

# Merton Council

## Council meeting

### Membership

**The Mayor:** Councillor Mary Curtin

**The Deputy Mayor:** Councillor Geraldine Stanford

**Councillors:** Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Eloise Bailey, Thomas Barlow, Nigel Benbow, Hina Bokhari, Kelly Braund, Mike Brunt, Adam Bush, Omar Bush, Ben Butler, Tobin Byers, Billy Christie, David Chung, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Pauline Cowper, Stephen Crowe, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Anthony Fairclough, Edward Foley, Brenda Fraser, Edward Gretton, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Andrew Howard, Janice Howard, Natasha Irons, Mark Kenny, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Paul Kohler, Rebecca Lanning, Najeeb Latif, Edith Macauley MBE, Russell Makin, Peter McCabe, Simon McGrath, Nick McLean, Oonagh Moulton, Aidan Mundy, Hayley Ormrod, Dennis Pearce, Owen Pritchard, Carl Quilliam, David Simpson CBE, Marsie Skeete, Peter Southgate, Eleanor Stringer, Dave Ward, Martin Whelton, Dickie Wilkinson and David Williams

**Date: Wednesday 4 July 2018**

**Time: 7.15 pm**

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

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

[democratic.services@merton.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@merton.gov.uk) or telephone [020 8545 3616](tel:02085453616).

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# Council meeting

## 4 July 2018

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**Note on declarations of interest**

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

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# Agenda Item 3

COUNCIL  
23 MAY 2018

(7.15 pm - 8.28 pm)

PRESENT           The Mayor, Councillor Marsie Skeete,  
The Deputy Mayor, Judy Saunders

Councillors Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Eloise Bailey, Thomas Barlow, Nigel Benbow, Hina Bokhari, Kelly Braund, Mike Brunt, Adam Bush, Omar Bush, Ben Butler, Tobin Byers, Billy Christie, David Chung, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Pauline Cowper, Stephen Crowe, Mary Curtin, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Anthony Fairclough, Edward Foley, Brenda Fraser, Edward Gretton, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Andrew Howard, Janice Howard, Natasha Irons, Mark Kenny, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Paul Kohler, Rebecca Lanning, Najeeb Latif, Edith Macauley MBE, Russell Makin, Peter McCabe, Simon McGrath, Nick McLean, Oonagh Moulton, Hayley Ormrod, Dennis Pearce, Owen Pritchard, Carl Quilliam, David Simpson CBE, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Eleanor Stringer, Dave Ward, Martin Whelton, Dickie Wilkinson and David Williams

## 1       APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Aidan Mundy.

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

No declarations of interest were made.

## 3       ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR 2018/19 AND THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2018/19 (Agenda Item 3)

It was moved by Councillor Stephen Alambritis and seconded by Councillor Sally Kenny that Councillor Mary Curtin be elected Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the 2018/19 municipal year.

Councillors Oonagh Moulton, Peter Southgate and Dennis Pearce spoke in support of the nomination.

*(A copy of their speeches are attached at Appendix A to these minutes)*

There not being any other nominations the Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Mary Curtin made the statutory declaration of office and was invested with the Mayor's chain and badge of office.

The new Mayor announced that her Deputy Mayor for the 2018/19 municipal year would be Councillor Geraldine Stanford. Councillor Stanford signed the statutory declaration of office and was invested with the Deputy Mayor's badge of office.

The Mayor announced that her consorts would be William Thompson, Marie Bateman and Dolores Bisnouth. The Mayor's Chaplain would be Father John Mulligan.

The Mayor presented badges to the outgoing Mayor, Deputy Mayor and their respective consorts.

The Mayor, Councillor Mary Curtin, thanked the Council for her election for the forthcoming year and announced that her two Mayoral charities would be Friends in St Helier and Colours House Theatre.

*(A copy of her acceptance speech is attached at Appendix B to these minutes.)*

5 VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR (Agenda Item 5)

The Mayor invited Councillor Marsie Skeete to receive the Council's vote of thanks.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis moved and the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Oonagh Moulton, seconded the vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor.

In doing so both Group Leaders, along with the Leader of the Merton Park Ward Independent Residents Group, Councillor Peter Southgate, spoke in praise of Councillor Marsie Skeete's year in office.

*(A copy of these speeches are attached at Appendix C to these minutes).*

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Council places on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor Marsie Skeete for the dedicated manner in which she has served as Mayor of the London Borough of Merton for the 2017/18 municipal year.

6 ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda Item 6)

The Mayor asked for nominations for the Leader of the Council.

It was moved by Councillor Mark Allison and seconded by Councillor Edith Macauley that Councillor Stephen Alambritis be elected as Leader of the Council.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Anthony Fairclough, also spoke on the nomination.

There not being any other nominations the Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was

RESOLVED

That Councillor Stephen Alambritis be duly elected Leader of the Council.

#### 7 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 7)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2018 are agreed as an accurate record.

#### 8 CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES (Agenda Item 8)

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

The Conservative amendment as set out in Item 10 was moved by Councillor Oonagh Moulton and seconded by Councillor Daniel Holden.

The Conservative amendment was put to a vote and was lost - votes in favour 17, votes against 42, abstentions 0.

The substantive motion was then put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour 42, votes against 17, abstentions 0.

RESOLVED:

That the Council:

- A. i) approves the constitution of committees, sub-committees and scrutiny bodies set out in Appendix A to the Council report and;
  - ii) agrees the allocation of seats, chair and vice-chair positions and the appointment of members to those seats;
- B. i) approves the constitution of consultative forums and other bodies set out in Appendix B to the Council report; and
  - ii) agrees the appointment of members to those seats;
- C. agrees the allocation of seats and appointment to the outside organisations as detailed in Appendix C to the Council report.
- D. agrees the terms of reference of consultative and other bodies appointed by the Council, detailed in Appendix D.

- E. notes the appointment, made by the Leader, of the Deputy Leader and his respective portfolio and appointments to the Cabinet including their respective portfolios detailed in Appendix E to the Council report.
- F. agree the amended terms of reference of the Mertantun Development Limited Sub-Committee, as set out in Appendix F.
- G. agree the membership and note the amended Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the South West London and Surrey Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) as set out in Appendix G.
- H. agrees that the Council's Constitution be amended to incorporate any changes resulting from the approval of recommendations A to G.

## 9 FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH (Agenda Item 9)

The motion was moved by Councillor Stephen Alambritis and seconded by Councillor Oonagh Moulton.

Councillor Peter Southgate also spoke on this item.

### RESOLVED:

That the Council agrees to award the Freedom of the Borough to former Councillor Philip Jones in recognition of his long service to the Borough and agrees to the holding of a Special Council meeting on 12 July 2018 for the purposes of passing the necessary resolutions.



## Full Council

04 July 2018

Wards: All

### Strategic Theme Report: Sustainable Communities

Lead officer: Chris Lee, Director for Environment & Regeneration

Lead members: Cllr Nick Draper, Cabinet Member for Community & Culture

Contact officer: Christine Parsloe, Leisure & Culture Development Manager

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#### Recommendation:

A. That Council note the content of this report.

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## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. Each meeting of Council receives a report updating progress against one of the council's strategic themes. The theme for this report is:

### **Culture and Sport (with an emphasis on Sport)**

1.2. The main portfolio holder is Councillor Nick Draper. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel continues to exercise its statutory function.

1.3. The Environment & Regeneration department provides a co-ordinated approach to managing the public realm. This includes management and operation of the borough's Greenspaces as well as Leisure and Culture Development, both based within the Public Spaces division. These services directly deliver a range of culture and leisure services, including sport, and working in partnership with others to deliver specific projects and initiatives.

1.4. This report summarises the key work being delivered either directly by officers or indirectly where the council is a partner.

1.5. The report provides an overview of the following main areas of work:

- Cultural Services (excluding Library & Heritage Services and Adult Education)
- Leisure Services
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Sports

## 2 DETAILS

2.1. The ambition for the Sustainable Communities theme is outlined in the council's Business Plan 2016-2020.

*"The Sustainable Communities and Transport Partnership was established to create a more sustainable borough, one which is less reliant on fossil fuel*

*and which reduces its negative impact on the environment and climate change. The Partnership promotes investment into the borough in order to create new jobs, improve the skills and capacity of residents and to improve the condition and supply of housing including affordable housing. The Partnership also works to promote the development of sustainable transport including cycling and walking, as well as public transport in and around Merton.”*

- 2.2. The council also works in partnership with the community and businesses to deliver Merton’s Community Plan. Culture and Sport are a key contributor to meeting the Community Plan Visions of:
  - 2.2.1. Bridging the Gap - between those people living in the east and the west of the borough.
  - 2.2.2. A healthy and fulfilling life – working with communities and residents to increase opportunities for everyone to enjoy a healthy and fulfilling life, as well as reducing health inequalities.
  - 2.2.3. Better opportunities for youngsters – delivering outstanding services which improve outcomes and life chances for all the borough’s children and young people. Also determined to help those facing real challenges to overcome them and narrow the gap in outcomes.
  - 2.2.4. Keeping Merton moving and developing, with a home for all – making the best use of limited resources to deliver nationally and internationally recognised projects and developments through working in partnership. Meeting the needs of our residents and businesses with the aim of securing long-term investment, sustainable travel, an improved physical infrastructure and a vibrant cultural offering.
  - 2.2.5. Being safe and strong – wanting everyone to feel safe in their community so we aim to prevent and reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and misuse of drugs and alcohol. To make our communities strong, also wanting residents to play an active part in the life of the borough and to feel truly valued.
- 2.3. Culture and sports services locally also seek to align themselves with the strategies and visions of the national and London lead agencies where these have the opportunity to deliver make an impact and improve outcomes for Merton’s local people. For sport, this is Sport England’s Strategy – ‘Towards an Active Nation’. In particular activities and initiatives delivered locally contribute towards improving local people’s physical well-being, mental well-being, individual development, social and community development as well as ensuring opportunities exist for volunteering.
- 2.4. From a London-wide perspective Merton works with London Sport and jointly shares the ambition to have 1 million Londoners physically active.
- 2.5. In 2015, the council published its Culture & Sport Framework. It identified that Culture and Sports services have the potential to contribute to Merton’s priorities and wider social outcomes; in particular, programmes to improve health and well-being; learning, skills and employability, economic resilience, positive behaviour and community cohesion. Furthermore, Culture and Sports services have the ability to develop innovative programmes to deliver against a range of outcomes and are an effective tool in promoting and facilitating behaviour change and empowering people, leading to improved

life chances. This approach was not new rather it documented that the council understood the relevance and importance of Culture and Sport within the borough and recognised the wider implementation by many public and voluntary sector agencies, individuals and organisations borough-wide.

- 2.6. Culture and sports services present a uniquely positive and impactful offer on some of the biggest issues local areas are dealing with, such as improving health and well-being and supporting vulnerable people. As such, cultural and sporting opportunities are offered by many groups, businesses, community organisations, etc. across the borough with employed people as well as volunteers.
- 2.7. The performance information contained within this report and appendices provide key facts and figures on culture and sports services, but the impact and outcomes for local people can be much more wide reaching as these services seek to contribute to tackling inactivity; improving health and well-being; opportunities for self-development and achievement; provide opportunities for volunteering; opportunities for continuous learning, opportunities for social interaction, opportunities to participate in regular exercise; etc.

## **CULTURAL SERVICES**

### **Theatres**

- 2.8. The council owns the New Wimbledon Theatre (NWT) and Studio Theatre, both of which are managed and operated on the council's behalf by Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG). Officers have been working for many years with the theatre to deliver an annual performance of the pantomime dedicated to the Mayor of Merton and with collections for the Mayor's chosen charities, as well as considering applications for community lets at affordable prices. ATG have responsibility within their lease to fully repair and maintain the building and everything within it as well as ensuring that the theatre delivers a range of productions and delivers work with schools, etc.
- 2.9. In 2017-18, NWT delivered 72 productions, 263 performances over 44 weeks, benefitting 200,942 people. It also employed 89 staff of which 39 were local residents.
- 2.10. In the coming year the NWT will be planning another year of consistent delivery to ensure the theatre provides an eclectic mix of shows and productions for all the community to benefit from. They will also be developing their long-term strategy for NWT to grow the theatre business to record levels of attendance and engagement. Starting with a vision of what the theatre will be in 2028/2029, the strategy will contain key milestones every year. NWT will be ambitious, brave, entrepreneurial and inclusive.
- 2.11. Their ambition is that New Wimbledon Theatre should be more fully programmed, with top-end quality musicals, dance, opera and plays, first rate 'one-night shows' (especially music and comedy) and locally generated content.
- 2.12. Polka Children's Theatre is to undertake a major £6.5m redevelopment (its first since opening in 1979) from March 2019 to summer 2020, subject to achieving 90% of the required £4m match funding by 1 December 2018 as per the terms

- of its £2.5m Arts Council Large Capital funding award. This project will develop Polka Theatre for future generations as a vibrant hub for the local community.
- 2.13. The project includes establishing a national centre for Early Years theatre, dedicated Creative Learning Studio, an expanded café, new and improved facilities for parents and carers, the opening of Polka's first onsite rehearsal studio, supporting its PolkaLAB professional development programme, improving access throughout the venue to enable greater participation by actors, staff and audience members with mobility impairments, and enhancing the building's environmental sustainability.
- 2.14. Polka will be 40 years old in 2019 and will be celebrating with the new development being underway. The council has committed to contribute £50k of Section 106 monies and £100k capital towards the new development, the latter amount in lieu of a reduction in revenue grant once the building is underway. In 2018-19 the council is supporting the theatre's work with a revenue Arts Grant of £60k, this helps them lever in core funding from the Arts Council of £570,219 per annum.
- 2.15. Polka delivered 94,035 visitors in 2017-18 through its programme of live theatre and creative learning activities and are anticipating an audience of 82,301 in 2018-19 (projected reduction due to planned closure in mid-February 2019 for the start of construction).
- 2.16. Attic Theatre Company are a Mitcham based organisation, who deliver projects and programmes throughout the borough and beyond. The council supports this theatre company with an annual arts grant of £32k, which helps them lever in additional income of around £60,000
- 2.17. In 2017 -18, Attic Theatre Company delivered:
- 20 professional performances of a newly commissioned adaptation of Tolstoy's novella 'The Death of Ivan Ilyich' which included 4 'pop up' community performances throughout the borough
  - 74 older peoples singing workshops and 6 performances to combat isolation and improve health and wellbeing in older people
  - Toured 9 performances of the highly successful Ma Kelly's Doorstep bogus caller roadshow, originally commissioned in 2002 by Merton and toured to over 11,000 people in two thirds of all London Boroughs
  - Piloted a series of drama workshops for older people
  - 31 sessions of drama workshops to support and integrate young refugee and EAL students struggling to enter mainstream school
  - A summer holiday drama scheme boosting confidence and preparing underachieving young people for the move to secondary school
  - Piloted a series of afterschool creative workshops for teenagers in Mitcham Library
  - Hosted the first Creative Networking event for all those working in the arts in the borough which achieved an attendance of over 70 people.
  - Been involved in a live Advent Calendar, Merton Arts Market, a seminar on adapting books at Wimbledon Bookfest, a celebrity Q&A at Wimbledon Library and other library events
- 2.18. For 2018 -19 they are planning to deliver the same community activities with older people and disadvantaged young people and have secured funding from

Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England to stage a newly commissioned piece about the suffragettes of Merton called *'The Rebellious Women of Wimbledon'* which will tour to over 15 venues, schools and community centres in south London, extending beyond the Merton boundaries to Wandsworth, Lambeth, Sutton and Croydon

- 2.19. Other theatres, arts centres and galleries are also open to public and community use including: Colour House Theatre, Lantern Arts Centre, Wimbledon Arts Space, Mitcham Arts Space, etc. as well as facilities within some of the boroughs schools.

