

Merton Council Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 14 July 2015

Time: 7.15 pm

Venue: Committee rooms C, D & E - Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden
SM4 5DX

AGENDA

Page Number

1	Declarations of pecuniary interest - see note overleaf	
2	Apologies for absence	
3	Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March	1 - 2
4	Policing in Merton - presentation by Borough Commander	3 - 16
5	Stop and Search Monitoring Data - presentation by the Chair of Merton's Stop and Search Monitoring Group	17 - 38
6	Ensuring the council has a positive impact on health - presentation by the Director of Public Health	39 - 62
7	Report of the Immunisation Scrutiny Task Group	63 - 88
8	Report of the shared services scrutiny task group - appendix to follow	89 - 90
9	Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme 2015/16	91 - 116
10	Member Survey 2015 - Analysis	117 - 138
11	Note of the financial monitoring scrutiny task group meeting 1 July 2015	139 - 144

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

For more information about the work of this and other overview and scrutiny panels, please telephone 020 8545 3864 or e-mail scrutiny@merton.gov.uk. Alternatively, visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Press enquiries: press@merton.gov.uk or telephone 020 8545 3483 or 4093

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Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

Councillors:

Peter Southgate (Chair)
Peter McCabe (Vice-Chair)
Hamish Badenoch
Brenda Fraser
Suzanne Grocott
Jeff Hanna
Oonagh Moulton
Abigail Jones
Stan Anderson
Katy Neep

Substitute Members:

John Dehaney
Russell Makin
David Simpson CBE
David Williams
John Sargeant

Co-opted Representatives

Simon Bennett, Secondary and Special School Parent Governor Representative
Peter Connellan, Roman Catholic diocese
Denis Popovs, Primary School Parent Governor Representative
Colin Powell, Church of England diocese
Geoffrey Newman, non-voting co-opted member

Note on declarations of interest

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

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

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

Scrutiny's work falls into four broad areas:

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

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

For more information, please contact the Scrutiny Team on 020 8545 3864 or by e-mail on scrutiny@merton.gov.uk. Alternatively, visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny

