

# Merton Council Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 7 March 2017

Time: 7.15 pm

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

## AGENDA

Page Number

1	Apologies for absence	
2	Declarations of pecuniary interest	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 4
4	Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-20	5 - 30
5	Cabinet response to the shared and outsourced services scrutiny task group	31 - 38
6	Financial monitoring task group - minutes of meeting on 20 February	39 - 42
7	Review of arrangements for co-opted members	43 - 44
8	Discussion of questions for the Borough Commander	
9	Work programme	45 - 52

---

**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](mailto:scrutiny@merton.gov.uk). Alternatively, visit [www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny)

Press enquiries: [press@merton.gov.uk](mailto:press@merton.gov.uk) or telephone 020 8545 3483 or 4093

Email alerts: Get notified when agendas are published  
[www.merton.gov.uk/council/committee.htm?view=emailer](http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/committee.htm?view=emailer)

## Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

### Councillors:

Peter Southgate (Chair)  
Peter McCabe  
Hamish Badenoch  
John Dehaney  
Abigail Jones  
Sally Kenny  
Dennis Pearce  
Oonagh Moulton  
David Williams  
Imran Uddin

### Substitute Members:

Michael Bull  
Agatha Mary Akyigyina  
John Sargeant  
Joan Henry  
Suzanne Grocott

### Co-opted Representatives

Mansoor Ahmad, Parent Governor  
Representative - Primary Sector  
Helen Forbes, Parent Governor  
Representative - Secondary and Special  
Sector  
Colin Powell, Church of England diocese

### 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](mailto:scrutiny@merton.gov.uk). Alternatively, visit [www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny)

# Agenda Item 3

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](http://www.merton.gov.uk/committee).

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

26 JANUARY 2017

(7.15 pm - 8.45 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Southgate (in the Chair), Peter McCabe, Hamish Badenoch, John Dehaney, Abigail Jones, Sally Kenny, Dennis Pearce, Oonagh Moulton, David Williams and Imran Uddin

Co-opted Members Mansoor Ahmad and Helen Forbes

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mark Allison (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance)

Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services) and Julia Regan (Head of Democracy Services)

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from co-opted members Geoffrey Newman and Colin Powell.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

### 3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2016 (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising - the Chair noted that the Head of Sustainable Communities has undertaken to circulate a note on planning enforcement to all councillors in early February. Residents and community associations will receive the link to the website as part of the information sent out for the March community forum meetings.

### 4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2016 (Agenda Item 4)

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

### 5 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE (Agenda Item 5)

Members agreed to take agenda items 5,6 and 8 together.

New savings proposals for Corporate Services

(set out on pages 23-28 of the consultation pack)

The Director of Corporate Services, Caroline Holland, introduced and described each proposal. At the request of the Chair, she identified which of the proposals could be brought forward, either completely or in part. In response to a question, she confirmed that no equality impact assessment had been provided for those savings proposals that had no impact on service users or staff.

In response to a question about CS2016-08 – potential income from letting out two floors of vacant office space in the Civic Centre - Caroline Holland said that the Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) are planning to rent space in the Civic Centre from the end of March.

The Commission agreed to ask Cabinet to bring forward savings proposals wherever possible in order to help to address the predicted funding gap for 2017/18 onwards.

#### Medium term financial strategy

The Chair asked Caroline Holland to introduce and to draw the Commission's attention in particular to the growth proposals, how these could be funded and the options for council tax.

Caroline Holland explained that the year by year forecast of the adult social care budget (set out on page 75) demonstrated the need for growth due to increased costs and that this would be adjusted if there was a change to the level of the Better Care Fund received. She said that departments were still expected to find the savings that had been identified previously as well as the new savings proposals set out in the budget consultation pack.

Caroline Holland said that the proposed growth would initially be funded through the Balancing the Budget Reserve. The medium term financial strategy makes no provision for an increase in council tax in 2017/18 or 2018/19 so the business plan report includes exemplars on the impact that different levels of council tax increase would have, as well as the statement received from the Clinical Commissioning Group about withholding the discretionary element of the Better Care Fund unless the council levied an adult social care precept. She said that the report to December Cabinet had been prepared prior to the government announcement that the Council could choose to levy an adult social care precept at 3% for each of the next two years (but with no increase in the third year) subject to demonstrating improvement in care (details of which are awaited), rather than at 2% per annum as currently permitted.

In response to questions Caroline Holland said that there were still some aspects of the MTFs where there was a level of uncertainty, including on corporate provisions, the Education Services Grant and on the impact that different levels of adult social care precept and council tax increase would have on the predicted budget gap in each year. The latest details will be modelled and reported to Cabinet on 13 February. The report will also include detail on balances and reserves.

Caroline Holland drew the Commission's attention to the capital programme, in particular the revenue implications of around £12m per year that would persist

despite the predicted decline in the size of the capital budget because of interest payments incurred by capital projects many years ago.

The Commission RESOLVED to forward the following comments and recommendations to Cabinet:

1. The Commission recognises that Cabinet has acknowledged that the growing cost of adult social care is not temporary and is something for which the Council must make provision.
2. The Commission urges Cabinet to look at the budget situation beyond 2017/18 and asks Cabinet to consider a number of options including, but not limited to
  - a) an increase in council tax;
  - b) review earmarked reserves to see whether they meet the purpose for which they were originally intended and, where this is not the case, to release them for use to partially address the predicted budget gap
  - c) continue to focus on the savings that will still have to be made, and to bring forward savings where it has been identified that these could be achieved sooner;
  - d) recognise that this still won't be enough to meet the growing burden of adult social care, as set out in the following statement from the Local Government Association (12 January 2017):

*“Council tax raising powers announced by government will not bring in enough money to fully protect the services which care for elderly and vulnerable people today and in the future.*

*Genuinely new government money is now the only way to protect the services caring for our elderly and disabled people and ensure they can enjoy dignified, healthy and independent lives, live in their own community and stay out of hospital for longer”*

The Commission urges Cabinet to give its full support to the LGA and London Councils in their efforts to secure a properly funded settlement from government.

- 6 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE - ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS (Agenda Item 6)
- 7 SCRUTINY OF THE BUSINESS PLAN 2017-2021: COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS (Agenda Item 7)

The Chair drew the Commission's attention to the report on pages 148-149 of the agenda and invited each of the Panel Chairs to provide a brief summary of the discussion at the Panels.

Councillor Peter McCabe, Chair of the Healthier Communities and Older People Panel, said that the Panel had thoroughly questioned the Director of Community and Housing and the Director of Corporate Services. The key issue for the Panel was a concern about the funding gap for future years and how this could be addressed. There was cross-party concern about the future of adult social care services that had been drawn to Cabinet's attention in the Panel's comments and recommendations.

The Director of Corporate Services, Caroline Holland, added that in response to questions raised at the Panel, further detail has been provided on the adult social care growth bid, set out on page 75 of the Commission's agenda. She confirmed that the growth figure was based on a "mid case scenario" and that if this proved too high, the excess would be returned for use elsewhere.

Councillor Dennis Pearce, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, said that the Panel had been briefed by the Director of Children Schools and Families on the savings proposals and the pressures facing the department. The Panel had expressed concerns regarding the overspend in SEND transport and had received assurances about this.

Councillor Abigail Jones, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, said that they had a constructive discussion and recognised that the council was facing tough times. The Panel had agreed that the proposed savings were sensible, with a focus upon efficiencies and mitigation of the impact on service users. The Panel has recommended that two of the savings should be brought forward and have asked Cabinet to reconsider the proposed saving D&BC6 – stop sending consultation letters and erect site notices only. No concerns were raised by the Panel regarding the growth items for Future Merton and Waste Services.

