

Merton Council

Council meeting

Membership

The Mayor: Councillor David Chung

The Deputy Mayor: Councillor Pauline Cowper

Councillors: Agatha Mary Akyigyina, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Hamish Badenoch, John Bowcott, Michael Bull, Adam Bush, Tobin Byers, Charlie Chirico, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Stephen Crowe, Mary Curtin, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Edward Foley, Brenda Fraser, Fidelis Gadzama, Ross Garrod, Suzanne Grocott, Jeff Hanna, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Janice Howard, Mary-Jane Jeanes, Abigail Jones, Philip Jones, Andrew Judge, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Abdul Latif, Najeeb Latif, Brian Lewis-Lavender, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Edith Macauley MBE, Russell Makin, Maxi Martin, Peter McCabe, Oonagh Moulton, Ian Munn BSc, MRTPI(Rtd), Katy Neep, Dennis Pearce, John Sargeant, Judy Saunders, David Simpson CBE, Marsie Skeete, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Linda Taylor OBE, Imran Uddin, Gregory Patrick Udeh, Peter Walker, Jill West, Martin Whelton and David Williams

Date: Wednesday 9 September 2015

Time: 7.15 pm

**Venue: Council chamber - Merton Civic Centre, London Road,
Morden SM4 5DX**

This is a public meeting and attendance by the public is encouraged and welcomed. For more information about the agenda please contact

democratic.services@merton.gov.uk or telephone [020 8545 3361](tel:02085453361).

All Press contacts: press@merton.gov.uk, 020 8545 3181

Council meeting

9 September 2015

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|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Celebration of the long reign of Her Majesty the Queen | |
| 2 | Apologies for absence | |
| 3 | Declarations of Pecuniary Interest | |
| 4 | Minutes of the previous meeting | 1 - 14 |
| 5 | Announcements by the Mayor, Leader of the Council and Chief Executive | |
| 6 | Public questions to cabinet members
The questions and written responses will be circulated at the meeting. | |
| 7 | Councillors' ordinary priority questions to cabinet members
The questions and written responses will be circulated at the meeting | |
| 8a | Strategic theme: Councillors' questions to cabinet members
The questions and written responses will be circulated at the meeting. | |
| 8b | Strategic theme: Main report | 15 - 30 |
| 8c | Strategic theme: motions | |
| 9 | Report from Raynes Park Community Forum | 31 - 34 |
| 10 | Notice of Motion - Conservative 1 | 35 - 36 |
| 11 | Use of Special Urgency for a Key Decision | 37 - 40 |
| 12 | Changes to membership of committees and related matters | 41 - 42 |
| 13 | Petitions | 43 - 44 |
| 14 | Business for the next ordinary meeting of the Council | |

Note on declarations of interest

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

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Agenda Item 4

All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the committee/panel. To find out the date of the next meeting please check the calendar of events at your local library or online at www.merton.gov.uk/committee.

COUNCIL
8 JULY 2015
(19.15 - 21.44)

PRESENT

The Mayor of Merton, Councillor David Chung
The Deputy Mayor of Merton, Councillor Pauline Cowper

Councillors: Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Hamish Badenoch, John Bowcott, Michael Bull, Adam Bush, Tobin Byers, Charlie Chirico, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Stephen Crowe, Mary Curtin, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Edward Foley, Brenda Fraser, Fidelis Gadzama, Ross Garrod, Suzanne Grocott, Jeff Hanna, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Janice Howard, Mary-Jane Jeanes, Abigail Jones, Philip Jones, Andrew Judge, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Abdul Latif, Najeeb Latif, Brian Lewis-Lavender, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Edith Macauley, Russell Makin, Maxi Martin, Peter McCabe, Oonagh Moulton, Ian Munn, Katy Neep, Dennis Pearce, John Sargeant, Judy Saunders, David Simpson, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Linda Taylor, Imran Uddin, Gregory Udeh, Peter Walker, Jill West, Martin Whelton and David Williams.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Agatha Akyigyina and Marsie Skeete.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

No pecuniary declarations of interests were made.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Agenda Item 4)

The Mayor announced the sad news on the passing of Mr Charles Ocansey, last year's Mayor's consort, and husband of Councillor Agatha Akyigyina. The Mayor on behalf of the Council asked that their condolences be sent to Councillor Akyigyina.

The Mayor provided the Council with a brief update on his recent Mayoral duties including discussing that to date between him and the Deputy Mayor they had attended over 80 engagements within the Borough. He also informed that it was his intention to visit all the schools within the Borough during this term as the Mayor.

The Mayor invited Councillor Stephen Alambritis and Oonagh Moulton to say a few words on the death the former Councillor and Mayor Joyce Paton.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 5)

The responses to the written public questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of the questioners in turn to ask (if they wished) a supplementary question to the appropriate Cabinet Member.

A copy of the supplementary questions and the responses will be included within the 'Public questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

6 COUNCILLORS' ORDINARY PRIORITY QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 6)

The responses to the Members' ordinary priority questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of those Councillors in turn to ask (if they wished) a further supplementary question to the Cabinet Member.

A copy of the supplementary questions and the responses will be included within the 'Councillors' ordinary priority questions' to cabinet members published document.

7 STRATEGIC THEME: COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 7)

The responses to the Members' strategic theme priority questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of those Councillors in turn to ask (if they wished) a further supplementary question to the Cabinet Member.

A copy of the supplementary questions and the responses will be included within the 'Strategic theme: Councillors' questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

8 STRATEGIC THEME: MAIN REPORT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES WITH AN EMPHASIS ON LEISURE AND SPORT (Agenda Item 8)

The report was moved by Councillor Nick Draper and seconded by Councillor Stephen Alambritis

Councillor Charlie Chirico also spoke on this item

RESOLVED:

That the report is agreed

10 REPORTS FROM WIMBLEDON COMMUNITY FORUM (Agenda Item 10)

Councillor James Holmes presented the report, which was received by the Council.

11 NOTICE OF MOTION - CONSERVATIVE 1 (Agenda Item 11)

The motion was moved by Councillor Michael Bull and seconded by Councillor Linda Taylor

The Labour amendment, as set out in item 23 was moved by Councillor Ross Garrod and seconded by Councillor Judy Saunders.

Councillor Mary Jane Jeanes also spoke on the item.

The Labour amendment was then put to the vote and was carried – votes in favour 33, and votes against 21 with 4 abstention.

The substantive resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED:

Council notes that under the previous Conservative administration official government data showed that Merton was the dirtiest borough in London. Since 2010 however, the government's figures show that litter and detritus on Merton's streets has reduced significantly due to a more targeted approach.

However, this Council recognises that whilst satisfaction with street cleaning is consistently high, people littering the borough's streets is clearly a top concern for some residents, according to the latest Annual Residents' Survey. With council tax now receding as a concern due to the council's five year council tax freeze, over a third of residents now cite litter and dirt in the streets as their primary concern, which is a 10% increase over the last 2 years and the highest level for a decade where council tax and crime were consistently the biggest concerns.

This Council therefore welcomes the Council's zero tolerance approach to litter and the Love Your Street campaign which is a comprehensive programme of initiatives and includes various clean up events arranged in the borough – both by the Council and other community organisations and representatives - including as part of the recent Community Clear Up Day 2015, and pays tribute to the on going efforts of local campaigning groups, including Sustainable Merton and Merton Matters, who – together with many other local residents – are working in partnership with the council in addressing the problem of people dropping litter in the borough.