### **Merton Priory Chapter House**

- 2.20. The foundations of the Chapter House of Merton Priory, adjacent to Merton Abbey Mills, are all that remains of what was once one of England's most important ecclesiastical centres. It was where the Statute of Merton (1235, the first such statute in English Law.) was signed by Henry III and his barons.
- 2.21. The Priory was demolished by Henry VIII in 1536 and most of the remains are now buried beneath the car park of the nearby Sainsbury's. The Chapter House foundations themselves remained preserved under the A24 Merantun Way - largely unknown and inaccessible except on special occasions when they are displayed to the public by volunteers from Merton Priory Trust.
- 2.22. Merton Priory Trust (MPT), in Partnership with Merton Council and the Living Wandle project represents phase 1 of a 2 phase project to develop this site into an important visitor attraction. Heritage Lottery funds, matched by LBM s106 have delivered capital works including the replacement of the existing south wall with a new glass wall and visitor entrance, plus domestic facilities which will permit more regular opening and its eventual use as a multi-function event venue to ensure its long-term sustainability of the venue.
- 2.23. The project was developed by MPT and LBM has acted as the client, match funding 53% of project value. Construction commenced on-site in November 2017 and was completed in early June 2018, with the visitor centre formal opening being planned for September 2018.
- 2.24. Once complete the cultural impact will be significant as this major archaeological site will be accessible again and more widely known within Merton's heritage. MPT volunteers have continued to open the site to visitors during the build and their activities have received significant publicity. In addition, MPT are coordinating the production of an online teacher resource pack and education film for a younger audience, both of which were funded through HLF volunteer training plan. The film is available at:

<https://youtu.be/OAOUxRFqU4c>

Further information:

<https://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/projects/merton-priory-chapter-house/>

Facebook: @mertonpriory

### **Commemorative Events**

- 2.25. This year the council will be laying the second, of only two, World War 1 commemorative stones for two soldiers, born in Merton, who were awarded the Victoria Cross for their actions in WW1. The commemorative stone to

honour George Edward Cates was laid on 8 Mar 2017 at Wimbledon War Memorial, the one hundred year anniversary of his act of bravery. On 18 September 2018 a commemorative stone to honour William White will be laid at Mitcham War Memorial, the 100 year anniversary of his act of bravery.

- 2.26. There will also be an event to commemorate and celebrate the one hundred year anniversary of the end of WW1 on 11 November 2018. Work on this is underway with the full details to be developed over the coming months and advertised late summer / early autumn.
- 2.27. Many commemorative events take place all the time and are organised and delivered within communities, schools and groups, such as street parties for the recent royal wedding. The council seeks to support these wherever possible and encourages communities to celebrate together in a safe and friendly manner.

### **Events**

- 2.28. One major international event happens every year in Merton with the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. During this time the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) work with the council to deliver the championships, including all the infrastructure to support it, as well as delivering free community tennis sessions for our youngsters at their centre in Raynes Park and a tennis fun day in Wimbledon Park.
- 2.29. During this period officers manage and operate Car Park 10 in Wimbledon Park, working with AELTC to manage the spectator queue and camping arrangements. This also includes any merchandising and charitable bodies, TV - news and weather broadcasters, etc.
- 2.30. Other strategic and significant events include:
- Ride London - an annual cycling event that comes through the borough, via Kingston into Raynes Park, Wimbledon and Wimbledon Village before heading out along Parkside into Wandsworth and onto the finish line in central London. 28,032 riders passed through the borough between nine o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the afternoon in 2017, only to be swiftly followed by elite cyclists racing through in 'peloton - grand prix style' passing through the borough in a matter of minutes.
  - Eastern Electrics – In 2017, this event welcomed nearly 16,000 guests to enjoy world renowned artists in the beautiful setting of Morden Park. The event was delivered by an external production company, but carefully overseen by council officers from the Greenspaces team together with colleagues from Licensing, Environmental Health, Noise, Car Parking, Safer Merton, London Fire Service and the London Metropolitan Police to ensure the event was safe and secure for visitors and local communities. This event returns for a slightly longer stay this year and officers are working with the production company to determine whether or not this can become a regular event for Merton's calendar.
  - Fireworks Displays – two annual events. Each event hosting two shows – one early show for a younger audience and the later show for an older audience. One event is held in Wimbledon Park and the other in Morden Park. Annual visitor numbers are in the region of 35,000, but this varies

from year to year and numbers are reduced when the weather is not so good.

- 2.31. Community events and activities are a regular occurrence within our parks and open spaces. The council, along with the parks contractors, idverde, provide outdoor space to enable a range of community and public events, which play an important part in supporting community cohesion, individual well-being and local economies. This includes the annual Mitcham Carnival, circuses, fun fairs, etc.
- 2.32. AFC Wimbledon are set to return to the borough at their new stadium in 2019 and this will bring league and cup football back to the borough, thus increasing the number of strategic and significant events.

### **Canons – Parks for People Project**

- 2.33. The council, in partnership with local organisations, has successfully bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund to deliver a 'Parks for People' project at The Canons in Mitcham. The lottery award of £4.4 million is to be match funded with £560,000.00 from Merton to regenerate both the historic house and the surrounding open space.
- 2.34. The Georgian façade of the Canons House will be fully restored. The ground and first floors will also be restored to facilitate ten new work spaces and offices, while the original parlour will become a bookable events space for both commercial and community use. The basement will be restored and designed as a heritage interpretation centre intended for use by community groups, schools and other organisations.
- 2.35. The public will begin to see changes at the Canons in the first half of 2019, when the construction phase of the project begins. This includes an exciting restoration of both the Grade II\* listed house and Merton's oldest building, the 16<sup>th</sup> century dovecote. The old toilet block and changing rooms will be demolished and an extensive plan of landscape works to the historic grounds will be undertaken.
- 2.36. A new park café and public toilets will be built in the heart of the open space. The café will be easily accessed from the newly created central walkway which will link Madeira Hall, The Canons House, the new playground, the walled garden and refurbished car park.
- 2.37. The team is currently engaging with the community through events, activities and attending local meetings and organisations. The programme of activities and events will run over the next four years with the intention to create a legacy of community engagement with the Canons House and grounds. Residents can find out about the community activities through Facebook, Instagram, e-newsletter and soon-to-be dedicated website.
- 2.38. Part of the capital works includes an exciting new play area. This will be located within the walled area in the front of the Canons Leisure Centre. The playground designer will engage with the public through an exciting programme of consultation on the design and build of the new play area.

### **London Borough of Culture**

- 2.39. Culture and arts can make a valuable contribution towards creating a cohesive, healthy and vibrant society. In February 2018, Merton was one of

just six successful boroughs to be awarded a 'Cultural Impact Award' from the Mayor of London as part of the London Borough of Culture Awards for 2019 or 2020.

- 2.40. The award was for Merton's FilmMerton project. FilmMerton is designed to support the long held community ambition to see a cinema in Mitcham, a core element of regeneration plans for the Town centre. This has always proved difficult, not least because cinema operators take the view there is no audience in the area. The programme therefore aims to:
- Build and demonstrate that audience for film in the area through running film seasons in a range of pop-up venues
  - Empower and engage local communities across the borough through curation of film seasons, commissioning new short films and augmented reality and participation in related events
  - Commission new work which is deeply rooted with local people and meets high standards of artistic excellence
  - Position Mitcham, and Merton more broadly, as an area open to and excited about emerging immersive technologies through *Mitcham Reality*, a festival showcasing public access to virtual and augmented reality as well as the public participation in the programme, which will take place at the end of the programme.
- 2.41. The process of bidding for the London Borough of Culture Award has generated considerable cultural enthusiasm and leadership in the borough, with the creation of a new Cultural Advisory Group. This group was brought together and is led by a range of creative businesses in the borough, mostly SME's, ranging from music studios to software and tattoo design, and practitioners, including photographers and actors.
- 2.42. The aim will be to work with and through the new Cultural Advisory Group to harness the energy, skills and talents of community organisations and cultural institutions to deliver FilmMerton and future cultural projects that will be a catalyst for change across Merton.

### **LEISURE SERVICES**

- 2.43. 'Leisure' incorporates all those things that people like to do in their spare time. The council's leisure services seeks to ensure that sufficient facilities and spaces exist so that a range of opportunities are available for local people, not necessarily all in council ownership / operation and not always within the borough boundaries but are within reach for the community within a reasonable time and /or distance. For strategic planning purposes this is normally a 20 minute drive time; 20 min public transport route and 30 min walking time.
- 2.44. Leisure can be activities range from arts activities, to gardening, to walking, to play activities, to organised and informal sports, etc.
- 2.45. The council has previously commissioned strategic facilities planning models for swimming pools and sports halls. These were still considered valid during the planning of the new Morden Leisure Centre. The council has recently commissioned a Playing Pitch Strategy. Work commenced on this at Easter



2018 and the research takes 12 months to complete in order to get the seasonal variations, hence this will be reporting in the summer of 2019. This will ensure a planned approach to outdoor sport and physical activity facilities in the medium term working towards achieving high quality facilities for local people.

## **PARKS & OPEN SPACES**

### **Green Flags**

2.46. The Greenspaces ground maintenance contract was awarded in February 2017 to idverde. The council works towards achieving excellence in its parks and open spaces and measures this through Green Flag Awards. In 2017, five Green Flags were awarded to:

- Colliers Wood Recreation Ground
- Dundonald Recreation Ground
- John Innes Park
- Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields
- South Park Gardens

2.47. All five of these sites were resubmitted for the 2018/19 Green Flag Awards, additionally, an application was submitted for Abbey Recreation Ground in January 2018 following commitment by the Council, the Wilmore End Residents' Association, idverde and others, in partnership, to improve the quality and standards at this open space in order to secure its very first such award.

### **Facilities**

2.48. Parks and open spaces provide venues for many leisure opportunities ranging from a seat to dwell on taking time for contemplative moments, sharing time with friends or just watching the world go by enjoying the flora and fauna, etc.; to places for walking, jogging, running or spending time with family and friends; to places for activities and exercises such as dog walking, buggy exercises, orienteering, etc.; to more formal sports activities.

2.49. Our first park being developed to be 'Dementia Friendly' is nearing completion and plans will follow for other parks in the future.

2.50. Within the parks there are formal sports facilities to use via pay and play or to book in advance especially for more organised activities and team sports. These include bowls, cricket, football, rugby, tennis, beach volleyball, adventure golf; etc.

2.51. Some parks have paddling pools; some have cafés; some have green gyms and some have table tennis tables.

2.52. **Table 1 - Locations of Facilities**

<b>Facilities</b>	<b>No sites</b>	<b>Locations</b>
Adventure Golf	2	Sir Joseph Hood; Wimbledon Park.
Athletics Track	1	Wimbledon Park.

Beach Volleyball	1	Wimbledon Park.
Bowls	6	Canons Rec; Haydons Rd; John Innes; Joseph Hood; Raynes Park; Wimbledon Park.
Croquet Green	1	John Innes Park.
Multi-Use Games Area (MUGAs)	22	Armfield Crescent; Canons Rec; Colliers Wood Rec; Donnelly Green; Dundonald Rec; Durnsford Rec; Edenvale Open Space; Garfield Rec; Haydons Rd; Joseph Hood Rec; King Georges Playing Fields; Lavender Park; Lewis Rd Rec; Morden Rec; Mostyn Gardens; Oakleigh Way; Pollards Hill Rec; Raynes Park; Rock Terrace; Rowan Rd Rec; Sir Joseph Hood; Tamworth Rec.
Paddling Pools	8	Colliers Wood Rec; Joseph Hood Rec; King Georges Playing Fields; Morden Park; Rowan Rd Rec; Sir Joseph Hood; Tamworth Rec; Wimbledon Park.
Playgrounds	43 playgrounds across 36 sites	Abbey Rec; All Saints Rec; Armfield Cres; Brenley Playing Fields; Canons Rec; Colliers Wood Rec; Cottenham Park; Donnelly Green; Dundonald Rec; Durnsford Rec; Edenvale Open Space; Garfield Rec; Haydons Road Rec; Joseph Hood Rec; King George's Playing Fields; Lavender Park; Lewis Rd Rec; Long Bolstead Rec; London Rd Playing Fields; Miles Rd; Morden Park; Morden Rec; Moreton Green; Mostyn Gardens; Oakleigh Way; Pitt Crescent; Pollards Hill Rec; Ravensbury Park; Rock Terrace; Rowan Rd Rec; Sherwood Rec; Sir Joseph Hood; Stanford Rd; Tamworth Rec; Wandle Park; Wimbledon Park.
Orienteering	1	Wimbledon Park
Outdoor Gym	12	Canons Rec; Donnelly Green; Dundonald Rec; Figges Marsh; King George's Park; Morden Park; Morden Rec; Mostyn Gardens; Oakleigh Way; Pollards Hill Rec; Ravensbury Park; Sir Joseph Hood.
Skate Park / Facilities	2	Pollards Hill Rec; Charnwood Square;
Table Tennis	7	Colliers Wood Rec; Donnelly Green; Figges Marsh; Holland Gardens; Joseph Hood Rec; Morden Rec; Sir Joseph Hood.
Tennis	63 courts across 16 sites	Collier Wood Rec; Cottenham Park; Dundonald Rec; Durnsford Rec; Holland Gardens; John Innes; Joseph Hood Rec; King Georges Playing Field; Lavender Park; Morden Rec; Nursery Rd Playing Fields; Oakleigh Way; Sherwood Rec; Sir Joseph Hood; Tamworth Rec; Wimbledon Park. NB Some are MUGA's and used also for tennis
Trim Trail	1	Brenley Playing Fields.

## **SPORTS**

- 2.53. Sports and physical activity opportunities are provided by many groups and organisations across the borough and beyond the borough boundaries and local people seek out and take part in those activities that they wish to do during their leisure time. These are provided in the community, education and private sectors as well as public facilities.

### **Leisure Centres**

- 2.54. The existing council owned leisure centres are operated by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) under a 15 year contract which commenced 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010. The leisure centres have a range of sports, health and fitness facilities allowing for pay and play activities, taught sessions, sports clubs, etc. In the last year 974,015 users have visited the Merton leisure centres with 92,736 of them being 14-25 year olds using the fitness facilities.
- 2.55. GLL also work with other community organisations and on other public sector agendas where sport, physical activity and health can be of benefit. These include Dementia Action Alliance, Love Wimbledon, School Sports Partnership, Merton Mencap, etc. GLL recognise the significant impact they can have by supporting people at risk of obesity and preventing further incidence of weight related ill health. GLL's strategic approach for healthy weight and diet focuses on raising awareness of the health benefits of healthy weight and diet, prevention of excess weight through physical activity and lifestyle programmes and rehabilitation and management of individuals with excess weight.
- 2.56. GLL invest considerable time and resources in the training, development and motivation of their staff and this reflected by their Investors in People Silver Accreditation and the Sporta Workforce Development Award 2017. In March 2018 staff in Merton received Dementia Awareness Training, which ensures that they are trained and ready for customers with dementia using the leisure centres as well as GLL being able to deliver specialist programmes for people living with dementia and their families across the centres.
- 2.57. GLL hold Main Provider Status on the Register of Apprenticeship Training which has helped 8 lifeguards complete their apprenticeships in Merton leisure centres within the last 18 months. They also work in partnership with Volunteering Matters to support the management and opportunities of volunteers.
- 2.58. The council is responsible for replacement of plant and machinery in the leisure centres as well as the fabric of the buildings. Recent investment includes a new lift at Canons Leisure Centre and phases 1 and 2 of external windows and doors replacements at Canons Leisure Centre, whilst a new building management system is being installed at both Canons and Wimbledon which will ensure plant and machinery can be better aligned and co-ordinated generating energy savings in what are high energy using facilities.
- 2.59. GLL are required to ensure our leisure centres undertake external assessments using a variety of measures which include Quest (Quality Assurance Assessment in Leisure Industry); Customer Service Excellence and Investors in People. Their most recent results are:

Table 2 – Leisure Centres – External Assessments

<b>Award</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Date Achieved</b>
Quest	Very Good	2016/17
Annual User Survey	86% Satisfied	May 2017
Investors in people	Silver	2017

**Morden Leisure Centre**

2.60. In 2014 the council announced it would commence the works to bring about a new ‘family friendly’ leisure centre in Morden to replace the ageing Morden Park Pools. At the outset a public consultation was carried out to determine the facilities priorities for inclusion in the new building. Since that time much work has been done and the new centre is due to be completed in September 2018. The operator Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) will then have 4-6 weeks to furnish the building and prepare to open to the public. Public opening is expected late October / early November 2018. Following this the existing Morden Park Pools will be demolished and the land reinstated to public open space.