The Commission RESOLVED to forward the comments and recommendations from the Panels (set out on pages 148-9 of the agenda) to Cabinet.

8 SAVINGS PROPOSALS CONSULTATION PACK (Agenda Item 8)

9 MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE FINANCIAL MONITORING TASK GROUP  
10 NOVEMBER 2016 (Agenda Item 9)

Members noted that the statement made to the task group by the Director of Community and Housing and the subsequent reference from the Commission to Cabinet had been instrumental in leading to the proposed growth in the budget for adult social care.

10 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 10)

The Commission RESOLVED to agree the work programme with the addition of a report on consultation to its meeting on 7 March, as requested by Council.

Members agreed to send questions for the Borough Commander to the Head of Democracy Services so that the Borough Commander could have as much notice of these as possible.

## **Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission**

**Date: 7 March 2017**

Wards: All

### **Subject: Refresh of the Equality Strategy**

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

Lead member: Councillor Edith Macauley, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Equalities and Engagement

Contact officer: Evereth Willis, Equality and Community Cohesion Officer

---

#### **Recommendations:**

- A. Considers and comments on the draft Equality Strategy (incorporating the statutory Equality Objectives) and Action Plan.
- 

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The Council's Community Cohesion Strategy 2012-15 has expired and the Equality Strategy 2013-17 will expire in March 2017. The Equality Act 2010 requires the council to publish equality objectives every four years to demonstrate how it will meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. This report outlines the draft objectives and appended to it is the draft strategy and action plan.

## **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. The refreshed strategy stating the council's equality objectives meets legislative requirements to publish equality objectives every four years. Following the agreement of Corporate Management Team (CMT) the refreshed strategy combines equality and community cohesion commitments.
- 2.2. The equality objectives have been developed through discussion with community representatives, the Corporate Equality Steering Group, Collective DMT and the Leadership Team. Five of the objectives relate to service provision and are outwardly focused and one of the objectives is internally focused relating to staffing matters.
- 2.3. Outlined below are the six draft equality objectives:
  - a. To ensure key plans and strategies narrow the gap between different communities in the borough
  - b. Improve equality of access to services for disadvantaged groups

- c. Ensure regeneration plans increase the opportunity for all Merton's residents to fulfil their educational and economic potential and participate in the renewal of the borough
  - d. Promoting a safe, healthy and cohesive borough where communities get on well together
  - e. Encourage recruitment from all sections of the community , actively promote staff development and career progression opportunities and embed equalities across the organisation
  - g. Fulfil our statutory duties and ensure protected groups are effectively engaged when we change our services.
- 2.4 The objectives aim to narrow the gap in outcomes between residents in the East and West of the borough. A cross-departmental approach will be needed to deliver some of the commitments such as Hate Crime and Domestic Violence.
- 2.5 The draft Equality Strategy 2017-2021, attached at Appendix I, is a four-year strategy that sets out what Merton will do to tackle discrimination and inequality and promote equal opportunities and community cohesion in Merton.
- 2.6 The accompanying Action Plan (the delivery vehicle for the draft strategy attached at Appendix II), sets out the actions we will take to meet our equality priorities both corporately and departmentally.
- 2.7 In this new draft strategy the activity that will populate the action plan will be closely linked to the council's performance framework so that commitments are aligned with departmental service plans. This will ensure the strategy is embedded in service plans across the council to ensure effective implementation. The aim is to set smart targets and, where no baseline information exists, improving data collection and analysis will itself become a target. The actions will be reviewed annually and reported on to Overview and Scrutiny Commission, Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with Ethnic Minorities and CMT.

#### **Next steps**

- 2.8 Public consultation is being undertaken between 26 January 2017 and 10 March 2017. A revised version of the draft strategy following consultation will be submitted to Cabinet for approval on 20 March 2017 and will Council for adoption on 12 April 2017. Comments and suggestions from OSC will inform the version presented to Cabinet.



### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. The Equality Act 2010 requires the council to prepare and publish equality objectives and subsequently at least four-yearly. Not having an Equality Strategy would put the Council at risk of legal challenge and potentially damage the Council's reputation.

### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. Consultation has included Corporate Equality Steering Group, CMT, DMTs and the Senior Leadership team, the Faith and Belief Forum, and the JCC. Public consultation will commence on 26 January.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

- 5.1. Appendix III outlines the time table for the refreshed strategy.

### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. The strategy will be delivered within existing resources.

### **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. On 6 April 2011 the Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires the Local Authority, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not. "Protected characteristics" are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.2. Delivery of the commitments in the Equality Strategy action plan and the publication of an Equality Strategy setting out our equality objectives fulfil the Council's legal obligations relating to equalities legislation.

### **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. By setting out its equalities commitments in the Equality Strategy the Council is re-affirming its commitment to human rights, equality and community cohesion.

### **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. There is a risk of increased hate crime activity directed towards certain groups if there is no commitment to eliminate discrimination and harassment

### **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. There is a risk to the Council's reputation if it fails to produce and publish equalities objectives. Additionally there is a risk of claims of discrimination based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

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

- Appendix I – Draft Equality Strategy
- Appendix II – Action plan
- Appendix III – Timeline for producing the refreshed strategy

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **12.1. Equality Strategy 2013-17**

[http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/plansandpolicies/equality\\_strategy\\_2013-17\\_final\\_v2.pdf](http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/plansandpolicies/equality_strategy_2013-17_final_v2.pdf)

## **APPENDIX I - DRAFT EQUALITY STRATEGY**

### **Merton's Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-21**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Equality Strategy sets out the council's equality objectives in one document and outlines how we will embed equalities considerations into our day-to-day business.

Under the Equality Act 2010 Merton has a Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure that in exercising our functions and delivering services and partnership work we:

1. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
2. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share a protected characteristic
3. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The Act also introduced nine 'Protected Characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation.

At the decision-making stage councils are required to assess how changes to policies and service delivery will affect different people. Therefore the Act requires that we provide accessible services to all our customers.

We acknowledge that the Council has a key role to play to promote a fair and more equal society by putting equalities considerations central to the decisions we make about service delivery, contract arrangements and employment.

In producing this strategy we have developed objectives that promote equality and promote community cohesion in Merton by addressing issues of concern in the borough.

The Equality Act underpins the strategy and the objectives apply to all the protected characteristics. Therefore, we will not tolerate discrimination and will endeavour consider all the protected characteristics in the delivery of our services.

We recognise that some people share more than one protected characteristic and as a result may face multiple disadvantage.

## **2. Merton the place**

Merton's population, according to Greater London Authority (GLA) 2016 projections, is 207,141 people, living across 83,446 occupied households. The population density of the borough is higher in the wards of the east compared to the wards that are in the west. Just over half of the borough is female (51%).

The average age of residents in the borough is 36.6, this is just above the London average of 35.9. GLA 2013 round population projections records Merton's BAME population as 74,971, meaning Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups make up around 36.7% of the population. This is lower than the London average of 42.5%.

Based on GLA trend-based projections, Merton's population is projected to increase by 13,245 between 2014 and 2020. During this time the boroughs age profile is also projected to change, with the most notable growth coming in the numbers of those aged under 16 and those over 50. This will be set against a projected decline in the proportion of people aged 25-35. Merton's ethnic composition is also forecast to change, with the BAME proportion set to increase to 40%

The borough's growing diversity shows the number of people that live in the borough that come from different backgrounds. According to data collected from the 2011 Census the three largest migrant populations by country of birth are Polish (3.5%), Sri Lankan (3.2%) and South African (2.8%). 34.9% of school pupils in Merton have a first language known or believed to be other than English.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) sets out a relative position for each local authority in the country, giving an overall score for each area. The indices were updated in September 2015 and ranks Merton as 7th least deprived out of the 33 London boroughs and 212 out of 354 local authority areas (where 1 is the most deprived) for the rest of England. This overall lack of deprivation does, however, hide stark inequalities in the borough between deprived wards in the east of the borough (Mitcham) and the more affluent wards in the west (Wimbledon).