This Council notes that:

- The Council's zero tolerance approach to litter has included using specialist environmental enforcement officers to fine people who drop litter and cigarette butts in our town centres. Whilst in 2009/10 just 139 fixed penalty notices for littering were issued by the council this has risen to over 4,000 fixed penalty notices issued in 2014/15 to people who drop litter in our streets, with the service extended to parks and green spaces during the busy summer months;
- The Council has invested in more productive and efficient street cleaning equipment including the new Glutton machines being operated across the borough and is introducing an improved approach to mechanical sweeping across the borough, particularly in cleansing hot spot areas;
- The budget for a Sunday street cleaning service in Merton's town centres has not been reduced despite the significant cuts to the council's funding from central government;
- The overall number of street cleaners employed in Merton has reduced from 112 in 2010 to 103 today, as a result of the council adopting a more efficient way of working as part of the LEAN approach to making our services more intelligence led. Over the same period there has been a significant increase in the number of traffic wardens employed due to an increase in residents who want controlled parking zones on their streets which the council is under a duty to enforce where this is the will of the majority of residents;
- As a result of the need to find savings of £32m due to government cuts to our funding, a further 7 street cleaning staff are due to be cut in 2016-17 as part of the Business Plan 2015-19, but, with the decision to work with our neighbouring South London boroughs in order to engage an external firm to deliver these services on our behalf in the future, it is expected that the council will be able to save at least £1m whilst continuing to deliver the same standard of service to our residents;
- Dog waste bins are also set to be removed from pavements in 2016-17 and with significantly more residents asked in the latest Annual Residents' Survey satisfied with the way in which Merton Council deals with dog fouling, we continue to improve this service by moving to a more efficient and effective "any bin will do" approach which has been supported by the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel;
- According to a recent Freedom of Information request, 21,700 people felt it necessary to contact the Council about street scene and waste issues last year, and we welcome this and have expanded the ways in which residents can contact us, including using our new smartphone app, LoveCleanStreets ; and
- Concerns are consistently being raised with councillors as we rely on residents to be our eyes and ears to identify fly tips or where there is a build up of litter, and the Council's stated policy to 'sweep every road once a week, twice if

required' whilst 'town centres and main shopping parades should be swept daily Monday to Saturday' continues to be our policy, despite the significant increase in littering across the country as a whole which we need to respond to without any increase in funding and indeed with the opposite, a significant cut in our funding from central government. Nonetheless, whilst average levels of satisfaction with street cleaning for London have reduced, Merton's have increased..

Furthermore, this Council notes that the level of missed waste collections continues to stand at just 0.05%, but that nonetheless it is accepted that the refuse receptacles currently in use are not fit for purpose, with black sacks being torn apart by foxes and refuse in the recycling receptacles being blown about by the wind. The Tidy Britain Group's analysis of our street litter found that 50% is as a result of our black sack and box collection regimes. Council therefore warmly welcomes the wheeled bin pilot in parts of Lavender ward and looks forward to assessing the results, noting that preliminary results show a 20% improvement in street cleanliness.

This Council therefore resolves to call on Cabinet to:

- a) Look in detail at the results of the pilot and Scrutiny's deliberations into the potential benefits and/or disbenefits of a wheeled bin service, bearing in mind the need for any changes to offer value for money and cleaner streets;
- b) Continue to strenuously enforce fixed penalty notices for the minority of people who litter our streets;
- c) Continue to sweep the borough's streets according to the agreed policy in line with the resources allocated as part of successive Business Plans agreed by full council;
- d) Continue with the same level of Sunday street cleaning service in Merton's town centres as has been part of the agreed budget for a number of years;
- e) Seek to identify additional efficiency savings over the coming months in order to achieve the total £32m of cuts required across the council as a result of the reduction in our funding from central government and where possible and in line with the July principles to protect Merton's street cleaning service by achieving economies of scale by working with our neighbouring boroughs via the South London Waste Partnership environmental services procurement;
- f) Continue to regularly review the training and monitoring systems in place for frontline street cleaning staff to ensure that the Council's stated policies and agreed service levels continue to be delivered on the ground;
- g) Continue to work as part of the borough-wide, cross party anti-litter campaign Love your Street as proposed by the council and the Merton Matters campaign group in order to discourage people from littering our streets;

- h) Continue to strenuously enforce fixed penalty notices for the minority of people who litter our streets; and
- i) In line with the budget agreed, continue to ensure that road gutters/gullies, which residents frequently complain remain filled with litter and dead leaves, are cleared on a regular basis.

12 NOTICE OF MOTION - CONSERVATIVE 2 (Agenda Item 12)

The motion was moved by Councillor Michael Latif and seconded by Councillor Charlie Chirico

The Labour amendment, as set out in item 24 was moved by Councillor Tobin Byers and seconded by Councillor Katy Neep.

Councillor Mary Jane Jeanes also spoke on the item.

The Labour amendment was then put to the vote and was carried – votes in favour 37, and votes against 0 with 21 abstention.

The substantive resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED:

This Council shares public concern about travellers illegally occupying public green spaces and other public and private areas in the Borough.

Council thanks officers, the police and the courts on their recent work to move on travellers illegally camping on some of our parks and open spaces.

However, it is frequently the case that travellers evicted by the Council from one site then simply move on to occupy another site in the vicinity and current legislation means that the council's hands are often tied, unable to move people on without undertaking time consuming and costly welfare checks and legal processes. This has been going on for many months in and around Merton, usually at the expense of public funds where it is public land being occupied, although there have also been encroachments on private land where the landowner is responsible and the legal requirements for removal are less exacting.

The process of undertaking travellers' needs assessments and applying for court orders, as required by law, is not only costly and time consuming for the authorities concerned but also causes a good deal of inconvenience and anxiety to the local residents, although this is not something that can be avoided given the current legal framework.

Council congratulates officers on the speed and efficiency with which they have returned affected parks to cleanliness, but notes that subsequent cleaning up and cost effective and appropriate securing of the sites after the travellers' eviction is only

achieved by spending further tax payers' money and must be weighed up against the many other services the council is required to provide from an ever reducing funding pot.

The council has a statutory duty to assess the welfare needs of Travellers in its area, and in particular the welfare needs of Traveller children and young people. Evictions cannot be progressed until this process has been undertaken and any welfare needs assessed. However council notes that officers are carrying out a review of the welfare assessment procedure to identify whether there are ways of speeding up this process whilst continuing to abide by the legal requirements.

In addition, by their very nature, our parks and open spaces need to remain open and accessible to residents. Whilst the council uses a number of methods to seek to prevent illegal encampments on our parks and open spaces, this is difficult to achieve without stopping residents from accessing their local parks. The council therefore seeks to achieve a balance between actively discouraging illegal encampments and maintaining access for residents, in the knowledge that it is not possible to completely secure parks from those who are determined to set up illegal encampments without affecting residents' rights of access to their local parks and open spaces.

Council notes the strong partnership approach to illegal encampments on our parks and open spaces between the council and the police service in Merton. This has helped speed up the eviction process and we are dependent on the police service's ability to continue to support us in this way, with reductions in police resources a potential threat to this partnership working.

This Council therefore resolves that it should:

- Continue to take a proactive approach to secure public parks in the borough by working closely with Friends groups, councillors and local residents on cost effective, practical and innovative solutions that help prevent illegal encampments whilst maintaining access for residents where possible;
- Continue to adopt a strong stance in order permanently to prevent travellers from illegally occupying public parks and other public spaces in the future, bearing in mind the legal duties placed on the council to assess the welfare needs of Travellers and in particular Traveller children and young people;
- Continue to take full advantage of the summary recently published by the Government of the powers that public bodies, such as Merton, have to help them deal with unauthorised traveller encampments, bearing in mind that none of these powers are new, the appropriate powers are already in use by the council, and no new powers have been proposed by the government;
- With ward Councillors well placed to communicate directly with their residents at short notice, consider measures to improve communication with local residents when unauthorised encampments do occur, building on the clear and regular

communications some of our Councillors have distributed to residents where such issues have arisen in their wards; and

- Seek agreement with the police on changes to the protocol where efficiencies in the current system are identified through the review of the welfare assessment procedure being carried out by officers which is seeking to identify ways of speeding up the process whilst continuing to abide by all the legal requirements.

13 NOTICE OF MOTION - CONSERVATIVE 3 (Agenda Item 13)

The motion was moved by Councillor Janice Howard and seconded by Councillor Michael Bull

The Labour amendment, as set out in item 25 was moved by Councillor Abigail Jones and seconded by Councillor Imran Uddin.