2.61. The new centre will include:

- Café
- Large Secondary Pool which accommodates Diving
- 25m x 6 lane swimming pool with Pool Pod platform entry for ease of disability access
- Health & Fitness facility with 100 stations
- Large studio / community space for a range of activities.

2.62. The facilities at the new centre will help support a fully accessible and inclusive programme of activities which will include:

- Club Programme – series of programmes and activities to encourage older people to become more active and to highlight the mental, social and physical benefits that sporting activities can bring
- Disability Swim Programme – dedicated swimming sessions and learn to swim lessons for disabled people
- Specialist Disability Sessions - sessions similar to the dry side sports programme GLL currently deliver in partnership with Merton Mencap
- Better Inclusive Membership – gives disabled people full, anytime access to our gyms, swimming pools and fitness classes across all Better leisure centres for a discounted price
- Junior Gym Sessions – allow 11-15 year olds to enjoy cardiovascular equipment in a safe and structured environment while achieving a fulfilling workout
- IFI gym sessions with qualified gym instructors.

## **Wimbledon Park Watersports & Outdoor Education Centre**

- 2.63. The watersports and outdoor education centre at Wimbledon Park operates under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. It provides a range of programmes catering for children over the age of eight and adults of all ages from the local area.
- 2.64. Activities include sailing, kayaking, windsurfing, bell-boating, raft building, etc. Activities can be booked as groups or as individuals using the council's online booking and payment systems. Groups booking include schools, uniformed organisations, businesses, children's parties, etc. Some of the classes lead to qualifications in watersports and first aid.
- 2.65. All of the groups and individuals are asked if there is any additional information they need to share with us to aid their bookings. Most groups will bring some participants with additional needs such as ADHD or others on the autistic spectrum. They usually alert us to the needs at the time of booking and then share the specific detail on arrival at the centre. With roughly 1 percent of the population currently diagnosed on the autistic spectrum the staff are trained and ready to include participants in the most beneficial way possible for the individual. Some of the groups, such as The Smart Centre, will bring groups with higher ratios of children with additional needs, but the centre is aware of this and works with the client to ensure all their needs are best accommodated to provide a fun and educational experience for the participants.
- 2.66. During the school holidays, within each and every week there will be young people with additional needs taking part in the holiday courses programme. The majority will not need any specialist equipment, but if they do then the staff will organise that for them. The staff incorporate all additional needs, wherever possible, into the mainstream activities.
- 2.67. The centre has a range of boats that are particularly suitable for people with disabilities and also has a hoist, should that be required. The yellow powerboat has a drop down front to allow access for wheelchairs, as not all wheelchair users wish to get out of their chairs. We are able to accommodate a large range of disabilities with the usual equipment adapted as needed such as rafting together 2 Canadian Canoes for increased stability and using the outdoor beanbags to support those people who cannot self-support out of their chairs. Children with disabilities from our local schools are regular users and some come back during their own leisure time on the courses and activities programmes.
- 2.68. The centre runs a young person's volunteering programme. Taking on some 20-30 young volunteers during the summer period. The volunteers must already be able to swim and ideally have some experience of watersports, so that during the course of their volunteering the staff can coach and mentor them in improving their watersports skills and using their experience to upgrade their qualifications. Some of these young volunteers will be the centre's casual staff in the future.
- 2.69. Many of the volunteers and staff at the centre have dyslexia, working outside and with people is a skillset that appeals to people who often struggle with written communication. The core staff team at the Watersports Centre offer a

supportive and nurturing environment for all the young and not so young volunteers and staff. Over the past 7 years the volunteer scheme has catered for over 170 volunteers, 42 have gone on to gain either their dinghy instructor or their level 1 kayaking instructor qualifications, 3 have become qualified in both.

### **Merton Active Kids**

- 2.70. This holiday courses programme has been operating for many years and during all that time has changed to meet different local needs. The children's holiday courses, activities and programmes market is now very competitive and includes childcare providers. This programme is not childcare, but rather offer educational activities and short courses in culture, arts and sports activities. In the last year one of the local major providers for horse riding advised that they were no longer able to continue to deliver activity programmes for Merton Active Kids and although other stables have been approached no replacement has been found, hence alternative courses and activities are being sought. The council links with local providers and then advertises their activities to our local people. It is increasingly becoming a year round programme with peaks in school holiday times.

### **Community Sports**

- 2.71. The council continues to pay the annual entry fee for the London Youth Games and links interested team managers to London Youth Games directly so that teams can be entered by local volunteers. The council also provides T shirts for the competitors.
- 2.72. Recent years has seen an increase in provision of competitive sport provided by the sports' national governing bodies. Sport is also more buoyant in schools, so much so that young people and the local sports clubs are no longer rushing to represent the borough in the London Youth Games. The council continues to support in a limited way within the resources available.
- 2.73. This year the watersports regatta took place at Royal Docks Adventure on Saturday 17 May and the finals weekend is at Crystal Palace on Saturday 7 & Sunday 8 July with the schools mini-games taking place on Thursday 5 July.
- 2.74. The London Mini Marathon is an annual event which takes place as part of the London Marathon event. An officer co-ordinates the Merton team primarily comprised of young people who have represented the borough in the London Youth Games. In 2018 we had 28 competitors across 6 teams and the borough's best individual came 44 in the under 17 boy's race with the best placed team in the London Borough's competitions being Merton's U15 girls.
- 2.75. The Wimbledon Foundation is the charity of the All England Club and the Tennis Championships. In 2017 they reached a milestone of having donated over £1million to projects in the communities of Merton and Wandsworth over the first four years of operation. This contribution is wider than sports and includes arts & community engagement as well as health & well-being and getting active. An officer supports this work by being involved in the evaluation process and offering advice and guidance when requested so to do. More details on this programme can be found at [www.wimbledon.com/foundation](http://www.wimbledon.com/foundation)

## London Sport

- 2.76. Merton works in partnership with London Sport across the physical activity and sport sector with the overarching aim of getting Londoners more active. Within the borough London Sport work with community organisations; sports clubs; public health; voluntary sector; etc. as well as working with and through officers.



## Performance Information






- 2.77. Merton carries out residents' surveys on a regular basis, included within that survey local people are asked about their satisfaction with leisure facilities and parks and open spaces. The satisfaction trends have previously been compared with London-wide and outer-London boroughs where these are available. The last time comparisons were available was in 2014. The full satisfaction trend graphs are attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.78. Merton last carried out a resident satisfaction survey in 2017. In summary, results are:

Table 3 – Residents' Survey – Satisfaction Results 2017

Category	% Saying Excellent / Very Good / Good
Leisure & Sports Facilities (all adult respondents)	63%
Leisure & Sports Facilities (adult users only)	68%
Leisure & Sports Facilities (young people)	68%
Parks, Playgrounds & Open Spaces (all responses)	75%
Parks, Playgrounds & Open Spaces (users only)	79%
Parks, Playgrounds & Open Spaces (young people)	56%

- 2.79. Table 4 - Merton Performance Management Dashboards, 2017-18

PI code and description	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Q3 2017/18	Q4 2017/18	YTD result	Annual YTD Target	Current YTD status
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
SP 015 Income generated - Merton Active Plus activity	£14,049	£19,087	£1,885	£2,065	£37,068	£60,000	
Reason for Red Status	Part way through the year the provider of horse riding sessions withdrew from the programme and no replacement provider could be found. Also there is increased competition in the holiday and short course provision market.						
SP 032 No. of Green Flags					5	5	

PI code and description	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Q3 2017/18	Q4 2017/18	YTD result	Annual YTD Target	Current YTD status
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
SP 251 Income from Watersports Centre	£67,362	£138,470	£20,935	£3,460	£376,165	£397,000	
Reason for Red Status	During the year two of the core staff were unfortunately taken seriously ill, which resulted in the programme being offered needing to be curtailed. Also there is increased competition in the holiday and short course provision market.						
SP 318 No. of outdoor events in parks	53	67	5	5	130	130	
SP 349 14 to 25 year old fitness centre participation at leisure centres	30,259	30,914	22,744	26,322	110,239	106,000	
SP 405 No. of Leisure Centre users	269428	247882	226897	253148	997,355	878,105	
SP 406 No. of Polka Theatre users	23,639	17,212	11,993	41,191	94,035	94,600	
Reason for Red Status	This target was only just missed by 1%. This occurred due to one particular show not attracting as large an audience as was expected.						

- 2.80. Sport England have carried out 'Active People Surveys' for a number of years, during which time the methodology of counting has changed, so current results are not able to be directly compared with some of the early surveys. A good comparison within any survey publication is how Merton compares against London and England. A summary of how Merton compare in the most recently fully published information is detailed below.  
(The source for this is Sport England – Active People Survey 10 - 2015/16.)



# MERTON

## PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK (AGED 16+)

SOURCE: SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE PEOPLE SURVEY 10/2015/16

MERTON **40.3%**

LONDON **37.8%**

ENGLAND **36.1%**



MALE **46.2%**  
FEMALE **34.6%**



BY GENDER

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

SOURCE: PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK K 2015

### ACTIVE RESIDENTS



HIGHER THAN:

ENGLAND 57.0%  
LONDON 57.8%

### INACTIVE RESIDENTS



LOWER THAN:

ENGLAND 28.7%  
LONDON 28.1%

## SPORTS PROVISION

SOURCE: SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE PEOPLE SURVEY 10/2015/16



OF SPORTING FACILITIES ARE PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE

SOURCE: ACTIVE PLACES POWER



OF SPORTING FACILITIES ARE OWNED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

HIGHER THAN:

ENGLAND 62.1%  
LONDON 57.6%

VERY / FAIRLY SATISFIED WITH LOCAL SPORTS PROVISION



**66.1%**

OF ADULTS WANT TO DO MORE SPORT

SOURCE: SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE PEOPLE SURVEY 9/2014/15

41.8% OF ACTIVE ADULTS WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE SPORT  
27.8% OF INACTIVE ADULTS WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE SPORT

### **Summary Key Decisions since last Council Meeting**

- 2.81. Leisure Management Agreement - Cabinet – 19 Feb 2018
- 2.82. Allocation of Merton's Neighbourhood Fund – Non-Key Decision – 06 April 2018
- 2.83. Cultural Advisory Group: London Borough of Culture and the Community Infrastructure Levy – Non-Key Decision – 30 April 2018

### **Overview and Scrutiny Panel / Commission**

- 2.84. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny has continued to review performance monitoring data at every meeting for leisure services. This focuses on income, usage figures and satisfaction ratings. In March 2018, Panel members noted the increase in fitness centre participation by 14 to 25 year olds. Previously, members were advised that the closure of Ridgeway Stables had reduced the income of leisure service. Also, that there has been a decrease in visitors to the Polka Theatre due an unpopular show.
- 2.85. At its meeting in July 2017, the Panel received an update report on facilities for physical activity in children's playgrounds. This focused on how the public health and greenspace teams are working together to maximise the potential offered by Merton's greenspaces. Members heard how with 42 separate playgrounds, the borough ranks 15<sup>th</sup> highest in London for the utilisation of outdoor space for health and exercise. Panel members were pleased to hear how the public health and greenspaces teams will work more closely to ensure better use of the facilities available based on evidence, best practice and resident feedback

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

- 4.1. Consultation is undertaken during specific projects and officers attend public community forums and meetings to provide updates and consult on any specific items as and when required.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

- 5.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

- 6.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

- 7.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

8.1. None for the purpose of this report.

**9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

10.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

Appendix 1 - Annual Residents Survey – Satisfaction Trends

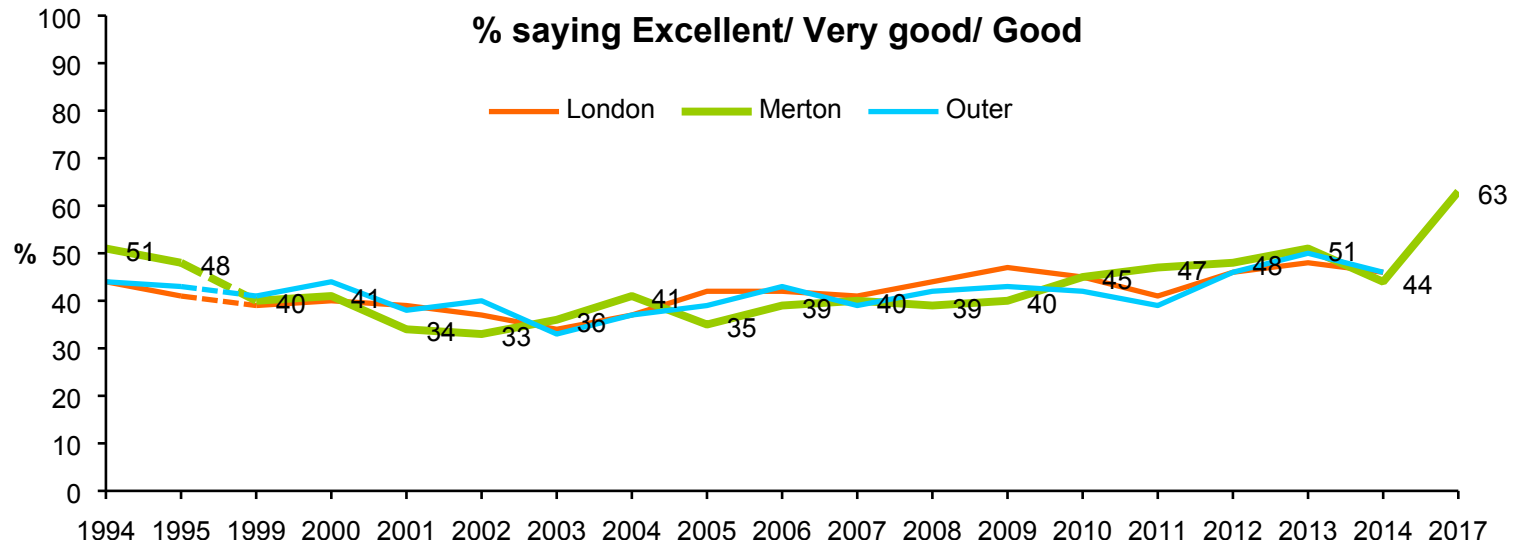
**12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. None for the purpose of this report.