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Merton highlights health inequalities that are based on gender, ethnicity and where people live. Health outcomes in Merton are generally better than those in London, and in line with or above the rest of England, however, there is a difference between the most and least deprived areas within the borough for life expectancy of 7.9 years for men and 5.2 years for women. Linked to deprivation, those in the east of the borough have a much higher chance of serious illness and early deaths from illnesses such as cancer and heart disease. In 2015 13.5% of residents in Merton that are of a working-age were recorded as having a disability or long-term health condition.

Merton residents who are in active full-time employment are distributed all over the borough, however, unemployed residents are concentrated towards the east of Merton, and self-employed residents are concentrated toward the west. Although unemployment in the borough is below the national average, it rises

significantly in some of the eastern wards, and 63% of all benefit claimants live in the east of the borough. There are also significant differences in skill levels between residents in the Wimbledon area, with higher numbers of people in the east of the borough in receipt of benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance. The GLA Pay-check 2011 dataset illustrates the large disparities in the distribution of income within Merton. In general the west of the borough is more affluent, notably Wimbledon Park, Village, and Hillside wards. These wards have a median income range of £41-£50,000. By comparison wards in the east such as Figge's Marsh, Pollards Hill, St. Helier, and Cricket Green have a median income range of £24-28,000.

### 3. Our achievements

Over the past three years progress has been made towards embedding equality practice throughout the Council and promoting community cohesion. Outlined below are some of our successes:

- **Merton School Improvement (MSI) Service** continued its programme of support and challenge to schools to identify, track and accelerate progress made by individual pupils from target groups. Identified secondary schools have been supported to implement English support targeted to **Bangladeshi** and **Asian-Other** pupils.
- **20% of Looked after Children (LAC)** achieved 5 GCSEs A\*-C or equivalent (incl. English & Maths) in 2013-14 which is above the national LAC average of 15%.
- A range of commissioned preventative services continue to be available for children and young people with disabilities including family-based overnight **short breaks**, weekend clubs offering activities and excursions, a holiday play scheme for children with complex needs, and a parent carer support service and parent forum.
- The work within Transforming Families and the Youth Justice Team, in particular, meant that interventions could be provided as early as possible in order to ensure that escalations in a young person's behaviour and/or offending are dealt with as quickly as possible. Geographically, there has been a focus on areas in the East of the borough which are generally more deprived.
- The use of equality analysis is embedded in the service planning process and savings proposals have been accompanied by an assessment of the impact of proposed changes on the protected characteristics.
- We worked with key community representatives to support the development of Black, Asian and Minority Voice to provide a strategic voice for the borough's BAME community.
- The council has also worked with community representatives to revitalise the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender Forum to progress issues facing the community.
- Volunteer Merton, a new online portal that seamlessly links up volunteers with volunteer opportunities through a digital platform has been launched. This will

make it much simpler and quicker to link volunteers to actual volunteering opportunities

- We have signed up to ValueYou: a new accreditation scheme to recognise individuals who have delivered over 100 hours of volunteering and offer them discount cards at local businesses.

#### **4. Key issues we want to tackle**

The aim of the Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-21 is to address key issues such as:

- bridging the gap between the levels of deprivation and prosperity in the borough particularly focusing on:
  - raising educational attainment for all children and young people and reduce attainment gaps for target groups including children with special education needs or disabilities, those who are looked after in care, specific BAME groups, specific groups of White boys and those who are excluded from school
  - tackling rising unemployment particularly among young BAME communities and disabled residents and supporting those who are long term unemployed back into work
  - Reducing health inequalities particularly the issues affecting some BAME communities, disabled and older residents.
  - Support residents who may be affected by mental illness or dementia
  - increasing education and economic opportunity in the east of the borough
- Improving understanding of the borough's diversity and foster better understanding between communities.
- supporting those who do not usually get involved in decision-making to better understand how they can get involved and get their voices heard
- Supporting residents to access on-line access services
- Providing services that meet the needs of a changing population.
- employing staff that reflect the borough's diversity

#### **5. Objectives and Indicators**

Not everyone receives the same start in life and this can significantly shape their opportunities in life. As a council we recognise that understanding this difference is

key to addressing some of the complex issues that create barriers and exclusion for some of our residents. Therefore we are committed to working toward:

- Everyone having an opportunity to fulfil their potential
- Individuals having choice and control to improve life chances and outcome<sup>1</sup>
- Everyone having ways to tackle the barriers that lead to inequality

It is evident<sup>2</sup> that some families experience inter-generational disadvantage that results in individuals experiencing inequality throughout their lives. Some disadvantaged people often lack basic information and skills. The challenges of disadvantage is felt by a range of people including teenage pregnancy, those who experience difficulty in the transition from being a young people to adulthood, gypsies and travelers, the long-term unemployed, disabled people and young adults leaving care.

## **Equality Objectives**

We have developed 6 objectives that aim to improve the life chances of our residents and create a more level starting point for all. The objectives are outlined below:

1. To ensure key plans and strategies narrow the gap between different communities in the borough
2. Improve equality of access to services for disadvantaged groups
3. Ensure regeneration plans increase the opportunity for all Merton's residents to fulfil their educational and economic potential and participate in the renewal of the borough
4. Encourage recruitment from all sections of the community , actively promote staff development and career progression opportunities and embed equalities across the organisation
5. Promoting a safe, healthy and cohesive borough where communities get on well together
6. Fulfil our statutory duties and ensure protected groups are effectively engaged when we change our services.

---

<sup>1</sup> Dimensions of equality as defined by the Equality Review published in 2007: longevity, health, physical security, education, standard of living, productive and valued activities, and individual and family life, participation, influence and voice, identity, expression, and self-respect, legal security.

<sup>2</sup> Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), (2010) How fair is Britain? equality, human rights and good relations in 2010: the first triennial review.

Marmot (2010). The Marmot Review: Fair Society, Healthy Lives. Strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010

## **6 Equality Analysis**

An Equality Analysis (EA) is an assessment and improvement process that helps us to determine how the Council's policies, procedures, services, practices, or new proposals will impact on or affect different communities – especially those groups or communities who experience inequality, discrimination, social exclusion or disadvantage.

In Merton Equality Analysis is generally used to inform and or support the following:

- Savings proposals
- Growth
- Major policy changes around service access
- Service cessation
- Restructuring

DMTs are responsible for identifying which proposed changes require an Equality Analysis. This will ensure that the EA becomes embedded in all our processes.

Additionally officers are required to provide Cabinet Members with sufficient evidence about who the stakeholders are and how they will be affected by proposed changes.

## **7. How will performance be measured?**

### **Leadership – responsibility and accountability**

Merton's elected members have overall responsibility for the Council's Equality Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Equalities and Engagement has the executive responsibility for promoting equality and diversity across the partnership and all council services, including those delivered on its behalf by businesses, voluntary, community and faith organisations.

Our Corporate Management Team and Departmental Management Teams will have responsibility for the strategic implementation of the strategy. This includes making sure that equalities is central to all work done by the council, communicating and promoting the strategy to others inside and outside the council, setting out what we aim to achieve in terms of equality and diversity, and holding departments to account through performance reviews.

All managers must be familiar with the strategy and be responsible for ensuring equality and diversity is an integral part of any policy development, service design and delivery, employment practices; and procuring and commissioning of goods and services.