Councillor Mary Jane Jeanes also spoke on the item.

The Labour amendment was then put to the vote and was carried – votes in favour 37, and votes against 0 with 21 abstentions.

The substantive resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED:

Council notes that Merton's housing stock was transferred to a Housing Association under the previous Conservative administration. Circle Housing Merton Priory (CHMP) are independent of the council and they have full ownership of 9,000 former council homes.

On taking over the properties, Circle made a series of promises to residents in terms of the service they would offer as a landlord.

Unlike the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the Council does not have any regulatory powers over CHMP. Under the terms of the stock transfer agreement, CHMP is formally accountable to the council solely in the specific area of whether they deliver on the promises in the offer document at the time of the transfer and whether they keep to their side of the transfer agreement.

Nonetheless, this council believes it has a moral duty to do all it in its power to stand up for CHMP tenants, leaseholders and freeholders, notwithstanding the limited powers the council has in this regard. This is why in September last year the council succeeded in ensuring CHMP signed up to the 10 Commitments. These commitments include: "Circle Housing Merton Priory will continue to maintain the homes of residents across the three neighbourhoods throughout the planning process until regeneration starts, including ensuring a high quality responsive repairs service."

Council believes that stronger controls on Housing Associations are needed and that government should give local authorities robust powers to intervene where local Housing Associations are not performing or where they do not offer value for money for residents.

This Council notes with concern that it is now more than 9 months since an independent investigation was commissioned into the whistle blowing allegations of corruption and mismanagement within Circle Housing Merton Priory's (CHMP) repairs and maintenance service which looked at a sample of 25 properties.

Following pressure from residents, the Wimbledon Guardian and from local Councillors who called for an independent audit, Council welcomes CHMP's admission that their repairs contractor, Keepmoat Property Services, has been overcharging for works and their announcement that they are now undertaking a wider investigation to assess the scale of overcharging and to identify ways of improving the system to stop contractors from overcharging.

However, despite the severity of the allegations and the number of people potentially affected, the initial audit report of 25 properties is still yet to be released to residents and councillors and no firm timetable for publication has been forthcoming. There has been no update on when the full audit is expected to be completed and when it will be published.

This Council is disappointed with CHMP's continued inability to manage repairs and strongly believes that it is important to identify a way forward as Merton residents have had to put up with inadequate repairs for too long.

This Council takes seriously its legal responsibility, under the terms of the stock transfer agreement, to formally hold CHMP to account in the specific area of whether they deliver on the promises in the offer document at the time of the transfer and whether they keep to their side of the transfer agreement. However the council believes it also has a moral duty to hold CHMP to account on behalf of all tenants, leaseholders and freeholders and therefore has:

- Introduced regular liaison meetings with the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture, the Director of Community and Housing, CHMP Managing Director, Circle Regional Director of Property Services and the council's Housing Relationship manager;
- Ensured that CHMP attended the June meeting of the council's Sustainable Communities Scrutiny panel for an update from CHMP on the stock transfer commitments and repairs;
- Required CHMP to produce a separate quarterly performance report to be available to the Sustainable Communities panel;

- Ensured, as part of their regeneration proposals, that CHMP signed up to a set of 10 Commitments which included continuing to offer a high quality responsive repairs service during the regeneration process.

However despite the above, the council has been clear with CHMP that their repairs service continues to underperform and let residents down. Council therefore:

- (a) Calls on CHMP to take urgent steps to ensure the repair service is radically overhauled so that residents get the service they deserve and already pay for;
- (b) Notes the Leader has invited Sir Robin Young and Senior Officers of Circle Merton Priory to a meeting to review how they are performing against the 10 Commitments, in particular in relation to ensuring a high quality responsive repairs service, and calls on them to address the urgent and historic cases that remain unresolved;
- (c) Urges CHMP's senior officers to continue to attend the Sustainable Communities scrutiny panel as requested by the Chair to answer questions from councillors and residents on the issue of repairs;
- (d) Demands the immediate publication by CHMP of the initial independent audit report on alleged fraud and repeated overcharging of residents by its repairs contractor, Keepmoat Property Services, and a timetable for the completion and publication of the full investigation;
- (e) Requests that any other such investigations conducted in the future in relation to CHMP or any of its contractors, including by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), are published in a timely fashion to ensure full transparency and accountability; and
- (f) Will continue to utilise the limited legal powers available to the Council under the terms of the housing stock transfer agreement, and reiterates its commitment to safeguard the needs of residents on Merton's housing estates and hold CHMP to account on the quality of its repairs and maintenance service, particularly in light of the HCA Regulatory Notice served on Circle Anglia Limited in February 2015, and to continue to hold CHMP to account in relation to the promises they made to residents as part of the transfer agreement and the 10 Commitments they signed as part of the regeneration proposals, and asks Cabinet to look at the limited legal powers available to us as a local authority if CHMP fail to make changes and demonstrate real impact; and
- (g) Calls on the government to ensure that local authorities have stronger powers to intervene in cases where Housing Associations are demonstrably not delivering for local residents.

14 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015-19 (Agenda Item 14)

The report was moved by Councillor Andrew Judge and seconded by Councillor Mark Allison

Councillor Suzanne Grocott also spoke on this item.

RESOLVED

That Council approves a new Capital Scheme "Rediscover Mitcham" totalling £507,290 funded by Section 106 contributions as detailed below.

Rediscover Mitcham Section 106 Funding 2015/16

Bid approved 23rd May 2012

B639a	Fair Green (Originally £42,600)	32,372
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Approved bids as per cabinet report 24th Sept 2012

B657a	James Estate, Bond Rd (Smythe's Toys)	71,550
B657b	James Estate, Bond Rd (Smythe's Toys)	183,988
Total		<u>255,538</u>

Approved bids as per cabinet report 9th Dec 2013

B667a	Tooting & Mitcham Football Ground	5,000
B667b	Former Segas site, Western Rd	65,000
B667c	Former Segas site, Western Rd	36,000
B667d	Land Nwrest side of Batsworth Rd	7,000
B667e	Former Rowan School Site	15,000
B667f	Former Rowan School Site	45,688
B667g	Former Rowan School Site	45,688
Total		<u>219,375</u>

Total for Rediscover Mitcham		<u>507,285</u>
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15 RECRUITMENT FOR DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH (Agenda Item 15)

The report was moved by Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah and seconded by Councillor Mark Allison.

Councillor Gilli Lewis- Lavender also spoke on this item.

RESOLVED

That Council:

1. agrees to commence a recruitment campaign for a new Director of Public Health as the current postholder is due to retire
2. approves an appointment to the post of Director of Public Health on a salary range that potentially will reach or exceed £100,000

16 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015 (Agenda Item 16)

The report was moved by Councillor Peter Southgate and seconded by Councillor Peter McCabe.

Councillor Oonagh Moulton also spoke on this item.

RESOLVED

That Council notes the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.

17 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 17)

The report was moved by Councillor Mark Allison and seconded by Councillor Stephen Alambritis.

Councillor David Williams also spoke on this item.

RESOLVED

That Council

1. notes the Members' declaration of interest form and guidance.
2. agrees that the form and guidance, contained within the report, should be updated to include declaration of trade union membership.
3. agrees that the form and guidance should be updated to include declaration of third party organisations in the borough where a Councillor or Co-opted Member holds a position of management or control.
4. agrees to ensure all councillors be guided by the Monitoring Officer on the new requirements that come into effect on 1st September 2015.

18 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS (Agenda Item 18)

The report was moved by Councillor Peter McCabe and seconded by Councillor Stephen Alambritis.

Councillor David Williams also spoke on this item.

RESOLVED

That Council

1. agrees to appoint Suresh Patel and Derek Prior as independent persons for the purposes of Chapter 7 of the Localism Act. The independent persons will be invited to attend meetings of the Standards Committee in that capacity
2. agrees that the appointments be made for a period of three years from 12 July 2015.