Appendix 1

Annual Residents Survey – Satisfaction Trends

# Leisure and sports facilities (all adult respondents)

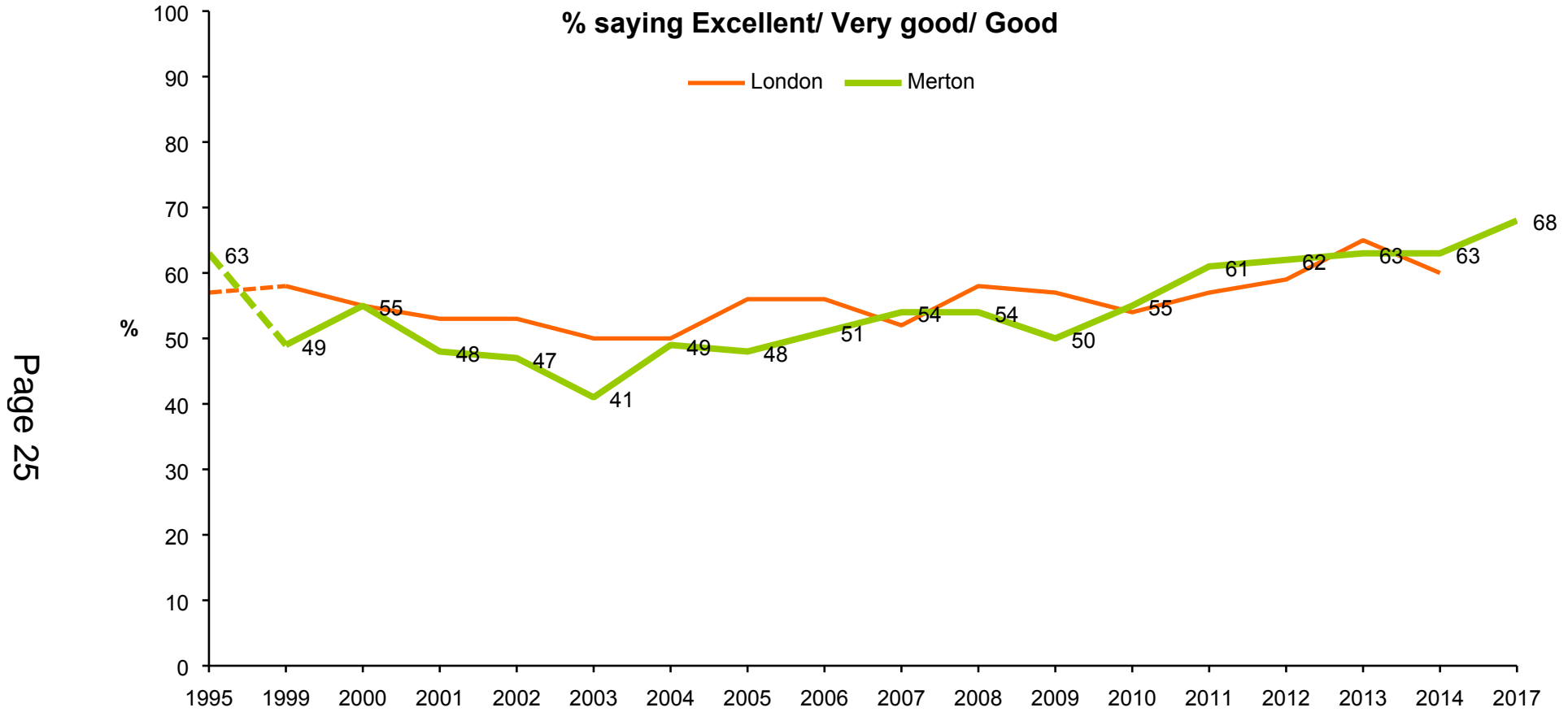


2017 base 1020

# Leisure and sports facilities (adult users only)

% saying Excellent/ Very good/ Good

London Merton



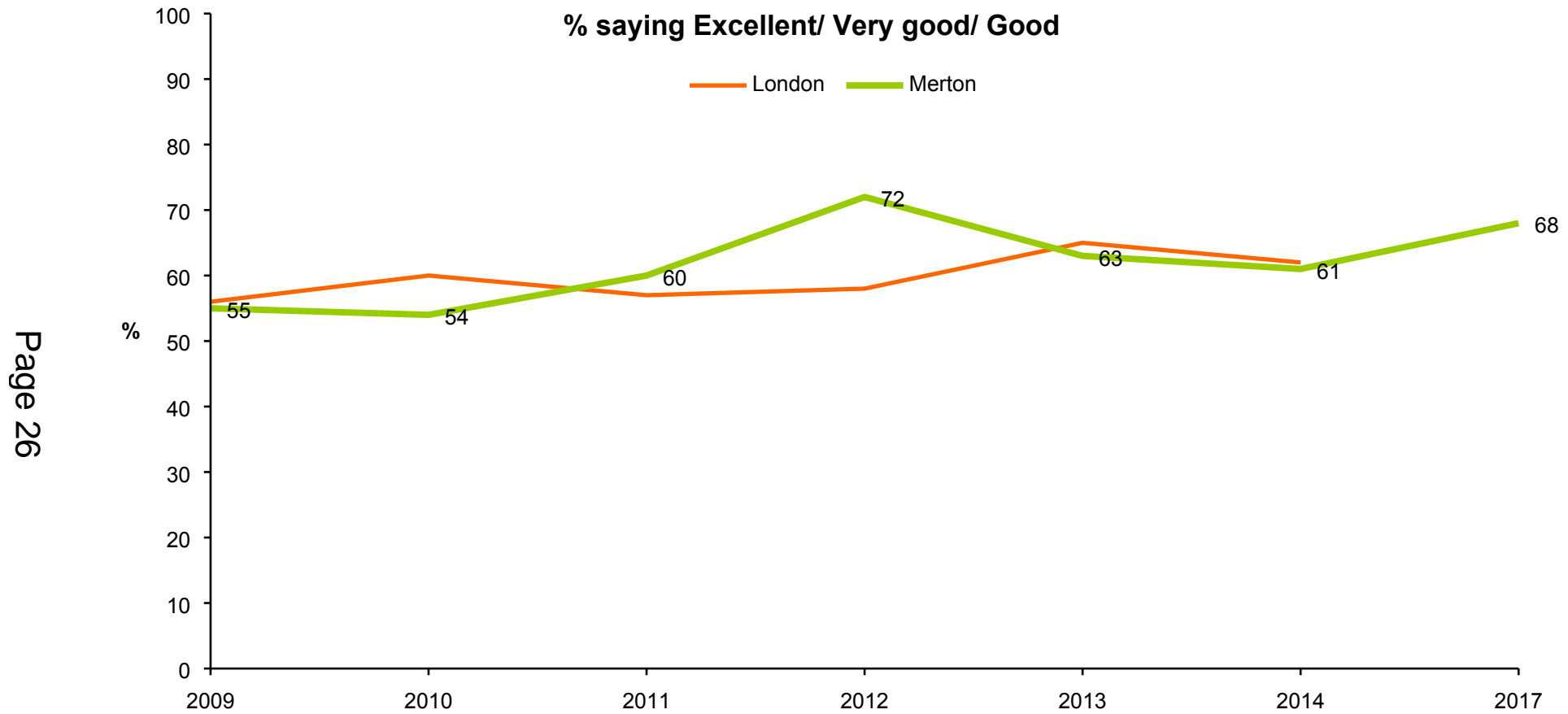
Page 25

2017 User base 352

# Leisure and sports facilities (young people)

% saying Excellent/ Very good/ Good

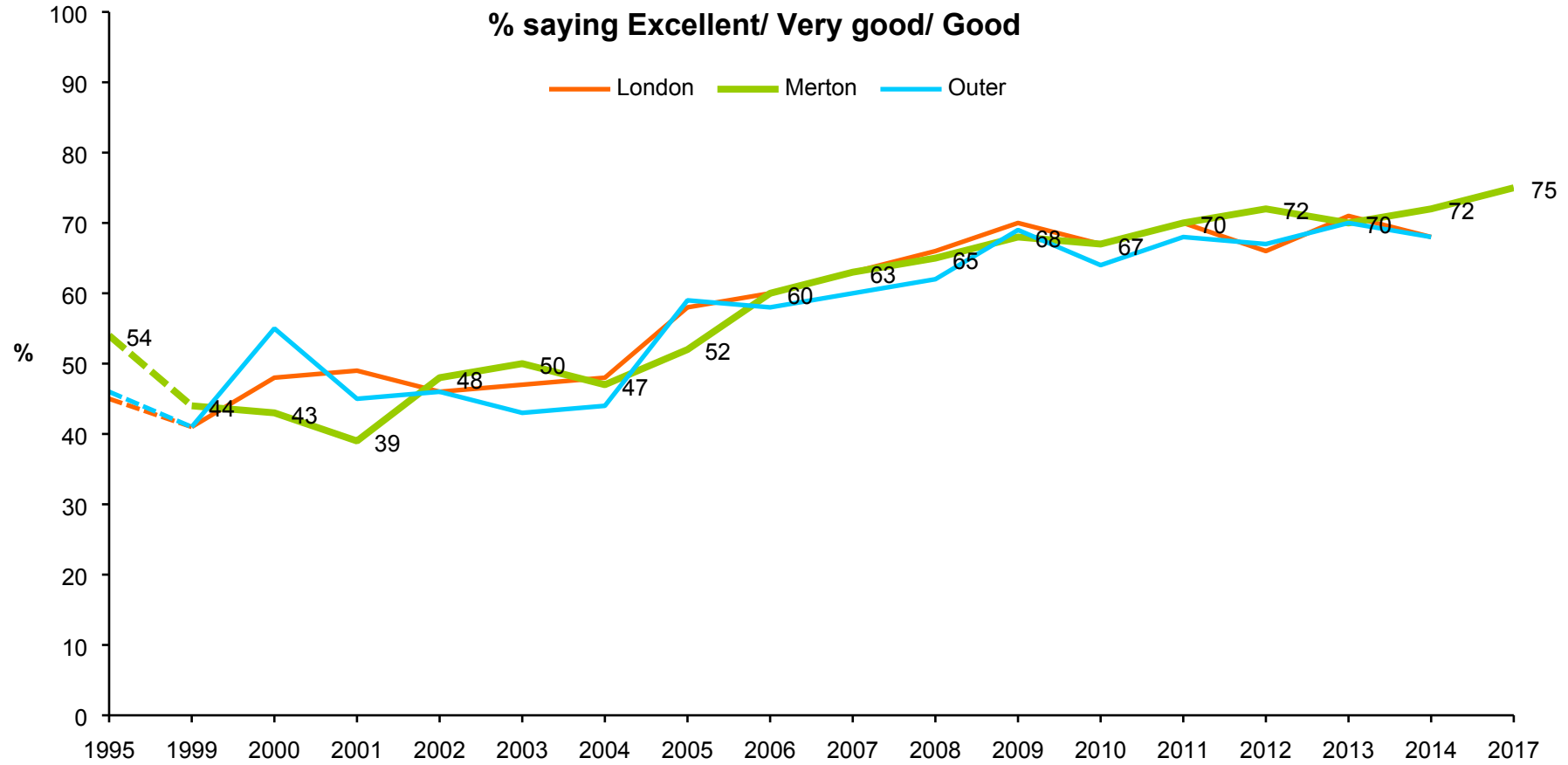
London Merton



Page 26

2017 Base 252

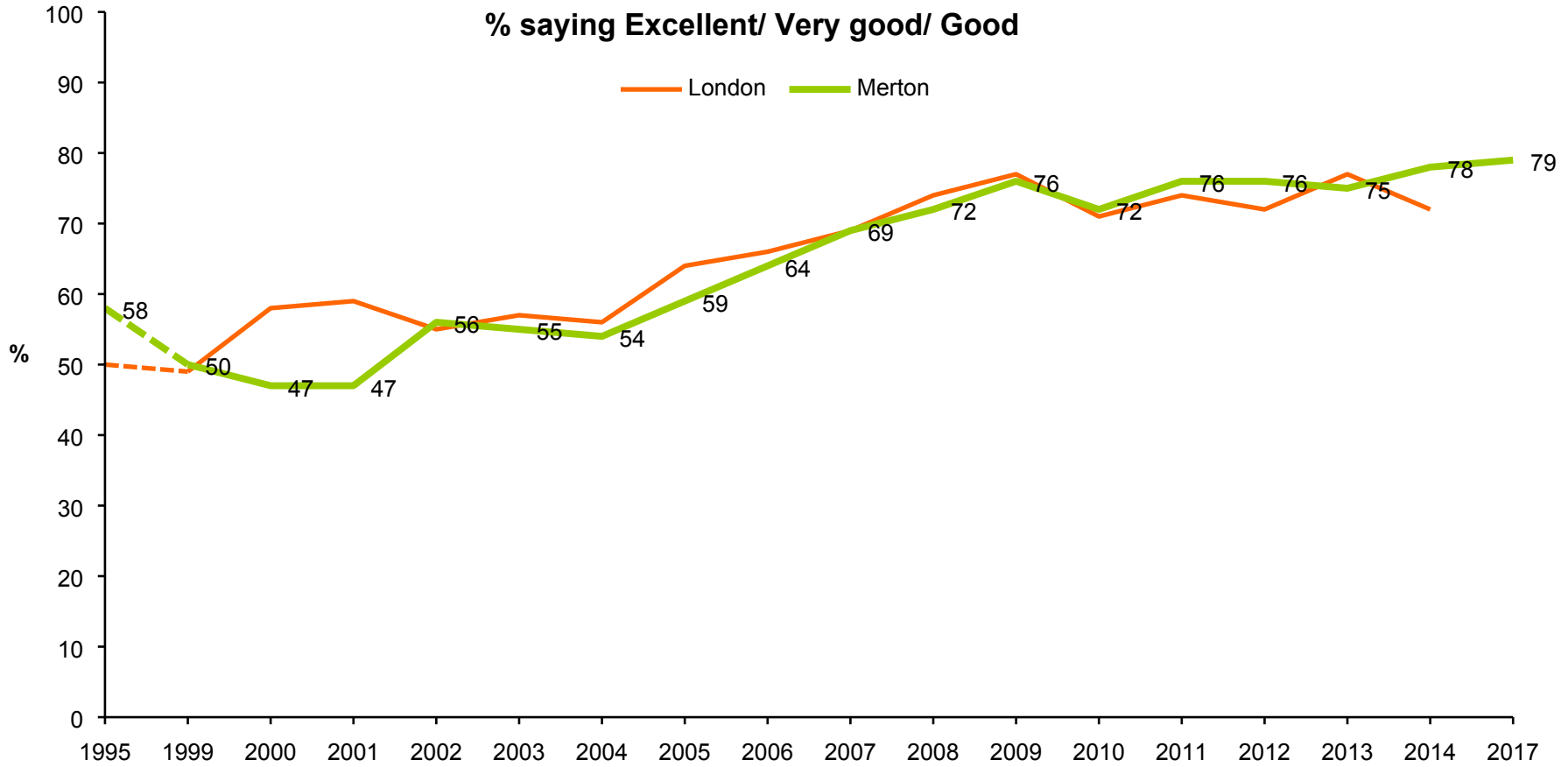
# Parks, playgrounds and open spaces (all responses)