All staff including those we work in partnership with, and who are contracted or commissioned to work on our behalf, have a responsibility to promote equality,



eliminate discrimination in their day-to-day work, and recognise and respect the different backgrounds and circumstances of people.

The strategy will be monitored through the governance structure outlined below:

**Corporate Equality Steering Group** is comprised of the CMT Equalities Champion (the Director of Children Schools and Families) and departmental representatives. The group will take the lead in monitoring the delivery of the strategy's commitments and where necessary highlight issues of concern and make recommendations to CMT for further improvements.

**Departmental Equality Steering Groups** - each department has a steering group comprised of representatives from across the department. They will be responsible for local delivery of the corporate objectives and will review and revise the priorities based on assessment of service need

**Departmental Management Teams** - will be responsible for the delivery of the strategy through service, teams and personal development plans.

**Corporate Management Team** - will receive progress reports twice a year.

**Overview and Scrutiny Commission** - will receive an annual update on our progress towards achieving the priorities identified in the strategy.

## **8. Implementation Plan**

We will develop a range of robust equality and diversity related performance indicators that we will use to help us monitor our performance. These will be outlined in an action plan outlining the priorities for each objective and the performance measures

## APPENDIX II – ACTION PLAN

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<b>Equality Objective 1: To ensure key plans and strategies narrow the gap between different communities in the borough</b>			
1. To reduce health inequalities between different communities in the borough: Sustained halt in rise in the gap in life expectancy between least and most deprived areas within Merton, through improving life expectancy amongst the most deprived	2012/14 Male -6.8 yrs Female-5 yrs Baseline 2011/13 & target Male -7.9 yrs Female- 5.2 yrs	Health and Wellbeing strategy (2015-18)	C&H
2. Halt the widening gap in % of obese 10-11 year olds between east & west Merton, through reducing obesity in children in east Merton	Target 2015/16 – 2017/18 9.2% Baseline: 2012/13-2014/15 9.2% gap  Trend in the gap between east and west Merton is increasing  East: 23.6% obese West: 14.4% obese	Health & Wellbeing Strategy/ Merton action plan to prevent childhood obesity 2016	C&H

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
3. Reduce gap in % of obese 10-11 year olds between east & west Merton, through reducing obesity amongst children in east Merton	target 2016/17 – 18/19 <b>8%</b> Baseline: 2012/13 –14/15 9.2% gap  Trend in the gap between east and west Merton is increasing  East: 23.6% obese West: 14.4% obese	Health & Wellbeing Strategy/ Merton action plan to prevent childhood obesity 2016	C&H
4. Increase active usage of libraries by 5% in the east of the borough amongst 11-16 year olds.	2015/16: 2270 active library users aged 11-16 years in the CR4 postcode.	Business Plan 2016-2021	C&H
5. Increase course take up by 25% in deprived wards by delivering a focussed employability and family learning offer.	2015/16: 52% of adult learners on employability and family learning courses were from deprived wards in academic year 2015-16.	Merton Adult Learning Strategy	C&H
6. Promote digital inclusion through activities that support the Customer Contact strategy	Proportion of completed online transactions for available services	Customer Contact strategy/Business Improvement	CS

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
7. Produce guidance and training for commissioners on the use of the Social Value Act including the development of a model approach for measuring and evaluating social value.		Corporate Services/Infrastructure & Transactions division/ Commercial services team	
8. Work with MVSC to increase community giving to the VCS, in particular to support smaller groups with low/no income base - working with disadvantage and vulnerable groups.	Report to Merton Partnership Summer 2017	Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy	CS
9. Review the support offer to Merton's VCS organisations, in particular to smaller and informal groups	Revised commissioning objectives for VCS support in 2017/18	Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy	CS
10. Continue to improve the educational outcomes for disadvantaged groups including LAC; SEN; and pupils eligible for Free School Meals or Pupil Premium	Education Outcomes at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years</li> <li>• Key Stage 2</li> <li>• Key Stage 4</li> </ul> For disadvantaged groups of pupils	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019  CSF Departmental Equalities and Community Cohesion Annual Plan  Annual School Standards Report	CSF

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
11. Challenge schools to improve attendance and reduce exclusions for all children.	School attendance in primary and secondary schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % attendance</li> <li>• % persistent absence</li> </ul> Exclusions in primary and secondary schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of permanent exclusions</li> <li>• % of fixed-term exclusions</li> </ul>	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019  CSF Departmental Equalities and Community Cohesion Annual Plan  Annual School Standards Report	CSF
12. Work with London Councils, as the borough lead for a pan-London employment project to address the following two priorities – 1. Inclusive labour markets 2. Skills for Growth	Quarterly outputs provided by the contractor on Total participants and including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long term unemployed</li> <li>• over 50's</li> <li>• ethnic minorities</li> </ul>	Economic Development Strategy Refresh 2012	E&R
<b>Equality Objective 2: Provide equality of access to services for disadvantaged groups</b>			
1. Adult Social Care - ensure equality of uptake of social care for all- in line with residents' needs - and take action through commissioning and provision decisions to improve equality of uptake	Annual analysis of pattern of service use by characteristics relating to need- including ethnicity	Commissioning /service plans	C&H
2. Housing –prevention of homelessness through advice and assistance	450 cases annual target	Service plan	C&H

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
3. Engage BAME groups to inform adult learning and library service development, tailored to their needs.	A range of services are currently provided. Workshops will be used to direct where some of our future resources are placed.  Run 2 workshops each year.	Merton Adult Learning Strategy	C&H
4. Provide an assisted collection for residents who otherwise may not be able to present their wheeled bin in accordance with standard policy			E&R
5. Continues to raise the issue of step free access at train stations such as Motspur Park and Rayne Park Stations as opportunities arise			E&R
6. work with TfL to ensure that all signalised crossings have the appropriate tactile and audible features & all other controlled crossings have the appropriate tactile paving			E&R

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>7. Where possible, the Council endeavours to make the public realm accessible by:</p> <p>A. ensure that the kerbs are dropped at key locations such as at junctions;</p> <p>B. de-clutter the footways and footpaths to improve accessibility</p> <p>C. ensuring that dropped kerbs at formal crossings and at some informal crossings have the appropriate tactile paving.</p>	Attend quarterly meetings with the sub-regional mobility forums		E&R
8. Continue to work with BAME Voice, Merton Centre For Independent Living, the LGBT and Faith and Belief forums to disseminate and raise awareness in their respective communities of services and support on offered by the council and partners.		Voluntary Sector Strategy	CS
9. Continue to target families living in areas of deprivation to utilise children's centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of total 0-4 year estimated Census 2011 population from areas of deprivation (IDACI 30%) whose families have accessed children's center services</li> </ul>	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019	CSF

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
10. Ensure that looked after children achieve long-term stability and permanency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of children adopted or subject of a special guardianship order</li> <li>• % of LAC in placement for at least 2 years</li> <li>• % of LAC at the end of the month with 3 or more placements</li> </ul>	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019  Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy	CSF
11. Ensure the <b>timely delivery of Education, Health and Care Plans</b> for children with special educational needs and disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % Education, Health and Care Plans completed within timescale</li> </ul>	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019	CSF
<b>Equality Objective 3: Ensure regeneration plans and activities increase the opportunity for all Merton's residents to fulfil their educational and economic potential and participate in the renewal of the borough.</b>			
1. Merton Partnership to look at opportunities through the One Public Estate programme to review how the public sector collectively uses its public estate and supports the VCS to deliver increased social value.	Report to Merton Partnership on OPE opportunities Autumn 2017	One Public Estate programme	CS/ER



Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
2. Continue to support young people into Education, Employment and Training	Reduce the % of NEET young people  Reduce the % of “not known” NEET  Reduce the % of Care Leavers NEET	Children and Young People’s Plan 2016 -2019  Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy	CSF
3. Housing needs for vulnerable people and families to be considered as part of the affordable housing proportion of all planning applications (planning conditions s106)	Affordable housing supply and nominations policy between LBM and RPs.	Housing Strategy & Merton’s Local Plan	E&R
4. We will work with Clarion-Latimer to promote access to local employment and apprenticeships opportunities via planning conditions and for Clarion’s procurement for re-building the estates.	To be determined and monitored as planning conditions of the regeneration.	Merton’s Local Plan & Estates Local Plan	E&R
<b>Equality Objective 4: To encourage recruitment from all sections of the community, actively promote staff development and career progression opportunities and embed equalities across the organisation</b>			
1. Monitor progress with respect to the recruitment of apprenticeships as required through the Waste Collection and Environmental Services Contract			E&R

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
2. Ensure that the procurement of Environmental services contracts, allow for the recognition of social value through the employment of special needs, apprenticeships and local long term unemployed			E&R
<p>3. Access to Apprenticeships:</p> <p>1. HR will work with departments to create opportunities for apprenticeships. Numbers have been set for each department.</p> <p>2. HR will work with managers to get maximum benefit from the Apprenticeship Levy by developing existing workforce.</p> <p>3. The Council will continue to work closely with CSF to prioritise apprenticeships for its Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p>			CS

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>4. Increase the diversity of Senior Leadership Team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We cannot positively discriminate however we will ensure that our recruitment processes are adhered to for senior roles including the appointment of the best candidate for the role.</li> <li>2. HR will ensure that the Council's Executive search consultants and recruitment team advertise the vacancies widely.</li> <li>3. HR will monitor equal access to Learning and development opportunities including management and leadership development.</li> <li>4. For an organisation to have a healthy, harmonious culture it needs a mission that unifies its diverse stakeholder community. Therefore, engagement with the relevant diversity interest group: customers, staff and partners.</li> </ol>			CS
<p>5. In developing HR policies and procedures – statutory requirement and best practice is incorporated</p>			CS

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<b>Equality Objective 5: Promoting a safe, healthy and cohesive borough where communities get on well together</b>			
1. Increase the confidence of victims to report Hate Crime and Domestic Violence	<p>The performance measures remain tbc until year 1 priorities are confirmed and the strategic assessment is completed in January 2017</p> <p>Current performance is designed to increase reporting by 20% year on year for 2016-17. This will be subject to review in the new year when the strategic assessment is finalised and the MOPAC police and crime plan performance is confirmed</p>	Hate Crime Strategy Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy	E&R
2. Working in partnership to deliver the Prevent Duty and keep Merton a safe and cohesive borough		Prevent Delivery Plan	CS Lead –
3. Continue to celebrate diversity by promoting community cohesion activity such as Black History Month and LGBT History Month			CS/ER
4. Continue to work collaboratively to reduce bullying in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of primary and secondary schools graded 'Good' or better for personal development, behaviour and welfare by Ofsted</li> </ul>	CSF Departmental Equalities and Community Cohesion Annual Plan	CSF

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
5. Continue to work in partnership to reduce the number of First-Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice system and undertake targeted work to identify and support those at risk of offending and re-offending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of FTE to the YJS aged 10-17</li> <li>• Rate of proven reoffending in the YJS</li> </ul>	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019	CSF
<b>Equality Objective 6: Fulfil our statutory duties and ensure (relevant stakeholders are consulted) protected groups are effectively engaged when we change our services.</b>			
1. Equality Analysis routinely undertaken to support the decision making process	Savings, growth and service reviews to include EAs	Equality Strategy	All
2. Refresh User Voice Strategy and ensure children, young people and families continue to impact continuous improvement for all services across CSF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure each CSF service commit to User Voice activity in annual Service Plans.</li> <li>• Report quarterly to Director's management team on annual action plan and programme of User Voice activity.</li> </ul>	CSF User Voice Strategy 2017 -2019	CSF

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
3. Continue to consult with children, young people and parents in the development of services for children with SEN and disabilities in line with the expectations of the Children and Families Act 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report quarterly to Director's management team.</li> </ul>	CSF User Voice Strategy 2017 -2019	CSF
4. Polling station review to be undertaken ahead of the council elections in May 2018	<p>Seek to ensure that all electors in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.</p> <p>Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.</p>		CS

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>5. Target particular communities who have not responded or registered to vote:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to collect council tax and housing benefit data on a monthly basis in order to identify new electors, plus student data at the beginning of each academic year. Expand data mining in an attempt to gain access to registrars, blue badge, and libraries data to identify new citizens/residents.</li> <li>2. Compare non responding properties to mosaic data in order to identify if there are particular communities under represented on the electoral register.</li> </ol>	50% of all new monthly registrations through data mining.		CS

## APPENDIX III - TIMETABLE

Action/Task	Lead Officer	By When
1. Review the approach to the new strategy	Evereth Willis/Departmental Representatives	31 July 2016
2. Take a report to CMT	Evereth Willis	04 October 2016
3. Departments to provide key equality priorities and themes.	Departmental Representatives	7 October 2016
4. Outline document to be presented at CESG meeting.	Evereth Willis	13 October 2016
5. Discussion at Collective DMT	Evereth Willis	20 October 2016
6. Discussion at Leadership Team	Evereth Willis	21 November 2016
7. Finalise objectives and actions	Evereth Willis	9 December 2016
8. First draft of the strategy to be written	Evereth Willis	31 December 2016
9. Consultation draft to CMT	Evereth Willis	10 January 2017
10. Consultation Draft to Cabinet Member	Evereth Willis	16 January 2017
11. Draft strategy to go to LSG	Evereth Willis	25 January 2017
12. Draft document out for public consultation	Evereth Willis	26 January 2017 - 10 March 2017
13. Final draft document to CMT	Evereth Willis	7 March 2017
14. Draft to go to Overview and Scrutiny Commission	Yvette Stanley/Evereth Willis	07 March 2017
15. Final draft document to Cabinet as a key decision	John Dimmer/ Evereth Willis	20 March 2017
16. Document to be presented to Council for adoption	John Dimmer/ Evereth Willis	12 April 2017
17. Launch and publicity for new objectives	Evereth Willis /Communications	April/May2017



## Overview and Scrutiny Commission

**7 March 2017**

Agenda item: Shared Services and Outsourced Services in Merton Task Group

Wards: All

### **Subject:**

Lead officer: Ged Curran, Chief Executive

Lead member: Cllr Allison, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Contact officer: Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement

---

### **Recommendations:**

- A. That the Commission discuss and comment on the executive response and action plan setting out how the agreed recommendations of the Shared and Outsourced Services in Merton Task Group will be implemented.
- 

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to set out the Executive Response and Action Plan to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to demonstrate how the agreed recommendations of the Shared and Outsourced Services in Merton Task Group will be implemented.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. At their meeting on 14 November 2016 Cabinet considered the final report and accepted the recommendations resulting from the task group review of shared and outsourced services in Merton.

