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Merton Council

Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 11 September 2019

Time: 7.15 pm

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

AGENDA

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Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

Councillors:

Peter Southgate (Chair)
Peter McCabe (Vice-Chair)
John Dehaney
Sally Kenny
Paul Kohler
Owen Pritchard
Nick McLean
Edward Gretton
Joan Henry
Natasha Irons

Substitute Members:

David Williams MBE JP
Thomas Barlow
Edward Foley
Ben Butler
David Chung
Simon McGrath

Co-opted Representatives

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

Note on declarations of interest

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

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

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

Scrutiny's work falls into four broad areas:

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

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

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Agenda Item 3

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

4 JULY 2019

(7.15 pm - 9.45 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Southgate (in the Chair),
Councillor Sally Kenny, Councillor Paul Kohler,
Councillor Owen Pritchard, Councillor Nick McLean,
Councillor Edward Gretton, Councillor Natasha Irons,
Helen Forbes, Councillor Ben Butler and Councillor David Chung

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the Council

Ged Curran (Chief Executive), John Dimmer (Head of Policy,
Strategy and Partnerships) and Julia Regan (Head of
Democracy Services)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Peter McCabe (substituted by Councillor Ben Butler), Councillor John Dehaney (substituted by Councillor David Chung), Councillor Joan Henry and co-opted members Emma Lemon and Colin Powell.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

4 QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE - PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2019/20 (Agenda Item 4)

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis, said that councils across the country are experiencing financial difficulties and that targets set for new and affordable housing were also key challenges for the council. He drew the Commission's attention to recent service improvements that had been made for the benefit of residents, including a new adult social care centre, a new secondary school opening in September 2020; as well as positive external feedback on libraries, schools and childrens' services. Recycling rates have increased and the council is holding providers to account in relation to residents concerns about refuse collection and street cleaning. Practical plans are in place for health and social care services to work together at a local level and the council has a good working relationship with the Clinical Commissioning Group. The council is trying to respond to residents' concerns

about air quality whilst understanding the needs of motorists - the imperative is to take steps to improve air quality.

In relation to housing, the Leader said that regeneration and new building in the borough will help to deliver 6000 new units over 10 years, but that this is still below the Mayor of London's ambitious target. The council is assisting residents in private rented accommodation through the prosecution of bad landlords and the creation of a landlord licensing scheme. EU residents are receiving assistance to apply for settled status and the council has offered to house 50 unaccompanied asylum seeking children over the next ten years.

The Chief Executive, Ged Curran, re-iterated the scale of the financial challenge facing the council and said that the most likely outcome of the delay in the government's spending review and the fair funding review would be a one year spending settlement which would make longer term financial planning difficult. Appropriate strategic decisions would be needed to find the most effective and efficient way of meeting need and providing services. This would include reducing costs, increasing income, reducing demand through client self-service and encouraging and developing local communities to work together to help themselves.

The Leader and Chief Executive provided additional information in response to questions:

- Each council department has income targets and many contracts require the contractor to supplement revenue through raising income. The income target in the council's budget is one that officers are confident they can meet. A balance must be struck between resident need and income generation (events in parks and night time economy given as examples). The council is also exploring opportunities to maximise use of its capital resources.
- Research in 2007/8 on the best way to encourage economic development in Mitcham found that the intensification of housing in the town centre followed by better transport links were key to this. Until there is a higher level of housing occupancy (which local residents have not supported) businesses will not be attracted to the area – Morden has similar issues.
- It is anticipated that by the end of this year the council will be able to start the procurement of a major developer for the regeneration of Morden town centre. The project has received cross party consensus and support from the Mayor of London and from Transport for London.
- Cross party motions to Council have been helpful and other opportunities for the political groups to work together on issues of interest to residents will be considered.
- The council is working hard to protect the most vulnerable residents, including through the investment of an additional £9million in adult social care and the exemption of care leavers from council tax. Financial pressures mean that a level of unmet need remains at present.
- Communication with residents is also subject to resource constraints but there is scope to improve the use of social media without increasing resources. Written communication through My Merton remains an important channel of

communication, particularly for residents who don't use digital communications, and the Residents Survey showed that it is widely read.

- Morden town centre regeneration will provide an opportunity to deliver social housing, working with housing associations and other partners.

In response to a question about the council organisational charts on the intranet, Ged Curran undertook to ensure that these were updated.