# Parks, playgrounds and open spaces (users only)

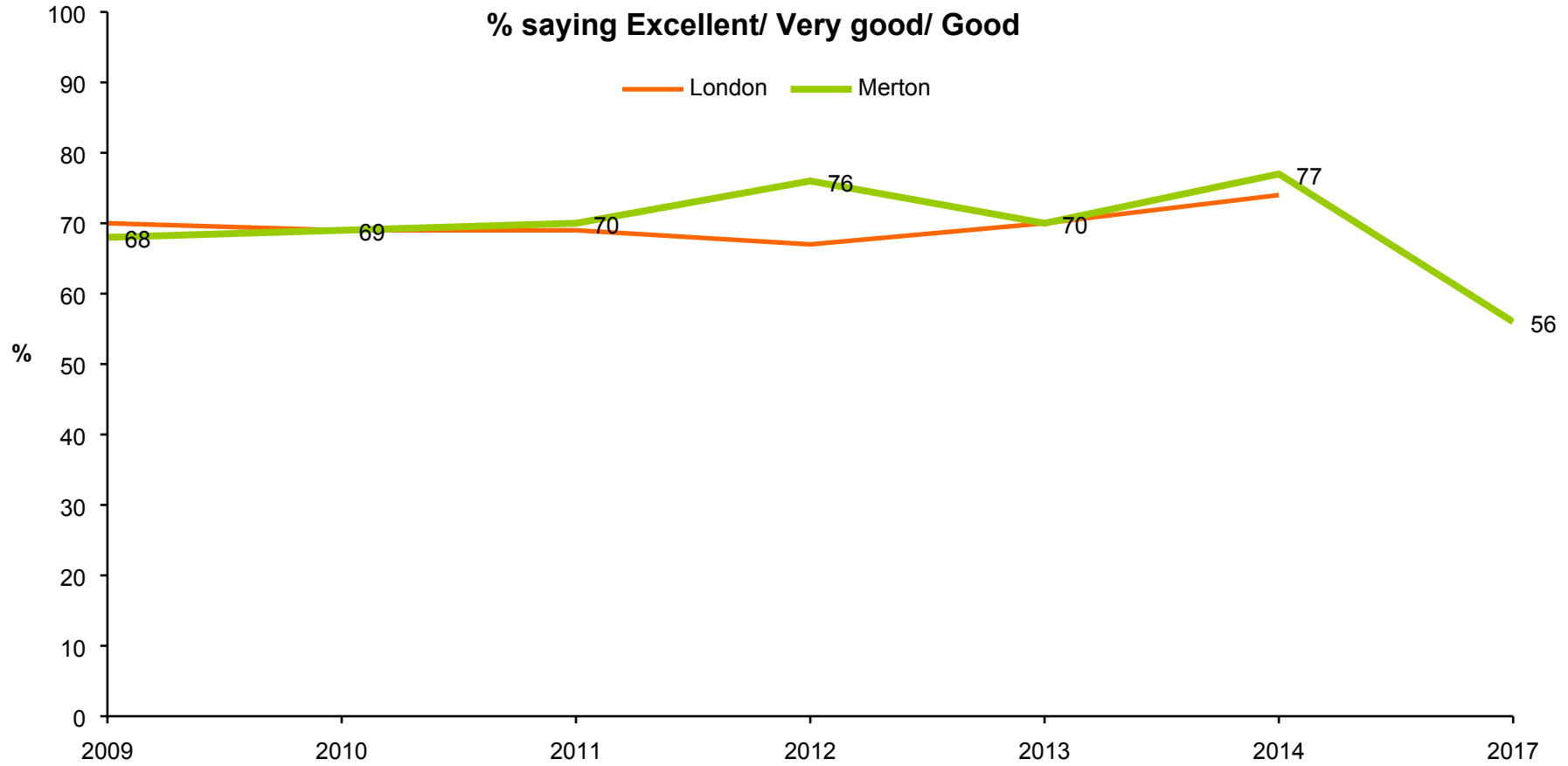
% saying Excellent/ Very good/ Good

London Merton





# Parks, playgrounds and open spaces (young people)



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COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2018

## NOTICE OF MOTION

This council condemns the failure of the administration to find an alternate use for the former Virgin gym in Battle Close. The site has become a focus for anti social behaviour causing great concern for the residents of Trinity. Due to the administrations inaction, £28,000 of taxpayer's money is being lost every month on preventing the site from deteriorating further. This council calls upon the cabinet to:

- a) Review previous options for short term use that would save taxpayers money;
- b) Publically state what options the council are considering to bring the site back into use.

Councillor James Holmes    Councillor Hayley Ormrod    Councillor Nigel Benbow

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COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2018

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### **Supporting our Little Leagues**

Organised sport is a vital resource for the children of our borough to support their continued good health and development. The government childhood obesity plan from January 2017 outlined that nearly a third of children aged 2 to 15 are now overweight or obese and younger generations are becoming obese at earlier ages and staying obese for longer. Organised sport is seen as a vital part of tackling childhood obesity and this is also reflected in Merton's own plan.

However, Merton's long running and popular volunteer-led Little Leagues that provide free football to local children are potentially facing new charges for use of our public parks. These charges will put pressure on volunteers and could lead to charges for parents that could discourage participation in organised physical activity outside of school.

This council notes that:

- The Merton council report in March 2017 'Tackling childhood obesity together' outlined the importance of organised physical activity for the children of the borough.  
<https://news.merton.gov.uk/2017/03/13/tackling-childhood-obesity-together/>
- The Raynes Park Little League is a voluntary organisation that has been serving the residents of Merton, providing free organised football based solely on voluntary contributions and is this year celebrating 50 years as part of the lifeblood of this borough.
- The volunteers for all our Merton Little Leagues past and present do an important job and should be supported by the London Borough of Merton and its elected representatives to continue their work.
- That the contractor IDVerde is proposing new charges for Little Leagues to use our parks that are yet to be confirmed and charges for the Raynes Park Little League could be as much as £4000 a year with the potential for additional charges for use of the pavilion.

This Council calls on the Leader and Cabinet member to:

1. Agree the principle that our volunteer-led Little Leagues should be able to use our parks without charge and for the benefit of the borough of Merton in any future contract.
2. Confirm with the current contractor IDVerde any charges to Little Leagues that will be due for use of parks and related facilities (such as the Pavilion in the St Joseph Hood memorial playing fields) in each year of

the contract. These details should be provided to Little League no later than 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

3. To ensure Little Leagues do not incur any financial penalty from any new charges for our parks and related facilities and can continue to run on the basis of voluntary contributions during the current contract period, Merton council will pursue one or more of the following routes:

- Negotiate with IDVerde a zero rate charge for Little Leagues for use of our parks and related facilities for the duration of the contract.
- Meet the cost of any charges for the use of our parks and related facilities directly through council funds for the full duration of the contract.
- Secure through the council sufficient sponsorship for Little Leagues to cover all costs incurred through the IDVerde contract for the full duration of the contract and meet any shortfall through council funds if the council is unable to secure sufficient sponsorship.

4. Ensure that before any further charges are implemented for the use of our parks anywhere in Merton or if our parks are monetised in any other way, that those proposals and details of the amount of any charges are brought to councillors and are scrutinised and debated either at full council or through the appropriate scrutiny committee at least a year in advance of implementation.

Councillor Hina Bokhari

Councillor Carl Quilliam

Councillor Eloise Bailey

## Raynes Park Community Forum Thursday 8 March 2018 Chair's Report

The meeting was held in Raynes Park Library Hall, and chaired by Councillor Michael Bull, with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association (RPA). More than 30 residents attended, as well as Merton Councillors, and officers from the council and its partners. Chris Edge opened the meeting, welcoming everyone and introducing Councillor Bull as the Chair.

### **Open Forum**

Merton Citizens – a new group has formed bringing together more than 20 local community organisation to focus on mental health and housing issues. A launch event is planned for 19 April at St Marks Academy, Mitcham.

### **Raynes Park Summer Festival**

Tom Underwood introduced plans for this summer's festival. Events will take place from 29 June until 8 July, ending with 'Lark in the Park' on the final day. There will be a range of arts events and displays over the week. More information and updates are available at <https://mailchi.mp/1974ecf97e68/myraynespark-february-update>

### **Town Centre Developments**

Tony Edwards provided an update on recent improvements to the Town Centre. The pictures provided by Tony can be found at <https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-and-local-democracy/community-forums/raynes-park-community-forum>

There have been significant improvements to the South Side of the Skew Arch with the bins removed and new Astroturf installed. There is still some funding available for planting but it is difficult to make significant changes with the impact of Crossrail 2 still unknown.

On the North Side the hoardings have been removed, but it is still not possible to access the embankment to make improvements due to Network Rail restrictions. The RPA will be meeting with Network Rail on 26 March to press this concern. Tony asked residents to consider the removal of the bins of the North Side. Claire Walshe, Merton Council, explained that the recycling centres are emptied three times a week and monitored weekly. This work has been disrupted recently due to staff being diverted to gritting duties. After a discussion residents were asked, by show of hands, if they supported removing the bins. There was a clear majority of those present in favour. Tony agreed to ask the Raynes Park and West Barnes Residents Association to raise this issue in their newsletter to gauge a wider viewpoint.

Tony said they have submitted a suggestion to the Community Infrastructure Levy for improvements on West Barnes Lane.

## **Raynes Park Station**

Chris Larkman said that in addition to the embankment the RPA would also raise the issue of the frontage of the station and bridge at the meeting with Network Rail. They will ask NR to paint and clean up these areas.

Department for Transport has announced a new Independent Affordability Review of Crossrail 2. The review will report back in the summer on how costs could be reviewed.

Heathrow Airport is holding a consultation on the physical changes on the ground needed to build a new north west runway and potential principles Heathrow could apply when designing the new flight paths. An exhibition had taken place in Wimbledon and several residents had attended. A resident asked if Merton Council was part of the 2M group opposing Heathrow expansion, the response is that Merton is part of 2M and opposes expansion. Another resident suggested that the now vacant Manston Airport would be a viable alternative.

## **Changes to Waste Management Collection Services**

Claire Walshe, Neighbourhood Client Officers, and Graeme Kane, Assistant Director of Public Space, from Merton Council were joined by Will Graham from Veolia to set out the changes to waste collection services that will occur in October 2018. The presentation can be found at <https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-and-local-democracy/community-forums/raynes-park-community-forum>

In response to questions from residents the team explained that the separation of materials is designed to improve the quality of the recyclables so that they have more value and can be reused. The principle of this service works well and whilst the roll out in Sutton did not go well Merton has been able to learn from this and has adopted a much longer lead in time. A 'hanger' system will be used to let residents know about contamination, a note left on the bins. Households in apartments with alternative systems will continue as they are, as will timed collections. Assisted collection services for those with disabilities will continue. Residents are unable to speak directly to Veolia managers and have to go through Merton so that Merton is able to use the evidence to monitor performance. Please report any issues with waste collection online or via the call centre to help Merton monitor Veolia's performance. As well as the data the contract is monitored by the Neighbourhood Client team visually checking the streets.

Will explained that operatives are trained to return bins to resident's property but this issue has to be constantly reinforced across the whole industry. Consistent problems can be reported and will be investigated. Spillages should either be cleared up by the crews or reported if this is not possible. Will also said that the food caddies are the best available in the industry at the moment and should prevent vermin from getting to the food waste if locked properly. Graeme explained that nappies cannot be recycled due to the materials used so have to be collected with residual waste. It would be possible to provide a specific collection but this would have a significant cost and in the areas with fortnightly collection nappies have not proved to be an issue.



Further Information on the changes can also be found at <https://www.merton.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/changes-from-2018>

## Planning

Chris Larkman provided an update on behalf of Neil Milligan.

557 Kingston Road – Dundonald Church – 17/P0763 - proceeding towards finalising the S106 agreement for the new church with flats above and then issuing planning permission.

559-589 Kingston Road – Manoplastics and land to the west – 16/P1208 - work has commenced on sorting out the S106. There is also a second application for 103 units (17/P2529) which is now in abeyance. The agent has said his client will review whether to withdraw the second application pending the outcome of work on the S106 for the initial application. There is no new on any implementation dates on the site nor do we know if there will be any Crossrail implications on this site

South side of Wyke Road – 17/P0609 - Despite the Inspector's decision on the earlier appeal we are yet to be convinced that this is a site suitable for housing – even if it is non-family.

Rainbow – non material amendment applications submitted to add/amend conditions so as to enable phased development – 18/P0258 and 18/P0259. Otherwise, no news.

35 Coombe Lane – 14/P1921 – Development of 14 units under construction. (site next to Waitrose)

40A Lambton Road - 17/P2023 - 3 dwellings on a backland site – reduced from 4 – considerable local interest - likely April Committee.

3/3A Orchard Lane - 17/P3256 – 5 dwellings on backland site – approved but nothing in the form of discharge of conditions since then.

61 Grand Drive – 17/P2016 – 3 dwellings – amended plans received - not a committee case.

Southey Bowls Club Kingston Road - S73 application to amend design of approved scheme for housing and new club house – S106 being updated and then able to sign off. Not a lot of local interest unlike initial proposals.

80-86 Bushey Road - 16/P1317 - Major retail/food and drink development. most unoccupied buildings now demolished. Unclear as to how the approved scheme might progress for the time being as occupied buildings like Pets at Home remain and the scheme would need to somehow work around these. Perhaps they will decant once a suitable unit becomes available in the new development.

## **Updates**

A reminder that the Ride London event will come through Raynes Park on 29 July 2018. As usual a street party will take place in the area.

Merton Council's Overview and Scrutiny Commission is asking residents for ideas for issues that Councillors could investigate. A resident suggested that bonfires should be considered by Scrutiny. For more information or to submit an idea please see:

<https://www2.merton.gov.uk/council/decision-making/scrutiny.htm>

## **Dates of future meetings: All at 7.15pm in the Library Hall**

Thursday 14 June 2018

Tuesday 18 September 2018

Thursday 6 December 2018

Tuesday 26 March 2019

COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2018

## NOTICE OF MOTION

This Council recognises that the decision made by the Mayor of London to close Wimbledon Police Station is deeply damaging for the local community and is detrimental to the wellbeing of the residents of the London Borough of Merton. This rash, poorly thought out decision, is totally opposed by local residents who wish to see Wimbledon Police Station remain open. This Council therefore resolves to request that the Leader and Cabinet:

- a) Save Wimbledon Police Station from closure by buying the land from City Hall and seeking to lease it back to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).
- b) Make provision in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the acquisition of the Police Station and associated running costs.

**Cllr Oonagh Moulton**

**Cllr Daniel Holden**

**Cllr David Simpson**

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## COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2018

### NOTICE OF MOTION

This council notes that judgment is currently pending in the judicial review disputing the legality of the Mayor of London's consultation on closing over half of London's police stations.

In light of recent changes to policing in Merton and in particular the Mayor's confirmation of his plan to close Wimbledon police station, the Council calls upon the Cabinet to establish an officer resourced cross party working group to monitor and mitigate the impact of changes to local policing including: the planned closure of Wimbledon police station; the creation of a merged BCU; the loss of the borough police commander; and reductions in borough police numbers.

This group will be tasked with co-ordinating genuine engagement in the future of local policing, including a strong and innovative response to the re-run of the Mayor's consultation on police station closures, should the judicial review challenge be successful.

Cllr Paul Kohler

Cllr Anthony Fairclough

Cllr Simon McGrath

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## **Committee: Council**

**Date: 4 July 2018**

Wards: All

## **Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18**

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

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

Contact officer: Julia Regan, 0208 545 3864

### **Recommendations:**

- 
1. That Council receives the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.
- 

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

- 1.1. Council is invited to receive the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.

## **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission is required to produce an annual report outlining the work of the overview and scrutiny function over the course of the Municipal Year. This year the Commission has used the report as an opportunity to draw attention to some of the outcomes achieved from 2014-2018 as well as covering in detail the work covered by each Panel/Commission during the year 2017/2018.
- 2.2. The report (attached as appendix 1) therefore includes:
  - a foreword by the 2017/18 Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Commission
  - a brief explanation of the term 'overview and scrutiny'
  - scrutiny achievements 2014-2018
  - a report from each Panel and the Commission on activities during 2017/18
  - a description of how local residents and local voluntary and community organisations can get involved in scrutiny
- 2.3. The report was approved for submission to Council by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 21 March 2018.

## **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission would be in breach of the constitution if it did not produce an annual report and present it to Council.

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

- 4.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission approved the content of the Annual Report. Each Panel Chair was consulted on the section relating to their work.