## **3 EXECUTIVE RESPONSE**

- 3.1. CMT have considered in detail the findings of the review and resulting recommendations. They would like to record their thanks to the Task Group for their comprehensive research and constructive recommendations; the insight into the council's approach to considering alternative delivery models as well as lessons from good practice elsewhere have been – and will continue to be – invaluable in strengthening the council's approach in this important area.
- 3.2. In developing an executive response, CMT have focused on the outcomes that the commission is seeking to achieve, which are understood to be:

- More rigorous process of challenge to the status quo, led by CMT, to ensure alternatives to current delivery models are properly considered comprehensively so that the most appropriate delivery model is chosen for each service.
  - A more systemised and consistent approach to the transition of delivery mechanisms into shared or outsourced services.
  - Adequate mechanisms with third party providers to ensure the council meets its responsibilities as the contracting authority and that accountability is maintained.
- 3.3. As the Commission is aware, the council's strategic planning process requires each service area to develop a target operating model (TOM) that provides a view of how it will transform and improve over the coming four year period. These are revisited every two years and the process is driven and overseen by CMT, with individual Directors accountable for development of TOMs for each of the services within their department. As the Task Group found, however, the degree to which this incorporates rigorous challenge from within the service may well vary from one service to another; its rigor depends in a large part on the propensity of the relevant Head of Service for innovation.
- 3.4. With this in mind, CMT will be refining and strengthening this process for its next iteration (2018/9) and ensure that in the meantime CMT, the Merton Improvement Board and DMTs take an active role in continuously questioning current delivery models and promoting a culture of innovation and enquiry. Making sure that information and support is available to officers about alternative delivery models, as recommended by the Task Group, will play an important role here also.
- 3.5. When forming the action plan set out in this report, CMT reflected on the challenges in instilling a culture of innovation and challenge amongst service leaders, many of which are articulated within the Task Group report. It was felt that these challenges presented a degree of risk in relation to three of the recommendations, namely that their implementation may not deliver the desired outcomes. With this in mind the action plan e offers alternative activities for three of the recommendations as follows.

***Recommendations 2 and 3 – development of business case template***

- 3.6. As the Task Group report recognises the permutations of service delivery models are complex and therefore the considerations for each proposed change to these will be varied. Capturing these in a single template, therefore, would be difficult and run the risk of stifling rather than promoting creativity and innovation. That being said, it is important that there is a consistent and comprehensive approach to the development of alternative models (in keeping with the outcomes articulated in item 3.1 of this report). CMT therefore propose that a set of guiding principles is developed and clear questions that each individual proposal must answer. In developing these officers will draw on the experience of those services who have

already transitioned to alternative delivery models as well as that of other authorities.

***Recommendation 5 – mandatory appraisal objectives***

- 3.7. The importance of service managers being encouraged and supported to routinely investigate and learn from good practice within the council and elsewhere in order to improve service delivery is acknowledged. CMT question, however, whether the addition of a mandatory appraisal objective will achieve this outcome. As the Task Force report notes, the key to making this work well is to ensure service managers have the appropriate information and skills to think strategically and challenge existing practice. There is currently a programme of leadership development being delivered to managers across the organisation which goes some way to address this challenge. In addition to this, the TOM process is to be refined to provide service managers with more direct, dedicated support to think strategically and stronger challenge from peers to ensure creativity. It is proposed that these actions will more effectively achieve the intended outcome.
- 3.8. The following table sets out in more detail the executive response to each of the recommendations.

Recommendation	Executive response	Timeline	Lead officer
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b> That the Corporate Management Team (CMT) should have a more clearly defined mandate and process to embed challenge on models of service delivery at a senior level within the organisation. This will ensure that there is more specific challenge to service managers as well as internal peer review.</p>	<p>As part of a planned review the TOM process is to be strengthened so that more direct, dedicated support – with facilitated sessions where required – to be made available to service managers as part of the TOM review/development process.</p> <p>DMTs will continue to routinely review (as part of their TOM action plan review) actions set out against the ‘organisation’ layer to review whether planned changes to delivery models need to be amended/updated.</p> <p>As part of the biannual reports already presented to Merton Improvement Board, DMTs will be asked to expressly report on progress against the ‘organisation’ layer and how it is being kept under review and MIB provide constructive challenge.</p>	<p>Late 2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>AD Business Improvement</p> <p>Directors</p> <p>Chair, Merton Improvement Board</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> That decision making on the establishment of proposed shared and outsourced services is strengthened through the production of a standardised business case that is presented to the Corporate Management Team and to Cabinet (or the relevant individual Cabinet Member for smaller services) for approval. This business case should be clearly evidenced and should include financial modelling to set out options and alternatives as well as details of other expected benefits so that vigorous challenge can be provided prior to a formal decision being made.</p>	<p>A set of guiding principles will be created to inform and support for the development of bespoke business cases, along with clear questions that must be answered within each business case.</p>	<p>June 2017</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Business Improvement (with CMT sign off)</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b> That a draft of the business case template is brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for discussion prior to finalising it.</p>	<p>The guiding principles and questions will be presented to OSC for discussion.</p>	<p>TBC with Head of Democratic Services</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Business Improvement</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b> That Cabinet should ensure there is support provided to service managers who are exploring the feasibility of establishing a new shared or outsourced service so that these managers can draw on learning and expertise that already exists within the council. This should take the form of an on-line resource such as a checklist of issues to consider and contact details of officers who can provide advice and support. The resource should also include guidance on developing and complying with the standardised business case for the service as set out in recommendation 2 above.</p>	<p>A checklist will be developed drawing on the experience of services that have already transitioned to alternative delivery models.</p>	<p>June</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Business Improvement</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b> That the Corporate Management Team should ensure that service managers have a mandatory appraisal objective to familiarise themselves with best practice elsewhere</p>	<p>CMT will continue to deliver the agreed programme of leadership development over the coming 18 months.</p>	<p>Ongoing to mid 2018</p>	<p>Chair, Workforce Strategy</p>

Recommendation	Executive response	Timeline	Lead officer
and consider how best to incorporate this in their service delivery.	The TOM development/refresh process will be refined for its next iteration to include more direct, dedicated support and challenge as per response to Recommendation 1 above.	Late 2017	Group Assistant Director of Business Improvement
<b>Recommendation 6</b> That the Corporate Management Team should ensure that a training or briefing resource is developed for officers in those corporate teams (such as HR, IT, finance and facilities) so that they understand the delivery model and likely support requirements of the council's shared services.	Work will be undertaken with representatives from services currently working in shared arrangements to develop a briefing resource for officers in corporate teams.	July	Assistant Director of Business Improvement
<b>Recommendation 7</b> That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission should invite the Chief Executive to present a report annually to set out how challenge has been embedded, what choices have been made by service managers on models of service delivery, what changes resulted from the challenge process and what options were rejected and why.	The Chief Executive, working with CMT, will respond to the invitation with a report drawing on the mechanisms set out within this report to provide an overview of how alternative delivery models are being considered and changes resulting from this process.	March	Chief Executive and CMT
<b>Recommendation 8</b> That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (or relevant Panel) should receive a report on the proposed establishment of large or strategically important shared or outsourced services at a point in time when there is an opportunity to have some influence on its development. There should be further reports to review the operation, performance and budget of the service 15 months after the start date and when the agreement is due for review.	CMT propose to discharge this recommendation through the forward plan mechanisms which highlights to the Commission any significant decisions on service reconfiguration.	Ongoing	CMT

#### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. All members of CMT have been involved in the development of this report.
- 4.2. The work to develop guiding principles and supporting materials will involve officers across the organisation with experience of selecting and implementing alternative delivery models.

#### **5 TIMETABLE**

- 5.1. The table within this report sets out the timescales for delivery.

#### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. The council faces considerable financial pressure in current and future years. The delivery of the activities set out in this executive response will ensure the organisation continues to deliver services in the most efficient and effective way.

#### **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. Changes to service delivery models will have legal and statutory implications. Consideration of this will be incorporated within the proposed guidance/supporting information to be developed to ensure this is adequately accounted for and managed on a case by case basis.

#### **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

#### **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

#### **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. Changes to service delivery models will require careful assessment and management of risk. Consideration of this will be incorporated within the proposed guidance/supporting information to be developed to ensure this is adequately accounted for and managed on a case by case basis.