ACTION: Chief Executive

Members thanked the Leader and Chief Executive for their input and said that they may ask the Deputy Leader for an update when he attends for the budget scrutiny items in November and January. ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

5 MERTON PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships, John Dimmer, introduced the report. He said that partnership working is very important to Merton, has been successful and has won a number of awards. The Merton Partnership is the framework and work is delivered through four thematic networks as set out in the report. Its work is scrutinised through the annual report and the performance framework.

The Commission was invited to comment on the draft annual report so that its views could be taken into account in the final version. Members commented on the absence of information and targets on housing – John Dimmer said he would raise this with the Sustainable Communities network. ACTION: Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships

In response to a question about why there was not more information on council services, John Dimmer explained that this detail is contained in council strategies and that the Merton Partnership report reflects the discussions and priorities of the partnership rather than solely the council.

John Dimmer provided additional information in response to questions:

- The results of the children's survey will be used as evidence in drawing up the renewed Children and Young People's Plan this year. The survey shows that young people care about their local area and that their level of volunteering is twice that of adults. John Dimmer undertook to find out when the survey results will be published. ACTION: Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships
- The work on social capital shows that this varies by ward and is high in some of the more economically deprived wards. Social capital will be a key theme for the renewed Sustainable Communities Plan and the ward data will be shared with councillors in due course. ACTION: Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships

The Chair thanked John Dimmer for the report and noted that the Commission would be scrutinising the draft Sustainable Communities Plan 2019-25 at its meeting on 13 November.

6 ANALYSIS OF THE ANNUAL MEMBER SCRUTINY SURVEY 2019 (Agenda Item 6)

The Chair, Councillor Peter Southgate, introduced the report and recommended that the Commission use the forthcoming review by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, coupled with new statutory guidance, as an opportunity to address the findings and identify ways to further improve scrutiny in Merton.

Members of the Commission discussed the level of resourcing for overview and scrutiny, how chairs are appointed and how members could use scrutiny differently, perhaps through changing the balance of resourcing between Panels and task groups.

RESOLVED: that the Commission agree the action points set out in the report and will discuss further at its meeting on 11 September 2019 as part of the discussion of the Centre for Public Scrutiny's review findings.

7 ROAD SAFETY AROUND SCHOOLS - REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY TASK GROUP (Agenda Item 7)

The task group chair, Helen Forbes, introduced the report, outlined the work of the task group and asked the Commission to approve and endorse the report for submission to Cabinet.

Members discussed the report and asked whether the task group had looked at cycling infrastructure. Helen Forbes said that had not been a part of its remit and was a separate issue to be considered elsewhere.

Members agreed that it would be helpful to send the parent information sheet (recommendation 6) to private schools so that they could use it as a resource too.

RESOLVED:

- 1) to amend recommendation 6 so that the information sheet is sent to all schools in the borough, including private schools
- 2) to endorse and forward the report to Cabinet for approval and implementation of the recommendations. This will be presented to Cabinet by Helen Forbes on 15 July 2019

8 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20 (Agenda Item 8)

The Commission considered the report and RESOLVED:

- 1) To agree the proposed work programme as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, with the addition of the Sustainable Communities Plan at the meeting on 13 November 2019 and the addition of a report on modern day slavery on 18 March 2020 (to focus on how council officers involved in procurement are made aware of and act in relation to this issue)

- 2) To re-establish the financial monitoring task group for the municipal year 2019/20 and to appoint Councillors Nigel Benbow, Stephen Crowe, Ed Gretton, Paul Kohler, Owen Pritchard and Peter Southgate to the task group.
- 3) To establish a task group review of commercialisation, revenue generation and income maximisation, with terms of reference as set out in paragraph 4.8 of the report. To appoint Councillors Paul Kohler, Owen Pritchard and Peter Southgate to the task group (Councillor Sally Kenny agreed to be a reserve member if other members did not come forward).
- 4) That the Head of Democracy Services will email Commission members the details of Centre for Public Scrutiny and London Scrutiny Network training and other events; and will share the slides from an LGA course on local government finance that Councillor Paul Kohler attended recently.

ACTION: Head of Democracy Services

9 DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS FOR THE BOROUGH COMMANDER (Agenda Item 9)

The Commission discussed its approach to asking questions of the BCU Borough Commander and RESOLVED:

- 1) To send written questions to her in advance of the meetings so that responses could be published as part of the agenda.
- 2) To agree two or three areas for detailed questioning at the meeting, focussing on the impact of the four borough merger on policing levels; an update on police estate matters following the internal review of the location of the parade ground; an update on MOPAC decision making on the location of the Merton front office police station.
- 3) To have a pre-meeting on the day of the Commission's meeting to discuss the approach to be taken to questioning.