#### **5 TIMETABLE**

- 5.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission received, commented on and approved the report at its meeting on 21 March 2018.

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

- 6.1. There are none specific to this report.

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

- 7.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission is constitutionally bound to produce an annual report for the overview and scrutiny function and to present the report to the full Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission would be in breach of the constitution if it did not do this.

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

- 8.1. 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. Examples of how this aim is achieved are included in the annual report under the community engagement section.

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

- 9.1. The Police and Justice Act 2006 requires every Council to have a scrutiny committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken by the Council and the other responsible authorities in the exercise of their crime and disorder functions.
- 9.2. In Merton this responsibility lies with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and its work on these issues is described in the Commission's section of the Annual Report.

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

- 10.1. There are none specific to this report.

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

- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-2018

#### **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1. None





# Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18

London Borough of Merton

# Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18

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## Foreword

In December 2017, the Select Committee for the Department of Communities and Local Government published its report into the effectiveness of scrutiny in local government. It makes interesting reading (and not just for the positive reference to pre-decision scrutiny undertaken by Merton's Children and Young People panel into the site proposal for a new secondary school on p.9). The Committee concluded that the *organisational culture of the council* is the main determinant of whether scrutiny is effective or not, and adds: "In extreme cases, ineffective scrutiny can contribute to severe service failures" - witness the excessive death rate at Mid Staffs, and child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

The DCLG report provides a benchmark against which to assess the effectiveness of scrutiny here in Merton, and in this annual report you can read about what we have been doing:

1. The Commission investigated difficulties with the recruitment and retention of teachers (at the request of headteachers), and visited the Merton Refuge to see for themselves the help and support given to victims of domestic abuse.
2. The Children and Young People panel contributed to the achievement of a very successful outcome to the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services.
3. The Healthier Communities and Older People panel kept up their scrutiny of our health partners (Epsom & St Helier NHS Trust, Merton CCG, and St George's and SW London Mental Health Trust) and contributed to improved outcomes for their patients eg. with traumatic brain injuries.
4. The Sustainable Communities panel established a task group to investigate air quality, and robustly scrutinised the quality of services provided by Veolia and Clarion.

We have experimented with different ways of conducting scrutiny this year, by bringing in expert witnesses, paying site visits and conducting "deep dive" enquiries to understand how individual services work in detail.

No doubt there is more we could do, for example to attract greater public involvement in scrutiny reviews where appropriate. We will be reviewing the DCLG report in more detail next year to see what we can learn from it. But to go back to its starting point, I think we can be confident that the *organisational culture of the council* is conducive to effective scrutiny here in Merton.

For that we have to thank our hard working scrutiny team, headed up by Julia Regan and ably supported by Stella Akintan and Annette Wiles. They manage to work harmoniously with members, officers and other stakeholders to achieve effective outcomes for our residents – which is what good scrutiny is all about.

**Councillor Peter Southgate**  
**Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Commission**

## What is overview and scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000. Merton operates a Leader and Cabinet model, where the Cabinet makes the executive decisions of the authority on behalf of local residents.

Overview and Scrutiny's main roles are:

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

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

### **Principles**

Overview and Scrutiny at Merton is:

- open to the public
- informed by methodically gathered evidence
- based on careful deliberation and discussion
- conducted in an appropriate manner

### **How Overview and Scrutiny works in Merton**

Merton Council has an Overview and Scrutiny Commission, which acts as a coordinating body supporting three Overview and Scrutiny Panels with individual areas of responsibility:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Sustainable Communities

Commission and Panel meetings take place throughout the year and members of the public are welcome to attend. Dates, agendas and minutes for these meetings can be found on the council website:

<https://democracy.merton.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

More information about Scrutiny at Merton can be found at

<https://www2.merton.gov.uk/council/decision-making/scrutiny.htm>

or by phoning the scrutiny team on 020 8545 3864 or emailing [scrutiny@merton.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@merton.gov.uk).

## Scrutiny achievements 2014-2018

Councillors involved in scrutiny have indicated that they have found this to be a rewarding and influential role, as highlighted from feedback from our last survey (2018) of scrutiny councillors, co-opted members and Cabinet members:

*“I believe the overview and scrutiny function gives me the opportunity to learn from others by way of practice, policy, communication and link working, also an opportunity to identify where changes need to be made and practice and habits need to be changed.”*

*“The Task Groups are very good and enable in depth discussion on potential policy direction.”*

*“Cabinet continues to be responsive to suggestions from scrutiny when reviewing the budget”*

Scrutiny has resulted in real changes in policies, service provision and council budgets over the last four years. Some of the highlights are set out below:

### **Improvements to local services**

Over the last four years scrutiny has made recommendations that have had a significant impact on services provided by the council, its partners and other external organisations:

#### Care leaver accommodation

The recommendation of the Sustainable Communities Panel that a *House of Multiple Occupation* be piloted as an alternative option for care leaver accommodation has now been realised. This resulted from the Panel taking a workshop approach to focus exclusively on the issue of housing and specifically care leaver accommodation working in partnership with members of the Children and Young People Panel.

#### Energy Supply Company updates

Council officers continue to pursue the scrutiny task group recommendation that Merton should establish an energy supply company (ESCO). Discussions are ongoing with a housing scheme provider and as part of these setting up an ESCO is still being explored. It has been established that the business case for an ESCO is dependent on having a housing development opportunity as well as the necessary level of demand for energy and heating. Proving the business case therefore cannot be achieved until the development is more advanced.

#### Type Two Diabetes

The task group review on tackling type two diabetes in the South Asian community led to culturally appropriate services being provided for this group. This includes education sessions and ensuring NHS health checks are provided at a younger age.

The task group review also raised the profile of this important issue. This has contributed to the Health and Wellbeing Board identifying tackling type two diabetes as a priority area.

#### Brain injury

The Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the services available for people who had experienced traumatic brain injury. It became apparent during the scrutiny process that Merton had lower provision than its neighbours, which led to a decision by the Merton Clinical Commissioning Group to provide additional services in the Borough.

#### Childhood immunisations

A cross cutting scrutiny review on improving the rates of childhood immunisations in the 0-5 age group has led to successful outcomes. The review was conducted because Sutton and Merton had the worst immunisations rates in London and key partners including NHS England, the local authorities and the clinical commissioning groups did not have a joint approach to tackling this issue but worked in silos. As a result of the recommendations arising from the review and the positive manner in which they were received a strong partnership approach with regular meetings and a joint action plan was in place and overall there has been an increase in immunisations rates amongst the 0-5 age group

#### **Holding external bodies to account**

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is pleased that it successfully managed to scrutinise two key external bodies during this municipal year: Clarion Housing and Veolia UK. Merton transferred its social housing stock to Clarion in 2010 which was subject to an agreement lasting five years. Now that this has concluded, there is no obligation on Clarion to continue to participate in Merton's scrutiny process. Therefore, the Panel is pleased that it secured the commitment to attend this year and in future years.

Merton's waste, recycling and street cleaning services are now provided through the South London Waste Partnership by Veolia UK. It was therefore important that when faced with performance issues it was willing to participate in the scrutiny process with its representative having appeared at two of the Panel's meetings. A Veolia manager also attended and answered questions at the Commission's call-in meeting on the size of the residual waste containers.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Commission**

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission is responsible for the scrutiny of cross cutting and strategic issues, crime and disorder and issues relating to the council's "corporate capacity". The Commission acts as a coordinating body in supporting the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels and has responsibility for developing and keeping scrutiny under review.

## **Scrutiny reviews**

### Recruitment and retention of teachers

The task group was set up in order to investigate the difficulties that schools in Merton were experiencing with the recruitment and retention of teachers and how Merton Council and its partners could assist with this. The task group heard from local headteachers, newly qualified teachers and council officers as well as examining information about teacher recruitment and retention nationally.

The task group noted that good school performance has a positive impact on both recruitment and retention and were therefore encouraged by evidence of sustained improvement in performance in Merton schools and the high proportion of schools that have been rated "good" or "outstanding" by Ofsted.

The task group found that the council already has appropriate systems and structures in place for teacher recruitment. It has made recommendations aimed at using these more effectively and promoting them more widely to headteachers. Similarly, there is a range of benefits already on offer to teachers, so the task group has made recommendations to re-invigorate their promotion as well as encouraging governing bodies to organise activities that would promote staff health and wellbeing.

The cost of local accommodation was found to be a key factor affecting both recruitment and retention. The task group has made a number of recommendations that are intended to improve teachers' experience of the private rented sector, including the proposed introduction of an interest free loan to assist teachers with payment of rent deposits.

### Shared and outsourced services

The Commission has continued to receive reports on progress made by Cabinet in responding to recommendations made by the scrutiny review of shared and outsourced services. The recommendations were intended to stimulate a more consistent and rigorous approach to selecting delivery models and challenging officers on the most appropriate model for each service.

The Commission has welcomed progress made on identifying different service models for a number of services and on the development of a draft toolkit and business case pro-forma. Members expressed disappointment that more had not been done to bring proposals for large or strategically important outsourced services

to scrutiny at an early stage when there was still time to have some influence on their development.

### **Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny**

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive attended to set out their priorities for 2017/18, pressures on services and on housing supply in London and the financial challenges facing the council. The Commission asked them questions on issues including emergency procedures and building safety, commercial activity undertaken and planned by the council and how service performance was being addressed with Clarion.

The Commission commented on the annual report from Merton Partnership, particularly in relationship to use of the government's apprenticeship levy, SEN funding and the night time economy. Members suggested that all priority areas in the action plan should have measurable targets and a full set of data. A presentation on the findings of the residents' survey 2017 showed a positive shift against many of the measures. A notable concern was street cleanliness. Members agreed that they wished to see the survey continue on a biennial basis.

The Commission was pleased to hear that significant progress had been made against wide-ranging objectives in the council's equality and community cohesion strategy action plan. It will continue to review the action plan on an annual basis.

The Commission has continued to receive updates on the customer contact programme and has been pleased with the increased level of use of online services. The Commission noted the delay in completion and the budget overspend. Members were assured that various Apps for reporting streetscene issues could still be used. Members were informed of the commercial discussions with the supplier and the options that were being considered for ongoing support and hosting for the technology.

The Commission was pleased to hear that the Registration Services had received positive feedback from the General Register Office. Members also welcomed the completion of works at Morden Park House that would enable the council to maximise income from its use for ceremonial and other functions.

### **Scrutiny of crime and disorder**

The Borough Commander attended twice during the year to present the latest figures on crime and answer questions about policing in the borough. The Commission expressed concern about the 4.1% increase in total notifiable crimes in March and noted that the context for this was one of crime reduction previously since 2011 and a low base compared to other boroughs.



Questions to the Borough Commander have focused on operational changes and how the new 4-borough Borough Command Unit would work. Members also asked questions about safeguarding, knife crime, Traveller encampments and the Eastern Electrics festival in Morden Park.

The Commission sent a response to the MOPAC Public Access and Engagement Strategy in order to express its support for the retention of a front office in Wimbledon, agreeing the need to debate the best way to resource policing in the borough but questioning the wisdom of such large cuts to police budgets at a time of increasing terrorism and civil unrest.

The Manager of Merton Refuge outlined the services and support provided by the Refuge. The Commission also received a report setting out progress that had been made on tackling violence against women and girls, including domestic violence. Members who subsequently visited the Refuge to speak to service users, their children and staff were impressed by the facilities and services provided.

Safer Merton and Merton Centre for Independent Living provided an update on the hate crime strategy and associated action plan. The Commission resolved to continue to support the partnership work on hate crime and requested a more detailed analysis of next year's figures.

#### **Call-in**

One call-in request was received by the Commission in 2017/18:

#### Residual waste container size

The Commission heard a call-in further to pre decision scrutiny on this issue by the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel, in January 2018. Cabinet's decision was that the standard size of wheeled bins for both residual waste and paper/card should be 180 litres, with 240 litre and 140 litre alternatives to be an option for larger and smaller households respectively.

The call-in signatories and invited witnesses raised considerations relating to consultation processes, resident views, the consideration of different options and the assisted collection scheme. Commission members expressed varying views about whether the proposals were sufficiently flexible and whether consultation specifically on size should have been undertaken. The Commission voted to uphold Cabinet's decision.

## **Finance and performance monitoring**

The financial monitoring task group has continued to monitor quarterly financial management reports. In particular, it has scrutinised the forecast overspend, capital programme and lack of progress on achieving savings in some service areas. It has scrutinised a number of areas in depth including asset management, the Wimbledon tennis championship, the council's approach to commercialisation, and the service and financial position of the council's CHAS company.

## **Scrutiny of the budget**

The draft business plan, medium term financial strategy and proposed budget savings proposals were examined in detail, alongside equality impact assessments for each of the savings. The Commission examined progress made with savings that had been agreed in previous years and commented on the size of the capital budget, given that it was underspent in the past.

The Commission made a recommendation to Cabinet in November 2017 in relation to the proposed use of reserves to balance the budget, the predicted shortfall in savings from previous years, the vacancy rate and use of agency staff, and the longstanding and persistent pressures in adult social care as well as the unfunded costs of supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children and those with no recourse to public funds.

A further recommendation was made to Cabinet in January 2018 noting the substantial budget gap predicted for 2020/21 and beyond, recommending that officers should be encouraged to be entrepreneurial and pursue innovative solutions (subject to an acceptable level of risk), and that Cabinet recognize the importance of effective and appropriately planned project management to ensure projects are achieved on time and maximize potential savings from those projects.

## Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Areas of responsibility:** scrutiny of issues relating to children and young people. This includes education, children's social care, child protection and youth services.

**Councillor Dennis Pearce, Panel Chair:** "It has been a pleasure this year to scrutinise a service that has received such a positive outcome from its Ofsted inspection and it is good to note that the cross party working of this Panel was complimented as part of Ofsted's report. It is also important to note that this year we have worked in partnership with the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel to bring attention to the issue of care leaver accommodation, reflecting that this is an issue that needs to be addressed across Departments. It is important to acknowledge this valuable way of working. We have also continued to grow in our role of scrutinising child and family health and wellbeing. This remains new to the remit of the Panel but one in which we are growing in confidence".

## Scrutiny reviews

### Prevent task group

The decision to form this task group was set against the background of the four terror attacks that happened between March and June 2017; the Panel wanted to reassure itself that Merton's schools are successfully implementing the duty and doing everything possible to prevent Merton's young people from becoming radicalised and doing so in a way that doesn't cause stigmatisation of individuals or communities. Recommendations include looking at the role of the wider Merton community in helping prevent radicalisation amongst Merton's young people and Merton's schools continuing to share their best practice to support each other in fulfilling the duty. The report will be presented to Cabinet in the new municipal year before the action plan comes to the Panel.

### Care leaver accommodation

Members of the Children and Young People Panel were pleased to support the work of their colleagues on the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel when it took an in-depth look at accommodation for care leavers. It is evident that there are issues that sit across Panels and it is beneficial for us to work collectively and in partnership with officers from several departments across the Council. The officer response to the detailed reference that resulted from the workshop was welcomed by the Panel and has already resulted in a *House of Multiple Occupation* being piloted to provide alternative accommodation for care leavers.

### Routes into employment for vulnerable cohorts

This task group reported in February 2017 with the action plan for the implementation of the recommendations being presented to the Panel this year. Members have asked officers to clarify why it is not possible to ensure through standard terms that contractors and service providers offer apprenticeships for Merton residents. A further review of progress against the recommendations is due within six months.

## Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny

### **Ofsted inspection**

The Panel dedicated a whole meeting to looking at the outcome of the Ofsted single framework inspection and comparing this to the performance of other London boroughs. This emphasised that Merton is in the top 10 of local authorities nationally for its provision of children's services. Highlights include that managers and social workers know their children well, Merton's systematic model and approach to safeguarding is regarded as robust by Ofsted, the approach to care proceedings is credited with being the best out of the boroughs using the South West London courts and the adoption service receiving a rare outstanding judgement.