19 AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS (Agenda Item 19)

The report was moved by Councillor Mark Allison and seconded by Councillor Stephen Alambritis.

Councillor David Williams also spoke on this item.

RESOLVED

That Council authorise the changes to the council's constitution (set out below) in order to comply with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

Constitution – Part 4H Officer Employment Procedure Rules

Paragraph 7.1, replace:

“No disciplinary action may be taken in respect of the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer except in accordance with a recommendation in a report made by a Designated Independent Person i.e. as set out in the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2001”

With:

“No disciplinary action to dismiss may be taken in respect of the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer except after having taken into account any advice, views or recommendations of a Panel, the conclusions of any investigation and any recommendations of the relevant officer i.e. as set out in the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015”

20 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND RELATED MATTERS
(Agenda Item 20)

The report was moved by Councillor Stephen Alambritis and seconded by Councillor Mark Allison.

RESOLVED

That Council

1. notes the changes to the membership of Committees that were approved under delegated powers since the last meeting of the Council.
2. notes that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission rejected the request for the use of Special urgency (Rule 15) in relation to a delegated key decision.

21 PETITIONS (Agenda Item 21)

The report was moved by Councillor Stephen Alambritis and seconded by Councillor Mark Allison.

RESOLVED

That Council

1. notes the update on the petition received at the last meeting,
2. accepts receipt of a petition presented by Councillor David Dean called 'a petition to ask officers for re-appraisal of Burstow Road/ Kingston Road/ Lower Downs Road/ Cycle track junction.'

22 BUSINESS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
(Agenda Item 22)

That the Strategic Theme for the next ordinary meeting of the Council to be held on 9 September 2015 shall be Children and Young People.

Committee: Council

Date: 9th September 2015

Agenda item:

Wards: ALL

Subject: Strategic Objective Review – Children and Young People

Lead officer: Yvette Stanley – Director, Children Schools and Families Department

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

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

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

Recommendations:

- A. That Council considers the content of the report.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Council at its meeting in March 2015 approved the Business Plan 2015-2019. The Business Plan represents the way in which the council will lead the delivery of the Community Plan via a number of thematic partnerships and strategic themes. Performance against these themes, plus an additional theme of corporate capacity, is monitored by Council.
- 1.2 Each meeting of Council will receive a report updating on progress against one of these strategic themes. This report provides Council with an opportunity to consider progress against the priorities under the ‘children and young people’ theme.
- 1.3 The ambition for the theme as outlined in the council’s Business Plan 2015-19 is to ‘improve health outcomes, maintain robust safeguarding, improve educational outcomes, promote children and young people’s positive contribution and their economic wellbeing’.
- 1.4 The portfolio holders are Cllrs Maxi Martin and Martin Whelton
- 1.5 The Business Plan can be viewed at www.merton.gov.uk/businessplan.

2 DETAILS

Background

- 2.1 The Children Schools and Families Department aims to improve outcomes for children and young people in Merton through commissioning and providing a range of universal, targeted and specialist services. These include:
- Early years services in children’s centres and settings
 - Primary, secondary and special schools
 - Services for pupils with Special Educational Needs
 - School admissions, pupil place planning and school capital strategy

- School improvement
 - Education Inclusion including universal youth services
 - Social work assessment and casework – Safeguarding; children in need; children looked after; care leavers
 - Family and Adolescent Services including youth justice; Transforming Families
 - Integrated services for children with disabilities
 - Commissioning, procurement and contract management
 - Policy, planning and performance management
- 2.2 The Department leads the local Children’s Trust, a partnership of agencies from the statutory, community and voluntary sectors which develops strategy and plans for the delivery of co-ordinated and integrated services for children, young people and families. Many of the Council’s children’s services are provided through this partnership approach with, for example, joint commissioning, integrated teams, multi-agency jointly delivered services and some co-location of staff.
- 2.3 Strong partnership working is at the heart of our approach to ensuring that children and young people are healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and enjoy economic wellbeing. In addition to the Children’s Trust Board, governance of local children’s services is undertaken by Merton’s Local Safeguarding Children Board; the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safer and Stronger Thematic Partnership.
- 2.4 In 2013, the Merton Partnership refreshed the Community Plan. In seeking to promote ‘better opportunities for youngsters’, children’s services partners expressed the following vision:
- “We are committed to delivering outstanding services which improve outcomes and life chances for all the borough’s children and young people. We are also determined to help those facing real challenges to overcome them and narrow the gap in outcomes.”
- 2.5 The vision recognises the need to provide the highest quality universal services while focusing particularly on children and young people vulnerable to poorer outcomes. This more targeted approach, prompted not least by the financial pressures faced by the public sector, has been reflected in the borough’s Children and Young People’s Plan for some years now. Partners are currently in the process of refreshing this plan for the period 2015-18 and have agreed the following key priorities:
- Children in need of early help
 - Children requiring timely and effective safeguarding
 - Children looked after and care leavers
 - Children with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Improving overall and narrowing gaps in educational outcomes and opportunities
 - Preventing, diverting and deterring young people from criminal behaviour to enable better outcomes

Performance relating to Children and Young People

- 2.6 Children's services are amongst the most highly regulated of public services with several hundred performance measures applied by a range of government departments. At a local level, relevant performance data is used routinely by managers and is monitored by governance bodies noted above. Key performance data has been extracted for the purposes of this report and is contained in **appendix one**.

Commentary and key achievements relating to Children and Young People

Early Help, Safeguarding, Looked After Children and Care Leavers, Youth Offending

- 2.7 In common with all Local Authorities, services provided by Merton council and its partners for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers are subject to regular external inspection by Ofsted on, broadly, a three year cycle. The last inspection of these services in Merton took place in 2012. At that stage, all these services were assessed as 'good'. Since 2012 there have been changes to the inspection framework and a general 'raising of the bar' in respect of Ofsted's expectations. Services in Merton are currently expecting an imminent inspection under the new Single Inspection Framework and have implemented a range of continuous improvement activity to address these higher expectations. This has included:

- Strengthened the performance management and quality assurance role of Merton's Local Children's Safeguarding Board.
- Implemented a revised Child Wellbeing Model through which workers across a wide range of children's services disciplines assess and meet the additional needs of children and young people to prevent escalation of need.
- Clarified pathways and re-modelled early help services provided by in-house and commissioned services.
- Established a locality model of children's centres with an increased focus on 'reaching' disadvantaged families.
- Established and implemented new early help services including Transforming Families and the Family Nurse Partnership.
- Established Merton's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) with key NHS and police partners.
- Re-organised in house casework services to improve continuity of workers' relationships with service users and to sharpen the focus on specific casework tasks e.g. assessment; permanency; care leavers.
- Implemented a recruitment and retention strategy for social work staff to minimise use of agency staff in key casework roles.
- Completed LAC placement sufficiency assessment and analysis of LAC placement stability to inform placement commissioning activity and improved planning for our LAC.

- Implemented specific improvement plans for achieving permanency for LAC and the Youth Offending service.
- Implemented more robust strategies to address child sexual exploitation; children missing from home and school; and young people at risk of radicalisation in response to the strengthened focus on these issues from central government as well as our own established improvement priorities.

