the last 4 years we have worked hard to establish the prerequisites to deliver good social work practice. We have evolved our structures to deliver to larger numbers of children and families and meet the challenges of a range of public policy initiatives. In a difficult regional recruitment context, we have increased our number of social workers, provided reasonable caseloads and continue to focus on reducing agency rates. We will maintain our sharp focus on this going forward.

This significant change programme has led to improvements in key performance indicators:

- The majority of Single Assessments are completed in 31 - 40 days (42%) with 90% completed with the statutory 45 days. Merton has the third highest completion rate in 45 days amongst its statistical neighbours and 6th highest in London.
- 100% of Merton's Troubled Families were 'turned around' in phase one.

- Merton had improved court proceeding timeliness from 72 weeks in 2011/12 to 24 weeks in Quarter 4 2013/14.
- 95% of all LAC were placed in good or better placements (March 2015) and none where in inadequate
- 75% of all LAC are placed within 10 miles of their home (2014/15).
- Since the establishment of a dedicated Access to Resources team in October 2011 we have approved 39 new in house foster carers (December 2015).
- Year on year we have improved the average time from receiving court authority to place a child and matching them with an adoptive family (Scorecard indicator A2) Merton's three year rolling average for this indicator is 193 (2012/15) - this is better than the national average of 217 days (2011/14).
- Merton has reduced First Time entrants from 188 (2009/10) to 88 (2013/14) and only 60 (2014/15)
- 96% of Merton's Youth Justice clients are in Education, Training or Employment (March 2015)

We continue to be ambitious to do better and have a continuous improvement approach as a department and partnership. We will continue to provide leadership and governance through our MSCB partnership identifying and addressing our shared priorities for improvement to maintain our ambitions for all our services to be good or better.

Councillor Michael Bull to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Cleanliness and Parking:

How much parking revenue has been lost as a result of the recent spate of thefts from parking meters in the borough?

Reply: In the period 24 August 2015 to 13 January 2016 a total of £22k has been stolen from parking pay and display (P&D) machines. The thefts occurred due to criminal damage caused by the use of electric drills used to drill into the P&D machines leading to small amounts of coins being stolen from each machine.

As a counter measure we have introduced reinforcing measures to the P&D machines which have stopped the criminals from being able gain access to the P&D machines. We have also increased the frequency of cash collections from P&D machines, so reducing the amount of monies in each machine should thieves manage to gain access.

These measures have greatly reduced the thefts and no losses have been reported since mid January.

Councillor John Dehaney to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Parking

Could the Cabinet Member comment on what she is doing on ensuring that parked cars do not impede disabled residents access to pavements in the borough?

Reply: Having received a number of concerns from Merton's residents and pedestrians regarding vehicles obstructing pedestrian access on the pavement, the footway parking policy has been revised and the changes will be implemented from 4 April 2016.

From 4 April 2016 footway parking will only be allowed at certain locations and then only if a minimum gap of one metre has been left on the pavement for wheel chair users and pedestrians to pass the vehicle. Vehicles parked inconsiderately by not leaving a minimum gap of one metre on the footway, will be issued with a PCN.

Vehicles are not permitted to park on grass verges and as such will be issued with a PCN if parked on a grass verge.

There are 50 roads within the borough where it has been decided we will not enforce this policy because the narrowness of the road, coupled with the narrowness of the footway makes it impossible to force vehicles to leave a 1m gap between the vehicle and the property boundaries, without impeding the flow of traffic.

Councillor Stephen Crowe to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration:

Could the Cabinet Member please provide a ward by ward breakdown of serious accidents in Merton that involve cyclists for the most recent year for which figures are available?

Reply: Accident records are released to the Council up to four months after any reported accidents.

Our latest data for the most recent annual period covers 1st November 2014 – 31st October 2015.

In this period, there were 6 serious accidents involving cyclists. Thankfully none were fatal.

Of these 6 accidents, 4 occurred in Colliers Wood ward, 1 in West Barnes ward and 1 in Ravensbury ward.

There were no other reported serious accidents involving cyclists for the rest of Merton.

Officers will assess the incidents reports to determine the cause of such accidents and where appropriate, recommend improvements to the cycle network as part of the borough's cycle infrastructure investment.

The Council also has an excellent programme of road safety education in schools, training for cyclists and specialist cycle awareness training for HGV drivers to ensure that Merton is as safe a place as possible to encourage cycling as a sustainable transport choice in Merton.

Councillor Dennis Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities

Could the Cabinet Member update me on the work of the council-backed interfaith forum and how the different communities in Merton work together for the good of all residents?

Reply: Merton has a diverse religious and cultural mix and the Faith and Belief forum brings together people from different religious backgrounds to celebrate this diversity, promote understanding and join together to tackle issues of mutual concern.