With the help of Kathy Bundred, Children's Improvement Adviser for the Local Government Association, Merton's success was quantified and highlighted as one of a small number of authorities judged to be doing well in the provision of children's services. The session also focused on features of authorities with children's services judged good or higher providing the Panel with a framework for future scrutiny of the service.

### **Harris Wimbledon Secondary Academy**

Following its reference to Cabinet in July 2016 on the new secondary school, the Panel has continued to work with officers to review progress on the delivery of Harris Wimbledon and to understand the associated issues. This has been achieved through regular updates from the Cabinet Member for Education, information in the Department Update Report, member questions asked through matters arising and through a dedicated item. Members have focused on admission criteria, demand for the new school and how the needs of Merton Abbey Primary are being accommodated through the shared use of the site. Members resolved to ask Cabinet to seek formal written reassurance from the Elim Church that under its management Merton Hall lettings will enable the venue to remain for the use of all the community and will be fully compliant with equality legislation. It was reported to the Panel, at its meeting in January 2018, that Elim had confirmed in writing it will be offering the church site to the local community for groups and individuals to hire when it is available and that there would be no restriction on those groups accessing services, meetings and clubs etc. No bookings will be taken that conflict with the Constitution of Elim's charity.

### **Merton Safeguarding Children Board**

The Panel received the annual report of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB). Members used the session to understand how the board will sustain its focus on improvement, what support is provided to young people with a custodial sentence, what is being done to address knife crime and how the service ensures the child's voice is heard.

### **Corporate parenting**

The corporate parenting annual report was received by the Panel with the focus on improving placement stability for Merton's very complex young people highlighted along with the challenge of child sexual exploitation.

## **Health and wellbeing strategies for children and families**

Officers from Public Health and colleagues from the Clinical Commissioning Group provided the Panel with an update report on health and wellbeing strategies for children and families. This focused on activity to address and progress being made on childhood obesity as well as looking at Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Members sought to understand satisfaction with the CAMHS service. This is a new area of responsibility for the Panel and one in which it is growing in confidence. During this year, training has been provided for Panel members on those areas of the public health strategy that relate to children and young people.

## **Think Family**

The Panel benefited from a briefing on the *Think Family* initiative which recognises and promotes the importance of a whole-family approach, working across children's and adult's services.

## **Performance monitoring**

### **Performance monitoring data**

The Panel has continued to review progress against a basket of agreed key targets (Key Performance Indicators) with Councillor Mike Brunt continuing in the role of performance monitoring lead for the Panel. However, access to this data has been limited this year by the implementation of the new Mosaic information management system by the Children, Schools and Families Department. This situation has been carefully monitored by the performance monitoring lead and the Panel. Data started to become available again for the last Panel meeting of this municipal year.

### **Education, Health and Care Plans**

Having carefully monitored performance in provision of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), the Panel requested a deep dive session to improve its understanding of why the 20 week statutory target wasn't being met and what further work was in hand to improve performance. This established that whilst the target wasn't being met, the number of tribunals had notably decreased and that performance was on track to transfer all existing SEN statement to EHCPs by March 2018. The Panel also learned how the EHCP process was being streamlined to achieve the 20 week target including getting requests to the assessment panel quicker. At its final meeting of the year, it was noted that good progress had been made in transferring SEN statements to EHCPs (with only 20 outstanding). Also, between March 2017 and March 2018, there had been an increase in the number of plans being achieved in the 20 week timescale from 19% to 37%.

### **Schools annual report**

The Panel took its annual schools report, dedicating almost an entire meeting to look in depth at the performance of Merton's schools from September 2016 to August 2017. This covered achievement at each stage of education in addition to looking at attendance, exclusions and elective home education. It was highlighted that 93% of Merton's schools are now judged good or outstanding with 95% of Merton's pupils attending good or outstanding schools. Based on its key stage 4 results, Merton is

placed first in England, above both London and national averages whilst progress in maths and reading at Key Stage 2 places Merton 10<sup>th</sup> in the country. School attendance has improved (moving Merton from 10<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> nationally) and numbers of those not in education, employment or training are very low. Members noted the need to focus on the achievement of pupils in receipt of SEN support at all stages of education whilst officers were questioned on elective home education given this has increase by 174% over the last decade.

### **Financial monitoring**

Members used the two budget and business planning sessions this year to explore how the costs of Harris Wimbledon will be covered, look at how budgetary pressures are monitored, explore how efficiencies are being achieved by keeping staff sickness and the use of agency staff to the lowest possible level and discussed additional opportunities for the Children, Schools and Families Department to generate income.

The Panel resolved that it wishes to receive financial information on a more regular basis through the Department update report. This is to allow any significant financial items to be understood earlier (to be picked up in the next municipal year through the work programme). The Panel passed a reference on the budget and business plan: 'Recognising the excellent progress already made by the Children, Schools and Families Department in revenue generation, officers should explore additional opportunities for revenue generation in the same way as they are exploring opportunities for cost savings'.

### **Call-in**

No call-in requests were received by the Panel in 2017/18.

## Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

This Panel has responsibility for the scrutiny of issues relating to health, public health and adult social care. This includes promoting good health and healthy lifestyles, mental health issues, and reducing health inequalities for people of all ages.

Councillor Peter McCabe said *“The role of this Panel is crucial in bringing democratic accountability to the local health economy. Over the past year this panel played an important role in speaking up on behalf of local people and most importantly seen changes to local services as a result.”*

### Responding to local issues

#### **South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust - proposed change to diagnostic autism spectrum disorder service.**

The Chief Executive of South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust attended the Panel to address public concerns that they would no longer provide diagnostic Autism Spectrum Disorder Services for children. The Panel were informed that there had been a significant increase in the demand for this service therefore it was under review but no immediate changes would be made to the current provision.

#### **Personal Independent Payment process**

The Chief Executive of Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CiL) and Merton and Lambeth Citizens advice reported a number of re-occurring issues when supporting people through the Personal Independent Payments process (PIP) . This included

- Many medical centres are inaccessible for wheelchair users or those with limited mobility.
- There are no assessment Centres in Merton therefore people are required to travel out of the borough.
- Many people are struggling to complete the application forms especially vulnerable people and those with mental health issues.

The Partnership Support Manager from DWP accepted the Panel’s concerns and reported that service had been contracted out to the Independent Assessment Service, home visits are available for those who are not able to get assessment centres. After a robust discussion it was agreed that a meeting will be held with the chair and vice chair, independent assessment teams client champions, Merton CiL, Merton and Lambeth Citizens Advice and Adults First carers organisation to address these issues. The outcomes from the meeting which is due to be held in May will be reported back to the panel.

#### **Merton Clinical Commissioning Group – changes to some services**

Last year Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (MCCG) consulted with the Panel about proposed changes to some services. It was reported that they were facing significant financial challenges meant that they had to review current provision. Proposed changes included ending availability of gluten free products on prescription. The Panel expressed concern about plans to restrict the provision of IVF services and asked MCCG to conduct a full 90 day consultation. However having consulted with scrutiny committees across South West London MCCG decided not to go ahead with the proposal.

## **Financial Monitoring**

### **Budget and Business Plan 2017-18**

The Panel considered the budget for 2017-18. The Chief Executive of Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) addressed the Panel in regards to the Adult Social Care Budget. She expressed concern that not all the proposals had been subject to consultation. The Director for Community and Housing reported that many of the draft savings were still under review and a consultation would take place if significant service changes were proposed.

## **Scrutiny of key partners**

### **South West London and St Georges NHS Trust – update following CQC inspection**

The Acting Medical Director from South West London and St Georges NHS Trust attended the Panel to discuss progress with making improvements since the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection rated the Trust as Inadequate. The Panel were informed that significant progress had been made. The Panel asked a number of questions about specific services as well as areas of concerns expressed by their residents. The Panel were satisfied that the Trust were addressing the issues raised by the CQC inspection

### **Epsom and St Helier University NHS – 2020-2030 vision**

Epsom and St Helier University NHS Trust attended the Panel to discuss their vision for 2020-2030. The Trust highlighted that there are significant challenges with their current estate which is spread across two sites and requires significant rebuilding and regeneration. The Panel were keen to emphasise their support for maintaining all services on the St Helier site.

### **Services for people who have experienced traumatic brain injury**



The Panel considered the services Merton provide for people who need support and rehabilitation after an incidence of brain injury. The Panel met with clinicians at St George's Neuro-rehabilitation Centre, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, Merton Safeguarding Adults Manager and the Assistant Director for Adult Social Care. The Panel were informed that while there were areas of good practice, provision for Merton residents was lower than neighbouring boroughs, especially within the psychological services. As a result of the scrutiny by this Panel, MCCG agreed to increase service provision in the borough.

## Scrutiny reviews

### **Tackling Loneliness in Merton**

The Panel commissioned a review to look at how to tackle loneliness amongst older people. The topic was suggested by the school council at Abbotsbury Primary School.

The task group met with the British Red Cross, Libraries Manager, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, Street Pastors, Voluntary Sector Organisations and Adult Social Care colleagues. The task group found that there are services available but it can be difficult to identify people who are lonely. Recommendations sought to try and raise the profile of this issue across existing strategies and to develop an agreed list of organisations that people who are facing loneliness can be referred to. The Panel were pleased that all the recommendations were implemented by March 2018. They have also asked for a further update in six months time to consider the impact of the changes that have been made.

### **Tackling Type Two Diabetes in the South Asian Community**

The Panel conducted a task group review looking at how to reduce the high levels of type two diabetes in the South Asian community, of which there is a higher prevalence than in other ethnic groups. Since this task group has been completed, the Health and Wellbeing Board has identified type two diabetes as a priority. The Panel received an update on the progress with implementing the recommendations and were pleased to find that there has been significant progress and a range of projects will be taking place in the community as part of the wider strategic framework for diabetes.

### **Scrutiny Review of Homeshare Schemes**

The Panel commissioned a task group to consider if a Homeshare scheme would be beneficial in the borough. Homeshare brokers a relationship between older people who have a spare room with a younger person who will give around ten hours of support with tasks around the home. The task group found that although Homeshare schemes exist in Merton, they do not have any links or referral arrangements with the council.

A Homeshare scheme could help to address some of the council's priorities such as tackling loneliness amongst older people and access to housing for young people. The task group found if there are stringent safeguarding measures in place, a scheme of this nature could be beneficial for Merton residents. Adult Social Care was asked to lead on taking this work forward.



## Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Areas of responsibility:** scrutiny of issues relating to housing, environmental sustainability, culture, enterprise and skills, libraries and transport.

**Councillor Abby Jones, Panel Chair:** “It has been another extremely busy year for the Sustainable Communities Panel to such an extent that it has necessitated our adding two further meetings to our schedule. However, I am pleased that as I come to the end of my time as chair, this Panel has achieved some notable successes. It was brave of the Panel to devote so much time to looking at the issue of care leaver accommodation but this has paid off; a pilot scheme using a *House of Multiple Occupation* to offer care leavers a different type of accommodation has been achieved. Additionally, at a time when more and more council services are being contracted out to external bodies, we have continued to effectively scrutinise both Clarion Housing and Veolia UK. In this year, we have also successfully piloted some new ways of working; using Twitter for resident engagement and working cross party to plan some items and more effectively use the time available to us. Both approaches have proved profitable and the Panel should consider how it uses these in the future”.

**Graeme Kane, Assistant Director, Public Spaces, Contracts and Commissioning:** “Participation in the scrutiny process has been valuable for the Public Space team this year. It has afforded us the opportunity to engage with residents on the performance of the new waste and street cleaning contract, to listen to concerns and to allow us to explain the action being taken and demonstrate how this is beginning to improve the service. It has also given us the opportunity to engage with Councillors in the run up to introducing the new waste and recycling service, to consult on key aspects such as the size of wheeled bins, demonstrate the thorough preparation that is underway to rollout the new service and hear Councillors’ own ideas on aspects of the rollout such as how this can best be communicated to residents”.

## Scrutiny reviews

### **Air Quality Task Group**

This task group focused on air quality issues around building sites and fed into the review of the Council’s air quality action plan. Recommendations include that the Sustainable Communities Panel conduct pre-decision scrutiny of the scope of any review of parking levies which are a key way to influence decisions about vehicle purchases. The action plan to achieve the task group’s recommendations will be reviewed every six months.

### **Crossover Task Group**

This task group was focused on a topic of great interest to Merton residents as it sought to balance the risks to flooding and street scene caused by crossovers with

the desire of residents to park close to their properties at a time when the number of Controlled Parking Zones is growing. A recommendation is to address parking stress in controlled areas by limiting the number of annual permits issued per bay. Once this is reached no further crossovers should be allowed. Cabinet has requested to see the action plan before it comes to the Panel meaning this is now scheduled for the June 2018 meeting.

### **Commercialisation Task Group**

This task group initially reported in November 2016 with the Panel now taking updates on progress against the recommendations. Panel members noted the review of the Council's property portfolio that has been commissioned, progress on the redevelopment of Morden town center and the advice received that the development of an energy supply company can only be realised alongside a major housing development.

### **Housing Supply Task Group**

This task group reported in September 2015. However, given its importance, the Panel has continued to receive regular updates on progress against the recommendations taking two this year at a six month interval. Panel members noted the consultation being conducted on designation change to allow for small scale developments and the progress being made with the Local Authority Property Company. The Panel has requested to receive a summative and final report on this task group during the next municipal year.

## **Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny**

The Panel has undertaken pre-decision scrutiny on a range of strategic issues and Council priorities. These include:

### **Care leaver accommodation**

At its meeting in September 2017, the Panel took the decision to use a workshop approach to focus exclusively on the issue of housing and specifically care leaver accommodation. Working in partnership with members of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, an introductory presentation from officers on housing and homelessness was provided before participants were split into two workshops to focus on:

- the issues care leavers face with accommodation (supported by Grenfell Housing and Training that works with care leavers and supports them in their accommodation needs); and
- different approaches to care leaver accommodation (supported by Paul Chadwick, the former Director of Children's Services at Croydon).

This resulted in a detailed reference to Cabinet focusing on issues such as increasing the range of independent accommodation options, piloting the use of *Houses of Multiple Occupation*, the 'lead tenant model', greater use of the *Shared Lives* model and exploration of *Housing First*. The Panel was pleased to learn recently that a *House of Multiple Occupation* is now being piloted for care leaver accommodation.

### **New waste and recycling service**

Prior to the rollout of the new waste and recycling service in October 2018, the Panel has been involved in scrutinising key aspects of the service (including the decision on the size of wheeled bin to be used) and the planning being undertaken to realise the change in service delivery. Given the degree of change involved, the Panel has resolved to receive a further update on the new service prior to rollout in the next municipal year.

### **Morden redevelopment**

The Panel received a briefing on the Morden redevelopment from officers and Transport for London. This resulted in a reference to Cabinet recommending that Merton Council should maintain sufficient control of the project. Panel members believe that merely retaining planning authority status, without an active share in the Joint Venture itself, would not be sufficient.

During this year, the Panel has also looked at Public Space Protection Orders, facilities for physical activity in playgrounds, plans to conduct a consultation on the local plan and safety issues arising from the Grenfell Tower fire and their implications for all high rise buildings in Merton.

## **Performance monitoring**

### **Performance monitoring data**

The Panel has continued to review progress against agreed key targets (Key Performance Indicators) for both the Environment and Regeneration and the Community and Housing Departments. This forms a key part of every meeting.