2.8 This work has impacted on a range of specific performance measures. Key achievements to date include:

- Almost 80% of families from areas of deprivation in the borough have accessed children's centres services since 2013-14.
- The numbers of disadvantaged 2yr olds accessing funded child care and early education have increased by 50% since 2013-14.
- The % of reception age children who are overweight or obese has reduced since 2013-14.
- Rates of teenage pregnancy have reduced from 26 per 10,000 in 2012 to 22 per 10,000 in 2013, better than the national average.
- Numbers of families engaged by the Transforming Families service have doubled since 2013-14 with 100% of those families being 'turned around' as a result of intervention.
- The % of single assessments completed within timescales has improved from 80% to 90%.
- The % of children subject to a child protection plan who were visited and seen within timescales has improved from 84% in 2013-14 to 92% in 2014-15.
- The % of child protection cases reviewed within timescales has been maintained at 93% in 2014-15.
- Merton has reduced the time taken for completing care proceedings for children looked after (LAC) from 63 weeks in the first quarter of 2013-14 to 24 weeks in the final quarter of 2014-15.
- 16 children were either adopted or made subject to Special Guardianship Orders in 2014-15 against 15 in 2013-14.
- 25 new foster carers were recruited between April 2013 and March 2015.
- The % of Merton LAC placed with independent fostering agencies reduced from 50% in 2013-14 to 42% in 2014-15.
- 93% of initial Personal Education Plans for LAC were completed within timescales in 2014-15 as against 83% in 2013-14
- 94% of LAC had an annual health assessment within timescales in 2014-15, better than previous national average performance
- 41% of Care Leavers were in education, training or employment in 2014-15, better than previous national average performance
- Numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system have fallen from 88 in 2013-14 to 60 in 2014-15

- Numbers of children becoming looked after as a result of a remand during criminal proceedings have fallen from 14 in 2013-14 to 6 in 2014-15.
- Current Ofsted ratings of Merton's fostering and adoption services are both 'good'.
- The targeted 'Short Quality Inspection' by HM Inspectorate of Probation of casework in Merton's Youth Offending Team in 2013 found a marked improvement since the full service inspection of 2011.

Education, Educational Inclusion and Children with SEN and Disabilities

2.9 A key role for the council, working with schools and other partners, is to provide high quality early years, primary and secondary education for all Merton pupils and to provide specific support to pupil groups who, without support, may not reach their potential. Early years settings and schools continue to be subject to robust Ofsted inspection and, through targeted intervention from school improvement services, our aim has been to increase the numbers of children receiving provision which is 'good or better'. Officers and partner agencies have implemented strategies to improve attendance and reduce exclusions, both fixed term and permanent. Significant work has also been undertaken to implement the radical changes to the SEN statementing process introduced by the 2014 Children and Families Act. Work has also continued to expand Merton's primary school and SEN sectors and officers have been developing strategy to address the projected rise in demand for secondary school places in the borough. Key activity has included:

- Provided ongoing challenge and support to settings and schools to improve Early Years Foundation Stage performance and continued focus of work to improve early language development.
- Provided targeted support to schools in Ofsted improvement categories.
- Improved use of pupil progress and attainment data to support a more targeted approach to working with schools to improve performance at all Key Stages.
- Provided challenge to schools on their use of Pupil Premium funding and implemented project work to increase Pupil Premium income to schools.
- Provided a strong Continuing Professional Development programme for teaching staff.
- Focused governor development on governing body responsibilities in supporting performance improvement of schools.
- Strengthened arrangements for children missing education and exclusions and implemented a specific chronic absence project.
- Implemented strategy in response to the Raising of the Participation Age and to young people 'Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)'
- Implemented new arrangements in the Children and Families Act 2014 for integrated Education, Health and Care planning for children with SEN and disabilities.
- Established and published Merton's 'Local Offer' of services for children with SEN and disabilities.

- Introduced personal budgets for certain services for children with SEN and disabilities.
- Continued to implement the commissioning model for universal youth services in partnership with community and voluntary organisations
- Progressed the implementation of Merton's long-term primary school expansion strategy and provided additional places for SEN pupils in mainstream and special schools.
- Completed planning work and development of our secondary school places strategy.

2.10 Key achievements to date from this work include:

- In 2014-15 100% of Merton's Children's Centres were rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.
- In 2014-15 85% of Merton's schools inspected were rated 'good' or 'outstanding', better than national average.
- Children achieving 'a good level of development' in Early Years Foundation Stage increased to 60% in 2014, in line with national average, from 46% in 2013.
- Key Stage 2 results improved with 79% pupils achieving level 4 in reading, writing and maths in 2014, about at national average.
- 64% of Key Stage 4 pupils achieved 5+ good GCSEs inc english and Maths in 2014, an improvement and above national average.
- A-level average points scores improved in Merton's 6th forms in 2014 and performance was above London average.
- Merton's schools improved across most measures of pupil progress through Key Stages in 2014 with performance better than the national average.
- The progress and attainment of SEN pupils and those eligible for Pupil Premium improved across most measures in 2014.
- Attendance levels across primary and secondary schools improved in 2013-14 and levels of persistent absence reduced significantly in 2013-14.
- Numbers of permanent and fixed term exclusions decreased in 2013-14.
- Levels of NEET young people have reduced and are better than national average
- A commissioning model for alternative education provision has been introduced with more robust monitoring and quality assurance.
- Three local area partnerships are in place for the delivery of universal youth services and levels of participation in youth provision have increased from 2032 in 2013-14 to 3234 in 2014-15.
- 21 new forms of entry have been established in Merton primary schools ; SEN provision has been expanded at two of Merton's special schools and new Additionally Resourced Provision for pupils with SEN has been established in mainstream primary and secondary schools.

Young People's Participation in Service Design and Delivery

- 2.11 Children's services have a strong commitment to promoting the involvement and participation of young people in service design and delivery. 'User voice' is important in understanding viewpoints of young people, in providing feedback and in shaping services. Key highlights of user voice activity include:
- We have continued to commission an independent advocacy service for LAC and young people in the child protection system.
 - We have issued improved guidance on engaging young people in statutory review meetings and some young people are now chairing these meetings.
 - We have surveyed young people's views of placements provided to LAC and young people are routinely involved in foster carer recruitment and training activity.
 - We have strengthened our Children in Care Council and members contributed to the development of our new Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18.
 - Young Inspectors have been involved in quality assurance of youth services and chaired the annual MSCB away day.
 - Young people were actively engaged in the work of the CYP scrutiny task group on on-line safety this year.
 - 57% of Merton resident young people feel listened to 'a great deal or to some extent' compared to a London average of 47% and 47% feel involved in decision-making as against a 31% London average.

Key Challenges

Public Policy Issues

- 2.12 Following the general election in May 2015, the Queen's Speech outlining the legislative programme for the new parliament contained a number of proposed Bills which will have an impact on the delivery of children's services.
- 2.13 A new Education and Adoption Bill has already been introduced. Amongst a broader set of provision specifically affecting schools, the Bill if enacted will also enable central government to require local authorities in some circumstances to hand over responsibilities for adoption (recruitment; matching and post adoption support) either to another local authority or to an independent agency. The establishment of regional adoption agencies has also been signalled. Specific implications for Merton are unclear at this stage although the Director is involved with colleagues in the London Directors group in proactively considering models for the provision of adoption services that would be in line with the Bill's intentions.
- 2.14 A Childcare Bill has also been introduced which will increase the provision of free childcare for 3 and 4 year old children of working parents from the current level of 15 hours per week in term-time to 30 hours per week. This extended free entitlement is likely to increase demand for childcare and will require the

department to work with the local childcare sector to achieve sufficiency of provision. Although places taken up will be funded by central government, the development work required to support the childcare sector's expansion will increase pressure on the department's early years staffing infrastructure.

- 2.15 Government intends the proposed Policing and Criminal Justice Bill to contain provision designed to strengthen child protection through imposing sanctions on professionals who fail to take action on child abuse where it is their professional responsibility to do so. This may be via amending current duties, introducing a new offence of 'wilful neglect' or by introducing a mandatory reporting regime for certain professional groups. The specific details in the proposed Bill will be informed by consultation which has not yet been undertaken.