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Agenda Item 4

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

14 AUGUST 2019

(7.15 pm - 9.50 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Southgate (in the Chair), Peter McCabe, John Dehaney, Sally Kenny, Paul Kohler, Owen Pritchard, Nick McLean, Edward Gretton, Natasha Irons and David Chung

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Tobin Byers (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment), Martin Whelton (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport), Anthony Fairclough (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group), Daniel Holden, Nigel Benbow and David Dean

Chris Lee (Director of Environment and Regeneration), Cathryn James (Interim Assistant Director, Public Protection), Ben Stephens (Head of Parking Services), Jason Andrews (Environmental Health Pollution Manager), Mike Robinson (Consultant in Public Health) and Julia Regan (Head of Democracy Services)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Joan Henry (substituted by Councillor David Chung) and from the three co-opted members - Helen Forbes, Emma Lemon and Colin Powell.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3 CALL-IN OF "PUBLIC HEALTH, AIR QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT - A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PARKING CHARGES" (Agenda Item 3)

The Chair reminded all present that the purpose of the call-in was to determine whether Cabinet's decision on 15 July was flawed in relation to the council's principles of decision making and, if so, to demonstrate where it fell short. The Chair also said that as this decision had been the subject of extensive pre-decision scrutiny by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the Commission should focus its attention on new information. He explained that the Commission would take each of the two call-in requests in turn, starting with the one that had been received first.

Liberal Democrat Call-In Request

The Chair invited Councillor Anthony Fairclough to speak as a signatory to the call-in request. Councillor Fairclough said that he believed that Cabinet's decision had been flawed in relation to two of the principles of decision making - respect for human rights and equalities ; and clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In relation to human rights and equalities, Councillor Fairclough said that the council had failed to actively engage with organisations representing the affected groups that had been identified on the equality impact assessment, in particular in relation to measures to mitigate any potential negative impact. He said that this was clearly a requirement of the equality analysis process as set out in stage 8 of the equality analysis flowchart.

In relation to clarity of aims and desired outcomes, Councillor Fairclough said that the claim that increased parking charges will lead to an improvement in air quality can't be assessed, that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel had asked for further evidence and although some has been provided, it does not support the contention increased charges will result in a reduction in car ownership. He said that the proposals lacked information on how such an impact would be assessed and, without this, the proposal looked like a revenue raising measure.

In response to questions from members, Councillor Fairclough made some additional points:

- the Canadian Parking Association study cited in the Cabinet report found that in Amsterdam, residents were prepared to pay a considerable premium for housing with a parking space, implying that a large increase in parking charges would be required in order to have the desired impact
- the council should look at a range of alternative measures suggested in the responses to the consultation
- the council's equality assessment process requires officers to consult on proposals, assess potential negative impact, identify mitigation and to review in consultation with stakeholders. Three versions of the equality impact assessment were produced and revisions were made in the absence of input from affected groups. Failure to follow that process is a breach of the decision making principle on human rights and equalities

Cabinet Member response

The Chair asked the Cabinet Members and Director to respond to the points made by Councillor Fairclough.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee, assured the Commission that the public sector equality duty to pay due regard to the impact that policy changes might have on people with protected characteristics had been met and that the council's Equalities and Community Cohesion Officer had been closely involved and was entirely satisfied that the council had complied with this statutory duty and with the council's guidance. He said that the affected organisations had been written to and had also been invited to attend this meeting but had not responded.

Chris Lee said that a positive impact had been identified for all groups and that mitigation had been identified for potential negative impact, including the blue badge scheme and carers parking permits. He said that this would be kept under review, that impact would be monitored and further mitigation taken if required.

Chris Lee then addressed the points on the policy approach. He said that as Merton was at the forefront in developing this approach and that although there were no current direct comparative examples, the impact of car parking pricing and congestion charging zones shows that such measures are successful. The intention was to act in the public interest with the limited levers that were at the council's disposal. He believed this was a reasonable measure to try to nudge behaviour to reduce car ownership over time and thereby improve air quality.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment, added that the purpose was not just to improve air quality but also to promote a more active lifestyle and create healthier places. The air quality action plan contains a range of complementary measures including the introduction of a clean air zone in the borough. He said that these were complex issues and it was difficult to disentangle the impact of multiple policy measures which is why the council is proposing to measure the impact of the parking charges approach through the number of permits issued.