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

11.1. None.

**12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. Report and recommendations arising from the scrutiny task group reviews of shared and outsourced services in Merton.

This page is intentionally left blank



# Agenda Item 6

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](http://www.merton.gov.uk/committee).

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION - FINANCIAL MONITORING TASK GROUP

20 FEBRUARY 2017

(7.15 pm - 9.05 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Hamish Badenoch(in the Chair), Stephen Crowe, Suzanne Grocott, Jeff Hanna, Peter Southgate and David Williams

Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Bindi Lakhani (Head of Accountancy), Paul Angeli (Assistant Director Childrens' Social Care and Youth Inclusion), Yvette Stanley (Director, Children, Schools & Families Department) and Stella Akintan (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - COUNCILLOR DENNIS PEARCE (Agenda Item 1)

2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2016 (Agenda Item 2)

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3 BUDGET DEEPCDIVE - SUPPORTED LODGING/HOUSING, UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN AND NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS (Agenda Item 3)

Paul Angeli gave an overview of the report highlighting that the council has a duty to accommodate unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). The volumes vary from year to year with the majority coming from Albania, this fluctuates according to global stability. Merton is a member of the Pan London Rota System in which all local authorities work together to ensure fair distribution of UASC across the Capital. This area is a rising cost pressure; although the government has increased funding for individual placements from £71 to £91per day (for newly placed young people only) this does not cover the range of associated costs including for social workers and higher accommodation and placement prices within London.

Members asked questions including ; the growth in UASC numbers, if national government are being lobbied for additional funding and if Merton is benchmarking costs against other local authorities to ensure best value for money.

Yvette Stanley reported that Merton worked closely with London Councils who are lobbying on this issue. Larger local authorities benefit from economies of scale within the Pan London Rota System which Merton does not benefit from but takes the same number of children. We are all competing for the same placement providers and they generally charge local authorities the same amounts. We commission placements through a range of framework agreements and partnerships with other boroughs to get the best balance of quality and value. We also have a good track record in recruiting in-house foster carers.

Paul Angeli reported that housing for care leavers overall is a budget pressure and they are working with colleagues in the housing department to look at ways to reduce costs on different models. For UASC care leavers we receive no grant income to offset housing/placement or support costs. Again the Government is being lobbied on this issue.

In response to a question regarding whether UASC can make financial contributions through work or student loans, Paul Angeli reported that this cohort have no recourse to public funds so the council are responsible for them possibly until they are 25. They are not able to work until their immigration issues are resolved.

Task group members expressed concern that additional costs for UASC are presented as an over-spend in the budget when there is a government grant shortfall. It was felt that the budget did not reflect the actual situation and Council signs off a budget that cannot be delivered.

Yvette Stanley reported that the department works hard to find other ways to meet the shortfall on a one off basis and that the CSF budget overall in recent years did not have an overspend. Measure included: bringing forward savings and freezing non frontline vacancies. These were short term measures however. It has historically been hard to make assumptions about likely numbers given the international situation fluctuates. However we now have a significant period where the numbers have continued to rise and the expectation is that both the UASC and care leaver populations will continue to grow

Caroline Holland highlighted that contingencies are built into the general budget which is signed off by Council every year, for example last year the Children Schools and Families (CSF) department had an underspend and this year there is an estimated £1.2 million overspend. Last year the council overall had a minor overspend. In terms of an overall strategy the approach was that departments would not move monies to pay for an area that the government should be funding. Monitoring reports highlight the budget situation if the departmental budget was sufficient overall.

A task group member expressed concern that it is too easy for some groups to enter the UK. Yvette Stanley reported that the UK has sent a delegation to Albania to look at the underlying issues. There is a clan system with historical feuds. Young people will only be granted leave to remain in the UK if they can demonstrate they are at personal risk.

Paul Ballat gave an overview of the work on housing for care leavers and reported that the council has a statutory responsibility for looked after children. Merton currently has 100 children over 16 who are entitled to leaving care services. As a result of housing pressures we need strong relationships with housing providers and foster carers. We need to have different models of housing so young people have access to secure permanent housing. The current quota is under pressure as the requirement to look after care leavers for longer meant we need a larger supply however there is limited social housing available.

Paul Angeli gave an overview on the work of No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) He reported that families come to their local authorities after all other attempts have failed and they are homeless. The council is then required to provide housing and support. The case law in this area is complex and the council has made improvements in processing assessment by employing an NRPF officer who is able to help to resolve the issues, we are however dependent on the Home Office to process asylum claims.

In response to a question regarding whether recording NRPF as an overspend in the budget was consistent with other boroughs Yvette Stanley reported that this area is demand led process in some boroughs it is met from a contingency budget. The larger demand grows it gets the more difficult to contain within the CSF budget, growth may change according to national policy.

The chair gave an overall summary of the discussion and thanked officers for their report which was helpful for context, legal environment and the challenges. However the budget information provided was unsatisfactory as the task group has not been able to ascertain the underlying causes for the overspend given that details on the individual were not provided.

## RESOLVED

The panel thanked officers for their work and noted the report.

### 4 2016/17 QUARTER 3 MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 4)

A task group member asked the Director of Corporate Service to provide an opinion on the budget position by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Caroline Holland said £11 million of growth for 2017/18 should mean we are not in the same budget position next year, hopefully the overspend will decrease before year end but cannot make any further predictions at this stage.

**ACTION:** Department asked to provide baseline budgets for Phase C so the outturn report for next year will demonstrate what has been delivered for Lot 1, Lot 2, is starting from April 2017.

**ACTION:** Department asked to provide the alternative view of savings in the monitoring report. This should be available before the next Council meeting.

A panel member asked if an underspend due to vacancies at children and adolescent mental health services is a good thing. Caroline Holland reported that they have found a way to deliver more efficient services without putting children at risk.

**ACTION:** A task group member referred to page 94 of the agenda and queried why the majority of the debt is written off in the final quarter of the year. Caroline Holland agreed to report back on this.

RESOLVED

The panel thanked officers for their work and noted the report.

5 DATES AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (Agenda Item 5)

Task Group members have a preference for the 25<sup>th</sup> July over the 6<sup>th</sup> July and queried both meetings have been arranged.

RESOLVED

The Chair agreed to discuss agenda items with Julia Regan to determine if there is a need for an additional meeting.

**Committee:** Overview and Scrutiny Commission

**Date:** 7 March 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Review of the recruitment of co-opted members to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead member: Cllr Peter Southgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Contact officer: Julia Regan: Julia.regan@merton.gov.uk 020 8545 3864

---

## Recommendations:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission consider whether it wishes to recruit any non-voting co-opted members for 2017/18.

---

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Note - the arrangements for appointing the statutory co-opted members (the Diocesan Board and Parent Governor representatives on the Children & Young People Panel and on the Commission) are not within the control of the council and are therefore not addressed in this report.
- 1.2 The Commission, at its meeting on 7 October 2014, discussed and agreed proposals for a formal process for the appointment of non voting co-opted members. It agreed a recruitment process to attract applications from people with a particular interest or experience of crime and community safety issues or financial expertise. Shortlisted applicants attended an informal interview with the Chair, Vice Chair and Scrutiny Officer.
- 1.3 Subsequently one appointment, of Geoffrey Newman, was made for a 12 month period ending 31 March 2016. This was extended for a further 12 months by the Commission at its meeting on 5 April 2016.
- 1.4 The co-opted member's term of office will come to an end shortly. The Commission is therefore asked to consider whether it wishes to recruit any non-voting co-opted members for the municipal year 2017/18.
- 1.5 Instead of (or as well as) appointing another co-opted member, the Commission may choose to call upon independent experts to advise on specific subjects as they arise. External experts, advisers or co-opted members may also be appointed to any task group that the Commission chooses to establish in 2017/18.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Co-opted members can provide scrutiny committees or task groups with outside knowledge, experience and skills that can inform the work of scrutiny and complement the role of councillors. Co-opted members can be particularly helpful in representing community perspectives, contributing a wider perspective and encouraging public engagement.