Service Transformation

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

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

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

- 2.18 In the year ahead and medium term, further transformation will be required to meet outstanding savings targets; to meet the demands of demographic growth; to achieve the Department's ambitions to further improve outcomes for children and families and also to respond to the ongoing public policy focus on children's

services. Key elements of this work will involve refreshing the department's Target Operating Model (TOM) and will include:

- Engaging with the corporate flexible working agenda to enable further economies in the use of accommodation and increase efficiency of staffing resources. During 2014-15, some departmental services implemented flexible working pilots but it is now planned for the whole department to adopt smaller office accommodation 'footprint' and maximise the use of mobile technology from November 2015.
- Examining ways of changing customer contact 'channels' to achieve economies. Although the majority of CSF services will continue to require 'face to face' contact between service users and staff, as part of the ongoing corporate strategy, the department will need to explore the potential for other, more economical, approaches to customer contact.
- Making better use of ICT to support the above strategies but also to promote improved integration of CSF services. Following procurement of a new ICT system (Mosaic) to replace the existing Carefirst system, the department has been preparing for the system's 'go-live' date in Autumn 2015. The implementation of the new system will enable improved co-ordination of casework across social care and education functions.
- Driving further economies and efficiencies through progressing the joint commissioning agenda in particular with Merton's Clinical Commissioning Group and with Public Health services now located within the council. CSF officers with colleagues in Public Health and Merton CCG are currently re-commissioning community health services for children including health visiting; school nursing; specialist nursing for Looked After Children and Merton's MASH; and therapies for children. This re-commissioning will promote further service integration and strengthen health input into work with vulnerable children and those requiring safeguarding.

Service Specific Issues

- 2.19 In addition to the department's overall approach to further transformation noted above, there are a number of key challenges facing specific service areas within the department:
- 2.20 As a result of our own commitment to continuous improvement as well as a general increase in expectations on children's services and the 'raising of the bar' demonstrated by the current Ofsted inspection regime, the department needs to maintain a relentless focus on the quality of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. In readiness for inspection, we continue to maintain an up to date self-evaluation; suite of documents and data, supported by regular staff and partner briefings.
- 2.21 As part of the department's continuous improvement agenda, we will continue to review key service strategies including:
- timeliness of court proceedings and permanency for children looked after;
 - overall sufficiency of placements, placement stability and use of out of borough placements for our LAC and care leavers;
 - our response to missing children and those missing education;

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

Reports of Overview and Scrutiny Commission/Panels

- 2.28 Members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel have maintained an overview of the key policy and legislative developments affecting the Children, Schools and Families Department by receiving an Update Report at every

- meeting. This report enables the Panel to identify areas for further scrutiny and monitor how the council is progressing in implementing policy and responding to new requirements that impact service delivery.
- 2.29 The Panel also undertake performance management of a selected data set, which covers the key priorities of the department and issues of local concern, as selected by Members.
- 2.30 As part of its 2014/15 work programme, the Panel scrutinized and made recommendations to the department on the following items/areas of work:
- The Councils Secondary School Strategy and expansion to meet demand for school places;
 - Marketing Merton's Schools;
 - Annual Corporate Parenting Report;
 - Annual Report of the Safeguarding Children Board;
 - The Local Authority role in reducing particular vulnerabilities faced by girls (including gang activity, child sexual exploitation and FGM);
 - The Transforming Families Programme;
 - Youth offending services and preventative approaches;
 - The role of schools in promoting the broader wellbeing of children and families;
 - The Children and Families Act 2014;
 - Raising the participation age and career pathway for young people; and
 - The Local Authority role in promoting access to child care and early education for families
- 2.31 The Panel have also focused their in depth task group reviews on current issues facing the Children, Schools and Families Department, such as school leadership succession planning and on national issues, such as online safety for children and young people.
- 2.32 Both reviews have enabled Members to engage key stakeholders and partners and to commission external research and expertise to ensure that all recommendations were evidence based and achievable, and deliverable working with local schools, Governors and Merton Safeguarding Children Board.
- 2.33 The recommendations made relating to school leadership succession planning will result in a range of measures to encourage the recruitment and retention of more BME and female teachers applying for headship and a scholarship and development programme to encourage more candidates to apply, in particular from BME backgrounds, to ensure that the make up of school leadership teams is representative of the diverse communities within Merton.
- 2.34 The online strategies in school task group Final report and recommendations are due to be considered by Cabinet in September 2015.
- 2.35 The Panel have established a new thematic approach to delivering their work programme for 2015/16 which includes a short, focused task group review, with key lines of enquiry that link to that particular theme, at each meeting. Members will play a more proactive role in gathering evidence, engaging stakeholders, consulting service users and feeding back their findings to stimulate more

informed debate at Panel meetings. This is hoped to focus the Panels work on key themes that support the priorities of the Cabinet Members for Children 's Services and Education and also the CSF Department and will enable their work to be more outcome focused and strategic.

Summary of Key Decisions

2.36 The following key decisions have been taken in connection with this strategic theme since Autumn 2014:

- Contract award for an integrated substance misuse, detached youth and sexual health service for young people
- Contract awards for expansion works at Perseid, Hatfield, Dundonald, and Singlegate schools
- Contract award for design work for secondary expansion strategy
- School admission arrangements for 2016-17
- Allocation of s106 monies to the school expansion programme
- Extension of schools catering contract until 2016

Advice or Recommendations from Community Forums

2.37 Two Community Forums – Raynes Park and Mitcham – held discussions with officers in connection with i) pupil places issues including the secondary school expansion strategy and ii) traffic implications arising from the Cranmer school expansion project, but there has been no formal advice or recommendations from Community Forums in connection with this strategic theme since Autumn 2014.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1 Not applicable – this report is for information only.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1 N/A

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific financial, resource or property implications arising from this information report. All related services are delivered within existing resources.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific legal or statutory implications arising from this information report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific human rights, equalities or community cohesion implications arising from this information report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this information report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific risk management or health and safety implications arising from this information report.

11 APPENDICES – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

Appendix I: Performance Data

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 20015-19 Council Business Plan

Appendix I: Performance Data

Early Intervention and Prevention	2013-14 Outturn	2014-15 Outturn	National Benchmark
Percentage of mothers breast feeding at 6 to 8 weeks	69%	68%	n/a
Percentage of 0-4 year olds from areas of deprivation (IDACI 30%) accessing Children's Centre services (estimated Census 2011 population)	78%	78%	n/a
Number of two year olds accessing 'Free child places'	613	917	n/a
Percentage achieving 'A Good Level of Development' at Early Years Foundation Stage (4 to 5 year olds)	46% (AY 2012/13)	60% (AY 2013/14)	60% (2013/14)
Percentage of Free School Meals cohort achieving 'A Good Level of Development' at Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (4 to 5 year olds)	33% (AY 2012/13)	44% (AY 2013/14)	45% (2013/14)
Percentage of MMR1 coverage: 1 dose of MMR by age 2 years	83.5%	84.1%	n/a
Percentage of MMR2 coverage: 2 doses of MMR by age 5 years	72%	76%	n/a
Percentage of excess weight in children age 4-5 years (overweight and obesity)	21% (AY 2012/13)	20.9% (AY 2013/14)	n/a
Percentage of excess weight in children aged 10-11 years (overweight and obesity)	35% (AY 2012/13)	36.4% (AY 2013/14)	n/a
Percentage of young people requiring a First CAMHS assessment seen within 8 weeks of referral	51%	72%	n/a
Teenage Pregnancy conception rate per 1000 (under 18 years) (Average data 18 months in arrears)	26.3 per 10,000 in 2012	22.2 per 10,000 in 2013	30.7 per 10,000 (2011)
Numbers of families engaged and 'Turned around' in the Transforming families programme (National Troubled Families programme)	173	370 (100% Turned around)	99% 'Turned around'
Safeguarding and Child Protection	2013-14 Outturn	2014-15 Outturn	National Benchmark
Number of MASH initial contacts received	4574	4,613	n/a
Percentage of Single Assessments completed within statutory requirements of 45 days	81%	91%	82% (2013/14)
Percentage of quorate attendance at Child Protection Conferences	93%	91%	n/a
Number of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan (as at 31 March)	188	172	n/a
Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescale (cases open three months or more)	93%	93%	94% (2013/14)
Percentage of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan who had a four weekly visit on time	84%	92%	n/a
Percentage of Children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan for second or subsequent time	12%	17%	15.8% (2013/14)
Percentage of reports to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day (Working Together 2014/15 requirement)	45%	42%	n/a
Looked After Children	2013-14 Outturn	2014-15 Outturn	National Benchmark
Time take to deliver care proceedings in line with the Public Law Outline 26 week expectations (CAFCASS)	63 Q1 2013	24 weeks Q4 2015	37 weeks (2013/14)
Number of Looked After Children	150	157	n/a

Percentage of Looked After Children in external foster care agencies	50%	42%	38% (2013/14)
Number of 'In-house' foster carers recruited	15	10	n/a
Percentage of Looked After Children cases reviewed within timescales	97%	95%	n/a
Percentage of Looked After Children annual Health Assessments completed within timescale	95%	94%	87% (2013/14)
Percentage of Initial Personal Education Plans completed within timescales	83%	93%	n/a
Numbers of children who become Looked After due to a remand	14	6	n/a
Percentage of Care Leavers in education, employment or training (EET) (19 year olds)	43%	41%	34% (2013/14)
Number of Looked After Children adopted or receiving a Special Guardianship Order	15	16	n/a
Education and Youth Inclusion	2013-14 Outturn	2014-15 Outturn	National Benchmark
Percentage of all Children's Centres graded good or outstanding by Ofsted inspections	100%	100%	69%
Percentage of Nursery Pupils (3 and 4 year olds) in Primary Schools graded good or outstanding by Ofsted	new	82%	n/a
Percentage of all Schools graded good or outstanding by Ofsted inspections	87%	85%	79%
Percentage of all Pupils in Schools graded good or outstanding by Ofsted	new	84%	86%
Percentage of Primary school attendance (all schools Inc. academies 2 and a half terms)	95.6% (AY 2012/13)	96.2% (AY 2013/14)	96.2% (AY 2013/14)
Percentage of Secondary school attendance (all schools Inc. academies 2 and a half terms)	94.4% (AY 2012/13)	95.2% (AY 2013/14)	94.9% (AY 2013/14)
Percentage of Children achieving Level Four in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	78% (AY 2012/13)	79% (AY 2013/14)	79% (AY 2013/14)
Percentage of Young People achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A* to C including English & maths	62.6% (AY 2012/13)	64.2% (AY 2013/14)	53.4% (AY 2013/14)
Percentage of Secondary school pupils subject of a fixed term exclusion (percentage of pupils on roll)	8.15% (AY 2012/13)	6.89% (AY 2013/14)	6.62% (AY 2013/14)
Numbers of Secondary school permanent exclusions	11 (AY 2012/13)	7 (AY 2013/14)	n/a
Numbers of young people in alternative education	163 (AY 2012/13)	173 (AY 2013/14)	n/a
Percentage of Young People aged 16-18 Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)	4%	4.6%	5.30%
Percentage of Young People aged 16 - 18 who's NEET status is "Not Known"	9.8%	12.4%	9.20%
Number of young people engaging in positive youth service participation	2032	3234	n/a
Number of first time entrance into Youth Justice System aged 10 to 17 (cumulative)	88	60	n/a
Rate of proven re-offending by young people in the youth justice system	1.1	1.05	1.04 (2013)
Percentage of major Schools capital projects reporting to time	94%	100%	n/a
Percentage of surplus places at Reception year	3.75%	1.10%	n/a

Percentage of surplus places at Secondary school Year 7 (Inc. Academies)	12.34%	11.32%	n/a
Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities	2013-14 Outturn	2014-15 Outturn	National Benchmark
Number of new SEN Statements/Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) issued (in and out of Borough)	153	170	n/a
Percentage of all SEN statements issued in 26 weeks (without exceptions)	92%	96% (Q3)	93%
Percentage of all SEN statements issued in 26 weeks (with and without exceptions)	87%	92% (Q3)	86%
Percentage of new Education Health and Care Plans issued within 20 weeks	100%	Due Jan 2016	61.50%
Others	2013-14 Outturn	2014-15 Outturn	National Benchmark
Percentage of statutory returns to government on time	100%	100% (28 returns)	n/a
Percentage of commissioned services quarterly monitoring completed on time	100%	100%	n/a

Raynes Park Community Forum Tuesday 30 June 2015 Chair's Report

The meeting was held in Raynes Park Library Hall, and chaired by Councillor Michael Bull, assisted by Tony Edwards from local business Place, Design & Planning. Approximately 28 residents attended, as well as five other Merton Councillors, and officers from the council and its partners. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

School Places

Tom Procter, the council's Service Manager for Contracts and Schools Organisation, gave a presentation on school places. The presentation can be viewed at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/community-living/communityforums/raynesparkcommunityforum.htm>.

The council has implemented a primary school expansion programme to meet unprecedented additional demand, which together with a new primary 'Free School' (The Park School), is providing 4,830 extra places compared to 8 years ago. However, after this year demand for the first year of primary school is forecast to fall slightly, so the challenge now is to provide sufficient places for the growing number of children that are transferring from primary to secondary school.

For the west of the borough the strategy is to provide a new secondary school – 'Harris Wimbledon' has been approved by the Department for Education as a free school but finding a suitable site is extremely challenging. The council is fully aware of the necessity of this school to provide sufficient school places for its residents and are still in discussions with the Department of Education over potential sites for the new free school. It is hoped an announcement might be made on the matter in October.

The council is not considering additional sites for a primary school as forecast information shows that demand is no longer increasing for the start of primary school. Forecasts do take into account planned housing growth, but it is also necessary to review the impact of major developments on 'child yield' in a specific area.

Current and Anticipated Planning Applications

Neil Milligan, the Development Control Section Manager at Merton Council, provided an update on planning applications:

Rainbow Estate: could be considered at the Planning Applications Committee in July. The GLA raised issues which have now been resolved, therefore there are no insurmountable obstacles left to address.

Highways experts are looking at access around the site; parking spaces have been restricted to manage traffic and access.

The requirement for affordable housing on the site is still being negotiated.

There is no officer recommendation for the application yet.

Travelodge: A new contractor has been found and will commence work in about 10 weeks. The entrance to the hotel will be on Amity Grove. There will be about 85-90 rooms and some parking spaces, but not many.

Greyhound Stadium: The application is likely to go to committee in September. There are still some issues to be resolved, such as affordable housing.

Amity Grove: An application for nine flats at building 2a was granted at committee.

14-16 Coombe Lane: An application for a 24-hour gym has been submitted; the council will look at if this is appropriate for the town centre.

Proposed New Malden-Raynes Park-Wimbledon cycle route: Neil Milligan agreed to look into this further and to see if someone from Merton's Highways team or from Sustrans might come along to talk about the topic at the next forum meeting.

Offending Advertising Hoardings in West Barnes Lane

Tony Edwards from Place, Design and Planning explained that the double hoarding that has gone up on West Barnes Lane is legal because it has replaced hoardings that were on the same site previously and were permitted to go up.

Application for Best High Street Award

Tony Edwards explained that a submission is to be made in mid-July, entering Raynes Park for the Best High Street Award. More details on the submission can be seen at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/community-living/communityforums/raynesparkcommunityforum.htm>.

Local Health Issues

Clare Gummett, Lay Member on the Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, gave an update:

Local GP practices in the borough are working to form a federation across the whole of Merton. One of the aims of the federation would be to help meet requirements for extended 8am-8pm GP hours.

An initiative has begun to encourage people to stop stockpiling unused medication and to only get repeat prescriptions for what they need as unused medicine currently costs Merton £1million a year.

A 'Merton on the Move' initiative has been launched for residents and businesses, encouraging people to be more active by walking, running or cycling more. For more information, visit <https://merton.yomp.co/>.

Work is taking place across the five South West London Clinical Commissioning Groups together with acute trusts, community services and Mental Health services, to look at working together as much as possible. An Issues Paper has been put

together, which residents are encouraged to read ahead of proposed discussions to look at how the issues are resolved. The paper can be accessed at www.swlccgs.nhs.uk/issues-paper/.

Open Forum

Councillor Jill West may start a petition against the closure of Barclays Bank in Raynes Park.