The borough marked Interfaith Week in November 2015 with a number of different events. There was a discussion about 'Faith in the Media' held in the Council Chamber with guest speakers including Dr Chris Allen from the University of Birmingham and Helen Freeman, Principal Rabbi from West London Synagogue. There was also a very popular afternoon tea event organised by the Muslim Women of Merton and held at the Islamic Community Centre where attendees sampled different teas from around the world.

The Faith and Belief Forum has also worked with Faith in Action and the YMCA to support homeless people in Merton by providing venues and volunteers. It has also coordinated support to the Food Banks in the borough. Merton's religious communities have also come together as part of the borough's offer of support to refugees from the conflict in Syria.

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**FULL COUNCIL 6 APRIL 2016
ITEM 7C
LABOUR AMENDMENT**

Amend the motion as per the tracked changes below, with words underlined inserted and words struck through deleted:

This Council welcomes the decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to examine the budgetary implications of amending~~consider~~ the funding formula share between departments of the Council and its endorsement of the principle underlying the budget process since 2011 of ensuring less cuts to services for vulnerable people. ~~It also acknowledges that the underlying strategic direction of the Business Plan, which has remained unchanged for five years, needs refreshing.~~

Council continues to endorse the "July principles" that it introduced in 2011 on a cross-party basis (albeit they were not supported by the Conservative group), and notes that at the time of their introduction the council was facing significant cuts in revenue funding from the government. However, it was hoped that such cuts would be time limited as the then Chancellor, George Osborne had stated that his intention was to clear the country's deficit by 2015.

Council is very disappointed that the Chancellor failed to clear the deficit by 2015, meaning that large cuts to Merton's funding have continued long beyond what could have been anticipated, and recognises that this means the Council faces some very difficult decisions in future in order to deal with further government spending cuts. Council also notes that the Chancellor has been criticised by colleagues such as Iain Duncan Smith, who said the Government "is in danger of drifting in a direction that divides society rather than unites it. And that I think is unfair." Council recognises that, in order to combat this division locally it will need to continue to play a role in tackling that unfairness.

This Council resolves to instruct the Cabinet to take a fresh~~continue to review its~~ approach to its budget making in framing the 2017/18 Budget - and associated implications for the Medium Term Financial Strategy - which~~continuing to~~ maintains the principles of equality; in particular between age, gender, religion/belief, disability and race, as has been comprehensively undertaken as part of every budget setting exercise since 2010 using detailed equality assessments, and to continue to access all available funding streams to meet actual and perceived needs.

Motion now to read:

This Council welcomes the decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to consider the funding formula share between departments of the Council and its endorsement of the principle underlying the budget process since 2011 of ensuring less cuts to services for vulnerable people.

Council continues to endorse the "July principles" that it introduced in 2011 on a cross-party basis (albeit they were not supported by the Conservative group), and notes that at the time of their introduction the council was facing significant cuts in revenue funding from the government. However, it was hoped that such cuts would

be time limited as the then Chancellor, George Osborne had stated that his intention was to clear the country's deficit by 2015.

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This Council resolves to instruct the Cabinet to continue to review its approach to its budget making in framing the 2017/18 Budget - and associated implications for the Medium Term Financial Strategy - continuing to maintain the principles of equality; in particular between age, gender, religion/belief, disability and race, as has been comprehensively undertaken as part of every budget setting exercise since 2010 using detailed equality assessments, and to continue to access all available funding streams to meet actual and perceived needs.

**FULL COUNCIL 6 APRIL 2016
ITEM 12
LABOUR AMENDMENT**

Amend the motion as per the tracked changes below, with words underlined inserted and words struck through deleted:

This Council notes the importance of London's transport system to Merton's residents, many of whom commute into central London every day, paying exorbitant amounts on fares which are some of the most expensive of any major city. Council notes that:

- The current Conservative Mayor has increased fares every year since his election in in 2008, with a 42% increase overall
- Since 2008, under Boris Johnson, the cost of a return tube journey from Morden to central London in peak hours is now £7.80, a 56% increase since 2008
- The cost of a weekly zone 1-4 travelcard has increased by £11.90 or 34%
- The cost of a monthly travel card from Morden to Zone 1 has increased by 34% to £178.60 – a £45.70 rise since 2008 - and an annual season ticket from Morden to Zone 1 now stands at £1,860
- In addition, bus fares have risen from 90p to £1.50, a 67% increase, with weekly bus passes increasing by 63% from £13 to £21.20.

Council is concerned that the Conservative candidate for Mayor of London, Zac Goldsmith, intends to continue his predecessor's policy of increasing tube, train, tram and bus fares.