- 2.2 The Commission and its associated task groups may also call upon expert witnesses, service users or other stakeholders to present information and ask/answer questions for particular agenda items or meetings. This may be a more effective use of that person's time than co-option given the wide remit of the Commission.
- 2.3 Co-opted members should be invited to join any training that is provided to scrutiny councillors.
- 2.4 Non-voting co-opted members are not paid an allowance but travel and any reasonable subsistence expenses that are incurred whilst fulfilling duties as a co-opted member will be re-imbursed.
- 2.5 The Commission is asked to discuss and agree whether it wishes to appoint one or more non-statutory co-opted members for the 2017/18 municipal year.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 The Commission is requested to advise on the arrangements, if any, it wishes to make for the appointment of one or more non-statutory co-opted member.
- 3.2 The Commission may choose not to recruit additional co-opted members.

### **4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

### **5. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The cost of recruitment and support of co-opted members would be met within existing budgets.

### **6. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 2000 provides for the formal co-option of a person onto a committee to occupy a non-voting position.

### **7. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement. A widely advertised and clear recruitment process would enable local residents and community and voluntary sector groups to apply and would enhance engagement with scrutiny.

### **8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Police and Justice Act 2006 allows crime and disorder committees (the Commission has this role in Merton) to co-opt additional members with particular expertise in crime and disorder issues. Co-optees must not be employees, officers or members of one of the responsible authorities. Cabinet Members may not be co-opted.

### **9. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are none specific to this report.

### **10. APPENDICES AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 None

# Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2016/17



This table sets out the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's Work Programme for 2016/17 that was agreed by the Commission at its meeting on 7 July 2016. This work programme will be considered at every meeting of the Commission to enable it to respond to issues of concern and incorporate reviews or to comment upon pre-decision items ahead of their consideration by Cabinet/Council.

The work programme table shows items on a meeting by meeting basis, identifying the issue under review, the nature of the scrutiny (pre decision, policy development, issue specific, performance monitoring, partnership related) and the intended outcomes. The last page provides information on items on the Council's Forward Plan that relate to the portfolio of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission so that these can be added to the work programme should the Commission wish to.

**The Commission is asked to consider the recommendation from Council on 23 November 2016 that the Leader of the Council should be asked to bring a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on Merton's approach to consultation so that the Commission can consider whether it would wish to make any recommendations. If the Commission decides to accept this recommendation then it will need to identify the meeting at which it wishes to receive this report.**

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has specific responsibilities regarding budget and financial performance scrutiny and performance monitoring which it has delegated to the financial monitoring task group – agendas and minutes are published on the Council's website.

## **Scrutiny Support**

For further information on the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission please contact: -  
Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services, 0208 545 3864, [Julia.regan@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Julia.regan@merton.gov.uk)

**Meeting date – 7 July 2016**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/ Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Holding the executive to account	Leader and Chief Executive – vision, key priorities & challenges for 2016/17	Presentation	Leader of the Council Ged Curran, Chief Executive	Context for Commission’s work programme
	Merton Partnership annual report	Report	Chief Executive John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships	Context for Commission’s work programme
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Rehabilitation Strategies	Report	Neil Thurlow, Community Safety Manager	Progress report plus discussion with National Probation Service and MTC Novo
	Discussion of questions to ask Borough Commander at the next meeting			
Scrutiny reviews	Report of the Shared and Outsourced Services Scrutiny Task Group	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To agree final report and recommendations
	Analysis of Members’ annual scrutiny survey 2016	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	Discuss findings and agree action plan for 2016/17
	Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme 2016/17	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To agree work programme and task group reviews



**Meeting date – 20 September 2016**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/ Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Borough Commander	Report and in-depth discussion	Borough Commander	Update on policing issues
	Disability hate crime	Report from Merton CIL	Merton Centre for Independent Living	To identify how Commission can support work on hate crime
Holding the executive to account	Customer contact programme	Update Report	Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement	Progress report for comment
	Council tax consultation	Report on background to the consultation	Paul Evans, Assistant Director of Corporate Governance	Item in response to discussion at Council on 14.09.16
Scrutiny reviews	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meetings on 5 and 26 July	Cllr Hamish Badenoch Julia Regan	Financial monitoring task group

**Meeting date – 15 November 2016**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/ Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan 2017/21 - information pertaining to round one of budget scrutiny	Report	Cllr Mark Allison Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To send comments to Cabinet budget meeting 14 December
Pre decision scrutiny	Voluntary sector and volunteering strategy	Draft report	John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships	To comment on draft strategy
Holding the executive to account	CCTV	Report	John Hill, Head of Public Protection	Progress report on new CCTV system
	Enforcement	Report to provide update on enforcement action taken, with focus on Planning	James McGinlay, Head of Sustainable Communities	To comment on enforcement issues & identify any further action for scrutiny

**Meeting date – 26 January 2017 – scrutiny of the budget**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Member/Lead</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan 2017/21	Report – common pack for Panels and Commission	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services		To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
	Business Plan update - latest info from Cabinet 16 January (if any)	Report	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services		To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
Scrutiny reviews	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting	Cllr Hamish Badenoch Julia Regan		To note minutes of meeting held on 10.11.16

**Meeting date – 7 March 2017**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Holding the executive to account	Consultation	Report	Kris Witherington, Consultation & Engagement Manager	To respond to reference from Council
Pre decision scrutiny	Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-20	Draft report	Evereth Willis, Equality and Community Cohesion Officer	To comment on draft strategy
Scrutiny reviews	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting	Cllr Hamish Badenoch	To note minutes of meeting held on 20.02.17
	Shared and outsourced services task group	Cabinet response and action plan	Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement	To receive Cabinet response and action plan
	Review of arrangements for co-opted members	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To agree future arrangements for co-opted members
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Discussion of questions for the Borough Commander	Discussion	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	Discussion to plan line of questioning for meeting on 28 March

**Note – scrutiny of the immunisation action plan has been transferred to the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Commission members will be invited to join the meeting**

**Meeting date – 28 March 2017**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Member/Lead</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Mayor of London's policing priorities	Report	London Assembly Member		To discuss and comment on policing priorities
	Borough Commander	Report and in-depth discussion	Borough Commander		Update on policing issues
Holding the executive to account	Violence against women and girls	Update report	John Hill, Head of Public Protection		To discuss and comment on progress
	Services for women and children in refuges	Report	John Hill, Head of Public Protection		To discuss and comment on policy and service delivery issues
	Anti-social behaviour	Report plus data	Neil Thurlow, Community Safety Manager		Update report
Performance management	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan		To approve and forward to Council
	Planning the Commission's 2017/18 work programme	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate		

**Note - Carry forward items:**

Customer contact programme update – July meeting of Commission or Financial Monitoring Task Group

## **Forward plan items relating to remit of the Commission**

### **Banking services**

To award a contract for corporate banking services.

Decision due: 20 Mar 2017 by Director of Corporate Services

### **Equality Strategy 2017-21**

The Equality Act 2010 requires the council to publish equality objectives every four years to demonstrate how it will meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Note - The draft Equality Strategy 2017-21 will be discussed by the Commission at its meeting on 7 March so that its views can be taken into account by Cabinet .

Decision due: 20 Mar 2017 by Cabinet