Councillor West also said that a sponsorship evening is planned on 16 July at 5.30pm at Absolute Abode, ahead of the Raynes Park Christmas Festival on 4 December. Small businesses are welcome to attend the evening to explore sponsorship opportunities.

Councillor Mary-Jane Jeanes encouraged residents to water trees and saplings on their streets and in the local area during the hot weather.

Dates of future meetings all at 7.15pm, in the Library Hall:

Thursday 1 October 2015

Tuesday 1 December 2015

Thursday 3 March 2016

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COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2015

NOTICE OF MOTION

This Council condemns the considerable inconvenience caused to residents in Merton by the series of Tube and rail strikes that took place over the summer. Unnecessary strike action by the Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) union and some others has caused huge travel disruption for the thousands of Merton residents who rely daily on services such as the Northern and District lines to commute into central London from our borough.

This Council pays tribute to all those people in Merton affected by the strikes, including many council employees, for their resilience and determination to get to work using alternative methods of travel. This Council remains concerned however about the significant cost to the local economy of such strike action and recognises the considerable frustration felt not only by commuters but also by the borough's businesses as a result of lost revenue.

This Council also notes that the planned new Night Tube service is well supported by residents and businesses across Merton as part of London Underground's work to modernise transport in the capital. Journey times are due to be reduced by an average of 20 minutes, with some journeys cut by more than an hour whilst the Night Tube is set to support around 2,000 permanent jobs and boost the London economy by £360 million. Council therefore regrets that its introduction this month – including on the Northern line - could potentially be delayed in light of strike action by transport unions.

Whilst welcoming the ongoing talks aimed at resolving the disputes, this Council regrets that the unions involved have not ruled out staging more Tube and rail strikes which would cause further disruption to the borough's residents and businesses. Council therefore resolves to urge the Government to press ahead with the legislation promised in its General Election manifesto to protect hard working families in Merton from disruptive and undemocratic strike action taken without a proper mandate, including by requiring industrial action in essential services such as health, education, fire and transport to gain the support of at least 40 per cent of all those entitled to take part in strike ballots as well as a majority of those who turn out to vote.

Cllr Daniel Holden

Cllr David Dean

Cllr Oonagh Moulton

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Committee: Council

Date: 9 September 2015

Wards: All

Subject: Call-in and Urgency – Approval Of Property Purchase

Lead officer: Paul Evans, Assistant Director Corporate Governance

Lead member: Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the Council

Contact officer: Chris Pedlow, Senior Democratic Services Officer, (020 8545 3616)

Recommendations:

- A. That Council note the taking of an urgent key decision and the waiving of the call-in procedure.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report appries Council of the taking of an urgent key decision in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 E, section 17 of the Council's constitution.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The Constitution makes provision for the taking of an urgent decision i.e.

“Part 4 E, Paragraph 17(a) states that the call-in procedure ...shall not apply where the decision being taken is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests.

- 2.2. In accordance with paragraph 17(b) of the constitution the above titled report presented to The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Commission was brought to the attention of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Commission who made the following statement:

'having read the associated information, and in view of the need to authorise expenditure of up to £880K at auction on Monday 6 July, I am ready to permit use of Section 15 – Special Urgency, and Section 17 – Exempt Urgency procedures of the constitution for this decision. The decision is also exempt from call-in, given the auction timetable'.

- 2.3. Paragraph (c) of section 17 requires that “Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council together with the reason for urgency (the reason for urgency is identified at 2.2 above).

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. None for the purpose of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

- 5** **TIMETABLE**
5.1. None for the purpose of this report
- 6** **FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**
6.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 7** **LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**
7.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 8** **HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION
IMPLICATIONS**
8.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 9** **CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
9.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 10** **RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
10.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 11** **APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE
PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
Appendix A - Notice of Decision
- 12** **BACKGROUND PAPERS**
12.1. None.

CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Caroline Holland - Director



Notice is hereby given that a key delegated decision will be taken by Director of Environment and Regeneration on the following matter

APPROVAL OF PROPERTY PURCHASE

Where a matter is a key decision and has not been advertised 28 days prior to the date that the decision is required to be taken, and it has also not been possible to give five clear days notice, then the decision can still be taken Under Delegation if the provisions of Rule 15 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules Part 4B of the Constitution can be applied, once agreement, has been obtained by Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, that the decision cannot reasonably be deferred.

Also when a key decision contains exempt information and would be considered in private session and the 28 days notice period prior to the date that the decision is required to be taken has not been given, then the decision can still be taken Under Delegation if the provisions of contained within Rule 17 (Exempt Urgency Procedure) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules Part 4B of the Constitution.

Councillor Southgate in his capacity as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, has approved the use of Section 15 - Special Urgency, and Section 17 - Exempt Urgency procedures for this decision, and acknowledged that the use of the former procedure exempts the decision from call-in.

The decision to be taken relates to the facilitation and approval for potential property acquisition to support regeneration. The reason for urgency is due to the limited timeframe surrounding the purchase opportunity. The reasons for exemption pertain to Section 10.4, Category 3 information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), of the Access to Information Procedure Rules Part 4B of the Constitution.

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Committee: Council

Date: 9 September 2015

Subject: Changes to Membership of Committees and related matters

Lead officer: Ged Curran, Chief Executive

Contact officer: Chris Pedlow, Senior Democratic Services Officer, (020 8545 3616)

democratic.services@merton.gov.uk

Recommendations:

- A. That the changes to the membership of Committees that were approved under delegated powers since the last meeting of the Council are noted.
- B. .
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report asks the Council to appoint a member of the Standards Committee and note the membership changes made under delegated powers since the publication of the agenda for the Council meeting held on 8 July 2015.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The following membership changes have been made under delegated powers in accordance with section A4 of part 3F of the Constitution:
- 2.2.

Committee	Member resigning	Replaced by	Date
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	Councillor Brian Lewis-Lavender	Councillor Suzanne Grocott	9 July 2015
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	Councillor Suzanne Grocott	Councillor Brian Lewis-Lavender	21 July 2015

3 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 3.1. N/A

4 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None for the purposes of this report.

5 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The information regarding membership changes in this report complies with legal and statutory requirements. Council is required to accept nominations made by political groups.

6 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None for the purposes of this report.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1. N/A

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

None.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1. Documents from the authorised officer confirming approval of the membership changes agreed under delegated powers.

Committee: Council

Date: 9 September 2015

Subject: Petitions

Lead officer: Paul Evans, Assistant Director, Corporate Governance.

Lead member: Leader of the Council, Stephen Alambritis.

Contact officer: Democratic Services, democratic.services@merton.gov.uk

Recommendation: That Council

- 1) receives petitions (if any) in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution; and
 - 2) note the response given by officers in respect of the petitions presented to the 8 June 2015 Council meeting.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report invites council to receive petitions in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. At the meeting held on 8 June 2015, Council received the petition detailed below. Any petitions received by Council are referred to respective departments with responsible officers asked to advise the presenting member in each case of the way in which the petition is to be progressed.

- 2.2. Petition - *'To ask officers for re-appraisal of Burstow Road/ Kingston Road/ Lower Downs Road/ Cycle track'* submitted by Councillor David Dean.

In response to the petition officers would like to advise that the Council takes safety very seriously and we have an annual local safety programme. Rat running, perceived danger and excessive speed / volume of traffic are problems in a number of small residential roads throughout the borough and regrettably due to insufficient funds and resource it is not possible to address them all.

Due to limited available resource and funding and high demand for similar action, that outweigh the available funding, it is necessary to prioritise by giving first consideration to those areas with recorded personal injury accidents. According to records over the past 3 years there have 4 PI (personal injury) accidents on Kingston Road and the accidents were not due to the geometry of the junction. Given other priorities it would be difficult justifying any action / expenditure at this time. The situation will be monitored and the Council will take the appropriate action when necessary subject to available funding.

- 3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**
- 3.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**
- 4.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 5 TIMETABLE**
- 5.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**
- 6.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1. None for the purpose of this report.
- 10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 11 APPENDICES**
- 11.1. None.
- 12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 12.1. None.