In response to questions about the equality analysis process, the Cabinet Members and Director said that the council had gone above and beyond the public sector equality duty. The proposed changes had been the subject of public debate for some time and there has been no response from organisations representing affected groups. The response to the equality impact assessment was proportionate as there is minimal impact on affected groups and the cost increase is marginal in comparison to the cost of owning a car. The Director confirmed that blue badge owners can park in CPZ resident bays and on street parking free of charge.

In response to questions about whether the proposals would impact on the level of car ownership, the Director said that he thought there would be a small change over time. In respect of the level of charges proposed, the Director said that a number of factors had been taken into account including inflation and a consideration of what would be a reasonable level to nudge behaviour.

Discussion by the Commission

Commission members discussed the evidence received in relation to whether the principles of decision making had been followed. Members accepted that it had been difficult to evidence this innovative policy approach and agreed that the core of this call-in request was whether the equality impact assessment process had been properly followed. Some members expressed concern that there hadn't been more proactive follow up with organisations representing affected groups.

Councillor Paul Kohler proposed that the Commission should refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration on the grounds that the published equality impact assessment process had not been followed. Members discussed this proposal and a

further proposal to ask Cabinet to actively consult with the affected groups in relation to the mitigation before reconsidering the decision.

The Commission then voted on a motion proposed by Councillor Owen Pritchard and seconded by Councillor Sally Kenny, that was carried by 9 members voting in favour. It was RESOLVED:

“that the Commission should refer the decision on the strategic approach to parking charges back to Cabinet for reconsideration in relation to the principle of decision making on respect for human rights and equalities. Specifically the Commission requests that Cabinet complete the process of consultation with affected groups prior to reconsideration of its decision.”

Conservative Call In Request

The Chair invited Councillor Daniel Holden to speak as a signatory to the call-in request. Councillor Holden said that the consultation was flawed as the decision that would be taken had been clear since last November; that the proposals were discriminatory in relation to elderly and disabled people and those with young children; that the PTAL construct was flawed, showing similar levels for Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden but with higher charges proposed for Wimbledon; and that information was lacking on how much income would be generated and how it would be spent. He said that the decision should be rescinded in favour of more focus on progressive solutions.

Councillor Holden and Councillor David Dean made additional points in response to questions:

- the proposals will result in counter-productive measures such as an increase in the number of people paving over their front gardens to provide parking spaces
- the council seems to be more focussed on income generation rather than improving air quality
- the proposed charges will be higher for people who live in non-Labour voting areas and are therefore discriminatory
- the decision is being challenged in relation to the decision making principles of clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and a presumption in favour of openness

The Chair invited the registered speakers to address the Commission:

Chris Larkman, Chair, Apostles Residents Association

Chris Larkman said that the proposed increase in resident parking permits represented a small proportion of the cost of running a car and was therefore unlikely to have an impact on the level of car ownership. He added that he accepted the need for a change in behaviour but that the proposed charges were unfair in that they would only apply to car owners who live in controlled parking zones and those who don't have a driveway on which to park. He said that the consultation prior to setting

up the controlled parking zone had stated that the charge was an administrative one but this has now changed to something on which residents haven't been consulted.

Chris Larkman said that he was also speaking as Secretary of the Raynes Park Residents' Association and, in that capacity, he would like to point out the negative impact that increased parking charges would have on local shops.

Lynne Gordon, Chair, Wimbledon East Hillside Residents Association

Lynne Gordon said that she accepted the need to improve air quality but that this should be through effective measures that are not politically biased and do not discriminate against particular groups. She said that charges raised from residents' permits should be solely for the purpose of covering CPZ costs but that the proposed increases would raise three times the cost and would impact more in non-Labour areas. She said that resident parking was a minor pollutant compared to planes, buses and heavy goods vehicles and asked what the council was doing to tackle those and thereby improve air quality.

Helen Clark Bell, Chief Executive, Love Wimbledon Business Improvement District

Helen Clark Bell directed the Commission's attention to her written submission on page 231 of the agenda pack. She highlighted the submission's points regarding air quality being impacted primarily by traffic and public transport and the risk of the proposed changes having unintended negative consequences for independent businesses in Wimbledon town centre. She added that the desired outcomes had not been clearly stated and urged Cabinet to consider the economic and environmental impact of the proposals.