In contrast, Labour's Transport for London has confirmed that mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan's proposal has promised to freeze fares and to bring in a new one hour "hopper" bus ticket which will help low paid workers who need to take two buses to get to work. TfL Commissioner Mike Brown has publicly stated that the fares freeze will not damage TfL's investment programme and Sadiq has confirmed it will cost £1.9 billion £465m, to come from increased efficiencies in Transport for London as follows. It therefore calls upon Sadiq Khan to confirm what consequences this experiment will have for Merton. He will have to either:

- Merge engineering functions within TfL ensuring shared procurement and office functions save millions each year
- Halving the £383m TfL spent on consultancy and agency staff last year
- Seeking to establish a trading arm to sell TfL's expertise to other organisations both at home and abroad
- Generating revenue by developing spare TfL land
- Ending Conservative mayor's practice of spending Londoners money on expensive vanity projects such as the Greenwich cable car and the failing "new Routemaster" buses, neither of which bring any tangible benefit to over-charged Merton commuters.
- ~~Hit local families with a £175 Mayoral Council Tax hike;~~

- ~~Hit local public services by halving the amount of Mayoral Council Tax going to the police and fire service;~~
- ~~Hit the transport network by scrapping vital planned investment on road, rail and town centre regeneration projects — causing delays, overcrowding and congestion;~~
- ~~Hit veterans, the elderly and most vulnerable by cutting the Freedom Pass and Veterans Travel; or~~
- ~~Hit drivers by bringing back the western extension of the Congestion Charge Zone — costing motorists up to £650 extra a year.~~

We therefore call on Sadiq Khan all mayoral candidates to confirm how much extra Merton's residents will have to pay in tube, train and bus fares if they are elected. In particular we call on Zac Goldsmith to confirm that he is proposing a 17% increase in fares if elected, costing an extra £862 for commuters in Morden, for example. the costs of his experiment for residents in Merton and set out which of the following investments for Merton would be scrapped:

- ~~Improvements to the District line. The planned improvements will deliver better signaling and create 24 per cent more capacity — meaning 10,000 more passengers can use the line each hour.~~
- ~~Improvements to the Northern line. After signaling upgrades to the Northern and Jubilee lines, TfL are in the process of procuring up to 63 extra trains for both lines. These new trains will increase capacity in central London on the Northern line by 25 per cent.~~
- ~~TfL's £148 million investment in local transport and town centre improvements. This means Merton could miss out on £3.3 million which includes £100,000 to help transform Morden Town Centre, which may include the removal of the main road gyratory.~~
- ~~The Night Tube. TfL estimated that the Night Tube will create 1,965 permanent jobs and Londoners support the Night Tube: 78 per cent believe it will be good for the capital. Khan has already come under pressure from union donors to cancel plans for a night service. He accepted the loan of offices and a staff member from the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association (TSSA), who said the Night Tube 'isn't going to happen', and was endorsed by ASLEF and Unite — the unions behind anti-night tube strikes.~~

Motion now to read:

This Council notes the importance of London's transport system to Merton's residents, many of whom commute into central London every day, paying exorbitant amounts on fares which are some of the most expensive of any major city. Council notes that:

- The current Conservative Mayor has increased fares every year since his election in in 2008, with a 42% increase overall

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- In addition, bus fares have risen from 90p to £1.50, a 67% increase, with weekly bus passes increasing by 63% from £13 to £21.20.

Council is concerned that the Conservative candidate for Mayor of London, Zac Goldsmith, intends to continue his predecessor's policy of increasing tube, train, tram and bus fares.

In contrast, Labour's mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan has promised to freeze fares and to bring in a new one hour "hopper" bus ticket which will help low paid workers who need to take two buses to get to work. TfL Commissioner Mike Brown has publicly stated that the fares freeze will not damage TfL's investment programme and Sadiq has confirmed it will cost £465m, to come from increased efficiencies in Transport for London as follows:

- Merge engineering functions within TfL ensuring shared procurement and office functions save millions each year
- Halving the £383m TfL spent on consultancy and agency staff last year
- Seeking to establish a trading arm to sell TfL's expertise to other organisations both at home and abroad
- Generating revenue by developing spare TfL land
- Ending Conservative mayor's practice of spending Londoners money on expensive vanity projects such as the Greenwich cable car and the failing "new Routemaster" buses, neither of which bring any tangible benefit to over-charged Merton commuters.

We therefore call on all mayoral candidates to confirm how much extra Merton's residents will have to pay in tube, train and bus fares if they are elected. In particular we call on Zac Goldsmith to confirm that he is proposing a 17% increase in fares if elected, costing an extra £862 for commuters in Morden, for example.

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