Additionally, this year the Panel has appointed a lead member for performance monitoring for the first time (Councillor Holden). Regular pre-meets have been held between the performance lead and officers to allow further time to be given to the scrutiny of the data and for key points to then be highlighted at the subsequent Panel meeting. This has worked well, allowing for greater discussion and understanding of the data that is presented.

### **Waste, recycling and street cleaning**

Monitoring the performance of the waste, recycling and street cleaning contract has formed a key part of the Panel's work this year. At its meeting in November 2017, considerable time was devoted to looking at performance under the contract six months after it commenced. Following a number of submissions and representations from Merton residents, the Panel resolved a reference to Cabinet which sought its support for the Panel to sustain its scrutiny of performance under the contract. This was gained and the Panel has received detailed updates on performance at each of its meetings for the remainder of the municipal year. There has been further input from residents and the direct involvement of Veolia representatives allowing the Panel to highlight key concerns and look at how these are being addressed.

### **Clarion Housing**

The Panel was pleased that Merton's largest social housing provider returned this year to answer questions on repairs and estates regeneration. As happened previously, the opportunity was taken to seek questions from all Councillors and not just Panel members. These were sent to Clarion in advance with its responses being published in the agenda pack. This allowed the Panel to explore a number of issues in much greater depth than might otherwise have been the case. It also showed, as reflected in member case loads, that there has been a welcome improvement in Clarion's performance on repairs.

### **Adult learning**

The Panel scrutinised the performance of the adult learning service which has been inspected by Ofsted receiving a requires improvement judgement despite being on an upward trajectory. The Panel resolved to look more at the *Prevent* duty to understand the requirements given this had been highlighted in Ofsted's recommendations.

### **Libraries and heritage annual report**

Another strong annual report from libraries and heritage gave Panel members the opportunity to thank and congratulate officers and to specifically highlight the opening of the new Colliers Wood Library. It was also noted that the required savings are being achieved whilst all library sites and existing opening hours have been retained.

### **Automatic number plate recognition**

Introduced to the borough in 2016, the Panel heard how there has been a 200% increase in the number moving motoring contraventions caught as a result of ANPR. The rate of appeals lodged since has also halved. This is because for each contravention captured an evidence package is provided which can be shared with the driver making it much more difficult to appeal. Members were also interested to hear how it is intended to trial the use of ANPR outside schools to see if this can enforce parking restrictions.

### **Planning enforcement**

Members received a detailed update on the performance of planning enforcement learning that the backlog of cases has again built-up. Officers explained their plans to change working practices in order to address this backlog including beginning work with Capita to provide additional resource. Longer term plans include utilising technology to improve productivity. Panel members resolved to receive trend data on the number of planning enforcement cases that are more than six months old.

### **Town centre regeneration**

The Panel was pleased to receive its annual presentation highlighting all that has been achieved in delivering work to date on the programme of town centre regeneration. The Panel congratulated officers on the success of these schemes, particularly Mitcham and Colliers Wood.

During this year, the Panel has also received updates on the Christmas Parking Scheme (to be reviewed during the next municipal year) the Eastern Electric event and the Local Authority Property Company.

## **Financial monitoring**

The Panel used the two sessions on budget and business planning to focus on the reasons why planned savings haven't been realised, how the resulting funding gap is going to be addressed, new savings proposals, opportunities to increase commercial income from the regulatory service and to question officers on the content of the service plans.

## **Scrutiny of external bodies**

The Panel is pleased that during this year it successfully managed to scrutinise two key external bodies: Clarion Housing and Veolia UK. Merton transferred its social housing stock to Clarion in 2010 which was subject to an agreement lasting five years. Now that this has concluded, there is no obligation on Clarion to continue to participate in Merton's scrutiny process. Therefore, it was a notable success that a commitment to attend this year and in future years was gained.

Merton's waste, recycling and street cleaning services are now provided through the South London Waste Partnership by Veolia UK. It was therefore important that when faced with performance issues it was willing to participate in the scrutiny process with its representatives having appeared at two Panel meetings.

## **Different approaches**

During the municipal year the Panel has piloted a number of different approaches to support it in achieving effective scrutiny. Keen to reach out and engage Merton residents in the scrutiny process, Panel members have taken to social media (Twitter) to promote upcoming items at scrutiny and to encourage resident involvement. This was specifically used at the November 2017 meeting for the item on Veolia's performance resulting in numerous submissions from residents which were used to inform Panel members and support their questioning of both officers from the Public Space team and the Veolia representative. Additionally, it resulted in a higher level of residents attending the meeting and representations to the Panel on Veolia's performance.

Following the visit to the Communities and Local Government Committee in December 2016, this year the Panel piloted cross party planning of session to maximise impact. This was specifically used at the November 2017 meeting for the item on Clarion Housing and enabled the Panel to use the available time more effectively. This resulted in a more systematic approach, allowing a broader breadth of questioning to be achieved.



## Visits

### Veolia ride-along

Conducted by Councillor Sargeant in June 2017, this was undertaken to identify issues to be addressed in preparing for the new service rollout in Merton in autumn 2018. The ride-along took place in Kingston and involved the Councillor talking to two waste teams and riding along with a third. The success of real time reporting and monitoring of the Veolia on-board computer (the Echo system) was noted as was the adaptation in the service provided for the 5% of residents requiring assistance. As a result of the visit, Councillor Sargeant highlighted that planning for the new service rollout as key. The Panel scrutinised plans for the new service rollout at its meeting in February 2018 with the intention that this will return to the Panel early in the new municipal year.

### Merton College Adult Learning

The Panel had been involved in scrutinising the then plans to change both the venue and commissioning model for Merton's adult learning. In January 2018, Councillors Anderson, Holden, Jones and Makin visited Merton College to see the service for themselves following these changes. Members noted the quality of the facilities available, the breadth of provision and the level of participation.

## Call-in

The Panel has heard two call-ins during this municipal year:

Call-in	Outcome
Proposal for improving parking facilities in selected borough parks	The Panel resolved to accept all proposals within the report and asked the Cabinet Member to conduct a review in 12 months to ensure the changes are delivering the intended outcomes. This recommendation has been accepted by the Cabinet Member (due October 2018 onwards).
Decision to award the construction works for Merton Hall	The Panel resolved not to refer the decision back to Cabinet and therefore the decision was upheld and took immediate effect.

## Get involved

The involvement of local residents, community organisations and partners is an important part of the scrutiny process and councillors are committed to responding to the views and concerns of residents.

Getting involved in scrutiny is one of the best ways to influence decision making at the council, as councillors will hear your experiences first hand. There are a number of ways you can get involved in the work of scrutiny at the council:

### Suggesting an issue for scrutiny

The council's website contains an online form which can be used to make suggestions on issues and topics for future scrutiny:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/scrutiny/scrutiny-getinvolved.htm>

Suggestions may also be made in writing, by email or by phone to the Scrutiny Team – contact details overleaf.

All suggestions received will be discussed by the relevant scrutiny Panel and the person who made the suggestion will be contacted to let them know what has happened to it.

### Attending meetings

All scrutiny meetings are open to the public except where confidential information has to be discussed. A list of meeting dates and agenda items can be found on the council's website. <http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/committee.htm>

If you would like to attend a meeting simply come along to the meeting venue or, if you want more information, contact the Scrutiny Team – details overleaf.

### Providing information and views

Members of the public can send in written views or speak on issues that are under discussion at the Overview and Scrutiny Commission or one of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Information on current task group reviews and any deadlines for submission on information can be found on <http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny> or by contacting the Scrutiny Team – details overleaf.

## Contact the Scrutiny Team

The Scrutiny Team provides independent and professional support and advice to the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the three standing Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

You can contact the Scrutiny Team using one of the following methods: -

In writing:

Scrutiny Team  
Corporate Services  
Merton Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden  
Surrey SM4 5DX

By emailing:

[scrutiny@merton.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@merton.gov.uk)

By phoning:

Julia Regan – Head of Democracy Services  
020 8545 3864

Stella Akintan –Scrutiny Officer  
020 8545 3390

Annette Wiles – Scrutiny Officer  
020 8545 4035

For further information about overview and scrutiny at Merton please access our web pages using the following address <http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny>

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## **Committee: Council**

**Date: 4 July 2018**

Wards: All

## **Subject: The Use of Special Urgency for a Key Decision – Approval of property purchase**

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

**Lead member:** Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the Council

**Contact officer:** Louise Fleming, Senior Democratic Services Officer (020 8545 3616)

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### **Recommendations:**

A. That Council note the taking of an urgent key decision on 14 February 2018.

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

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

### **2 DETAILS**

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

Paragraph (c) of Section 17 requires that “Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council together with the reason for urgency”.

2.2. In accordance with paragraph 17(b) of the constitution the above titled key decision was brought to the attention of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Commission to seek his authority to take the decision under the Special Urgency Procedure, under Paragraph 15 of Part 4B of the Council's Constitution; and the Exempt Urgency Procedure at Paragraph 18 of Part 4B of the Council's Constitution. The use of the former procedure also exempted the decision from call-in.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

5.1. None for the purpose of this report

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

6.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

7.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

8.1. None for the purpose of this report.

**9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

10.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

Appendix A - Notice of Decision

**12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. None.

**CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Caroline Holland - Director



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

**APPROVAL OF LEASE PURCHASE AT AUCTION**

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

Also when a key decision contains exempt information and would be considered in private session and the 28 days notice period prior to the date that the decision is required to be taken has not been given, then the decision can still be taken under delegated authority if the provisions contained within Rule 18 (Exempt Urgency Procedure) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules Part 4B of the Constitution can be applied.

Councillor Southgate in his capacity as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, has approved the use of Section 15 - Special Urgency, and Section 18 - Exempt Urgency procedures for this decision, and acknowledged that the use of the former procedure exempts the decision from call-in.

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

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## Committee: Council

**Date: 4 July 2018**

## Subject: Changes to Membership of Committees and related matters

Lead officer: Ged Curran, Chief Executive

Contact officer: Louise Fleming, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Democratic Services 020 8545 3616 - [democratic.services@merton.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@merton.gov.uk)

### Recommendations:

1. That the Council notes the changes to the membership of Committees that were approved under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Council.

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report asks Council to note the changes made to committee membership under delegated authority since the publication of the agenda for the last ordinary Council meeting on 7 February 2018.

## 2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The following membership changes have been made by the Chief Executive under his delegated authority in accordance with section 1.4 of part 3F of the Constitution:

Committee	Member resigning	Replaced by	Date
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Agatha Akyigyina	Stan Anderson	31 January 2018
Appointments Committee	Linda Taylor	Adam Bush	13 February 2018
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	Daniel Holden (Substitute)	Suzanne Grocott (Substitute)	13 February 2018
Appointments Committee	Adam Bush	Michael Bull	14 February 2018
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	Agatha Akyigyina (Substitute)	Mary Curtin (Substitute)	20 February 2018
Standards and General Purposes Committee	Hamish Badenoch (Substitute)	Oonagh Moulton (Substitute)	2 March 2018
Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations	Stan Anderson	Jerome Neil	7 March 2018
Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations	Charlie Chirico (Substitute)	Adam Bush (Substitute)	12 March 2018

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Stan Anderson	Agatha Akyigyina	14 March 2018
Standards and General Purposes Committee	Michael Bull (substitute)	Najeeb Latif (substitute)	14 March 2018
Standards and General Purposes Committee	Najeeb Latif (substitute)	Michael Bull (substitute)	19 March 2018

1.2 The appointments to Committees and other bodies were agreed at Council on 17 May 2017.

### **3 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

3.1 None for the purposes of this report.

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

4.1. None for the purposes of this report.

### **5 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

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

5.2. The Housing and Local Government Act 1989 contains provisions relating to the political balance on committees, the duty to allocate seats to political groups and the duty to give effect to allocations.

5.3. The Council has a statutory duty to review the representations of different political groups on the Council in order to ensure that a political balance is secured on council committees so as to reflect the overall political composition of the council.

5.4. The requirement to allocate seats must be made in accordance with the following statutory principles:

a) All of the seats are not to be allocated to the same political group.

b) The majority of the seats must be allocated to the political group with a majority on the Council.

c) Subject to the two principles listed above, the number of seats on the total of all the ordinary committees of the Council allocated to each political group must bear the same proportion to that on full Council.

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

6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

### **7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. None for the purposes of this report.

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

8.1. N/A

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

9.1 None.

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

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## Committee: Council

Date: 4 July 2018

## Subject: Petitions

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

Lead member: Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis.

Contact officer: Democratic Services, [democratic.services@merton.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@merton.gov.uk)

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### Recommendation:

1. That Council receive petitions (if any) in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution.
  2. That Council notes the responses provided to the petitions submitted at the meeting held on 7 February 2018.
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## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

## 2 DETAILS

- 2.1. At the meeting held on 7 February 2018, the petition listed below was submitted and the response is set out below. Any petitions received by Council are referred to respective departments with responsible officers asked to advise the presenting member in each case of the way in which the petition is to be progressed.
- 2.2. A petition was submitted by Councillor Oonagh Moulton on street cleaning service.

### Officer Response

- 2.3 As a Council we fully appreciate the importance of maintaining clean streets and pavements for the benefit of residents' personal well-being as well as supporting the economic prosperity of the area. We note that a large proportion of the petition's signatories were from outside the borough and we recognise that our street cleaning service is vitally important for visitors and businesses in the borough as well as for residents. It is of great concern that the signatories of the petition feel that the streets of Merton are below their expectations in terms of cleanliness.

There are parts of the borough where cleanliness standards are in line with best practice as defined by the Department of Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) and expected by the London Borough of Merton but there are also areas where cleanliness is not at the required level. We intend to reach a consistent level across the whole borough which reflects our ambitions and commitment to have a clean borough.

Our new contractor, Veolia, started to deliver the street cleaning service in April last year. The contract is not yet performing as we would expect and we are working hard to ensure that it does as quickly as possible. The Council's Public Space Team are using a variety of methods to achieve this ranging from joint

inspections, contractual meetings at the highest levels within Veolia and withholding payments to them. The contract does require Veolia to maintain all streets to a required standard of cleanliness. To achieve this, they have a street cleaning schedule but it is clear that this is not always being adhered to, and improvements are being made to address this.

There are over 570 litter bins across Merton. They should all be emptied at a frequency that ensures they do not overflow. The Public Space team is working with Veolia to identify bins which are not being emptied frequently enough and are carrying out inspections to identify issues and raise performance.

As well as addressing the performance of our contractor, we are also raising awareness about individuals' responsibilities to dispose of their waste and litter in a responsible manner. The level of littering and fly-tipping in certain parts of the borough stretches our resources and costs all tax payers unnecessarily. We are using a combination of education and enforcement to address this in the hope of preventing the underlying causes of some of the litter on our streets. This year alone, the authority has issued 4909 fixed penalty notices for littering and fly-tipping.

Furthermore, the introduction of wheeled bins later this year will improve the cleanliness of the street scene. The bins will contain the waste much better than the current system and will prevent animals from spreading waste across the streets. This will greatly help us to maintain cleanliness standards as well as encourage greater recycling.

We are grateful to those residents who report issues to us, which they can do through London Borough of Merton's website ([www.merton.gov.uk/street-cleaning](http://www.merton.gov.uk/street-cleaning)) or through our contact centre (020 8274 4901). The Council's Public Space Team and Veolia respond to these reports and will ensure that the road is inspected by one of our teams to identify the failures and action the necessary cleaning to improve the situation.

We continue to be committed to maintaining a clean and green borough, and one of which our residents can be proud.

- 2.6 Members are invited to present petitions at this meeting, and a response will be provided to the next ordinary Council meeting in September 2018.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

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

- 4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

- 5.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

- 6.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

- 7.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

8.1. None for the purpose of this report.

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

## **11 APPENDICES**

11.1. None

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. None.

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