In response to a question from members, Helen Clark Bell said that there was not sufficient clarity on what the council is doing to reduce emissions in Wimbledon, particularly in relation to the proposed expansion of the low emissions area that would result in buses with higher level of emissions being used outside the ULEZ zone, including in Merton.

Bill Petch, Chairman, South Ridgway Residents Association

Bill Petch said that he was speaking on behalf of the Association's 420 members, many of whom were elderly, disabled or infirm non-blue badge owners who live on their own and feared that the proposals would increase their isolation. They were also concerned about the impact that parking charges would have on local high streets. He said that he viewed the proposals as "a tax grab hidden under a green umbrella" and that they were politically biased with greater financial impact in the west of the borough.

Eve Cohen, local resident

Eve Cohen said that she thought the council was misguided in trying to achieve diverse aims for the proposals; that the cost of parking would be a small percentage of overall car ownership costs and may result in people driving more not less; that the findings of the Canadian Parking Association study had been misinterpreted; and that there were mixed messages, for example in relation to the night time economy. She added that the council should charge differentially according to the level of pollution caused by cars and that air quality was unlikely to improve, especially in the east of

the borough, as a result of these proposals. She urged the council to increase the anti idling engines campaign and to withdraw free parking at Christmas.

Alison Carr, resident

Alison Carr said that she recalled correspondence relating to the introduction of the CPZ stating that monies raised would be used just to cover costs. The proposal to use additional monies raised to improve air quality therefore has no mandate and was not included in the Labour manifesto. She urged the council to withdraw this anti-democratic and potentially illegal proposal.

Director's response

The Chair invited Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration, to respond to the points made by Councillor Holden and each of the witnesses.

Chris Lee said that the genesis of the approach to use parking charges as a means to improve air quality was clearly set out in the Air Quality Action Plan (recommendation 32) and it is legal to do so. This was approached democratically through the recent consultation which set out the proposed shift in relation to CPZ charging and the reasons for this. The Director of Corporate Services had advised that it would be prudent to make some allowance in the Business Plan for the level of income that may arise and that it was expected that this level would change and would therefore be adjusted.

Chris Lee said that the NO2 monitoring results, set out on pages 207-212 of the agenda, demonstrate that air quality is poor throughout the borough and that three of the points exceeding the legal limit are in SW19. The council has a duty to address this and is also seeking to take access to public transport into account, through the PTAL rating, which is poorer in the east of the borough.

Chris Lee said that the council is working tirelessly with Transport for London (TfL) to press the case for cleaner buses in the borough (letter written by the Leader is on page 215 of the agenda). TfL have undertaken to do so by 2037 and the council has said that is too long.

Chris Lee said that the council is using the levers within its control to nudge behaviour on car use, parking and engine idling and that it has no control over TFL or Heathrow and limited control over HGVs driving through the borough. He said that the proposals were seeking to balance competing interests of residents, retailers and town centres.

Discussion by the Commission

Commission members discussed the evidence received and various views were expressed about the complex relationship between air quality, car use, the local economy and health. A member commented that it was illogical to criticise the proposed charges for being too small and at the same time too large.

Members asked for further information on what was being done to improve cycling infrastructure in the borough. Chris Lee said that although Merton's Mini Holland funding application had been unsuccessful, the Kingston application was agreed and

has resulted in a joint scheme in New Malden and Raynes Park. In addition the council has introduced improvements on Mitcham Common. Chris Lee said that the council has an incremental approach to improving cycling infrastructure with limited funding through an annual programme.

In relation to the question of whether the proposals were proportionate to the desired outcome, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport advised that he anticipated that a nudge on parking charging would have an impact in much the same way as congestion charging had on car use in central London. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment added that the policy was not intended to bridge the gap between the east and the west of the borough but rather to improve air quality across the borough.

In relation to whether any other principles of decision making had been breached, members asked whether a small cost increase would achieve the desired result. Chris Lee advised that the impact and level of charges would be kept under review.

Members expressed differing views on whether the increase is proportionate to the level of air quality and whether it will be effective. In response to a question about PTAL, Chris Lee said that it is the accepted model, is robust and is used by Planning Officers across London.

The Commission then voted on a motion proposed by Councillor Nick Mclean and seconded by Councillor Edward Gretton to reject Cabinet's decision in relation to the decision making principles on lack of proportionality and consideration and evaluation of alternatives:

“the proposals offer insufficient modelling or evidence to show how either of the Cabinet's two primary objectives will be met, in terms of either implementing air quality for the borough as a whole, or in terms of improving health outcomes in Mitcham and the east of the borough. As such, the Commission advises Cabinet to place the proposals on hold, consider alternative measures and set out a clear evidence based proposal that would actually deliver on the Cabinet's stated objectives. “

Three members voted in favour of the motion and six voted against. The motion fell.

The Commission then RESOLVED to include the following requests in its reference to Cabinet:

- that there should be a review, 12 months after implementation of the new charges, of the impact on air quality and on the number of parking permits issued
- that the results of the diesel levy should be reported to scrutiny as soon as practicable
- that, as the approach to parking charges is one of a suite of measures, the Commission looks forward to seeing the introduction of other measures to tackle air quality

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 11 September 2019

Subject: Crime and policing in Merton

Lead officer: Chief Superintendent Sally Benatar, BCU Commander

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

Contact officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services,
julia.regan@merton.gov.uk, 0208 545 3864

Recommendations:

- A. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the responses to its questions (see Appendix A) and the crime data provided by the Borough Commander (see Appendix B) and ask other questions as appropriate.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Basic Command Unit (BCU) Commander, Chief Superintendent Sally Benatar, has been invited to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting to give a brief overview of any changes since she attended previously in April 2019 and to address the questions identified by Commission members in section 2 below. Her responses are set out in Appendix A.
- 1.2. She was also requested to provide crime data in the same format as that provided previously. This is set out in Appendix B.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The BCU Commander has been asked to provide an overview of any changes since the last meeting and anything she wished to draw to the Commission's attention.
- 2.2. Commission members also identified a number of questions they would like to discuss with the BCU Commander. These were emailed in advance of the meeting so that the BCU Commander could prepare her answers. The questions and answers are set out in full in Appendix A. The questions are:
1. Please provide an update on the planned reorganisation of the real estate under your command; and
 - a) detail the process used in deciding the above
 - b) provide the evidence used in detailing the above
 - c) state what impact you think the reorganisation will have on response times in Merton
 - d) describe the rationale and evidence used in concluding the above.

2. What communication has the BCU Commander had with the Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime (or any other member of MOPAC) in connection with future plans for Wimbledon and/or Mitcham police stations?
3. Will the government's planned increase in Police numbers lead to a change in the estate management strategy and could this mean that Wimbledon Police station will remain open?
4. If the government does provide 20 000 more police officers, what numbers would the BC hope to have for our area and how would she deploy them?
5. How do the response times to both reports made through 999 and 101 in Merton compare to the other boroughs within the BCU?
6. How do you measure the effectiveness of neighbourhood police teams? And if they are falling below those standards, what action is taken to make improvements?
7. What can be done to tackle anti-social behaviour before it escalates?
8. What do you think your officers in Merton should be focusing on and what are the goals you have set them?
9. What is the Borough Commander doing with her force to deal with low level ASB which is causing local residents concern and making them feel unsafe? (such as motor bike taking and driving, graffiti in local parks and groups of youngsters gathering riding bikes on road in residential areas).
10. Please provide figures on the number and nature of crimes reported that can be attributed to the Eastern Electrics festival on 3rd & 4th August this year, and the number of arrests made and charges brought. Please provide comparable figures for last year's Eastern Electrics festival.
11. What could the police have done better to avoid the stabbings at the EE festival in Morden Park?
12. What is the ongoing strategy for knife prevention locally and are there Gang influences starting to take hold in the Borough?
13. Post the Wimbledon Burglar (WB) what are the Police doing to do raise awareness that just because the WB has been caught residents should not become complacent in case of new targeting?

2.3. The BCU Commander's responses to these questions are set out in Appendix A.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Commission members may choose to ask questions about other aspects of policing in Merton.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. Not applicable.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. Not applicable.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no property or resource implications at this time.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None for the purposes of this report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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 – BCU Commander’s response to questions posed by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Appendix B – crime data for Merton and surrounding boroughs

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None

Appendix A Questions and answers from the BCU Commander

1. Please provide an update on the planned reorganisation of the real estate under your command; and
 - a) detail the process used in deciding the above
 - b) provide the evidence used in detailing the above
 - c) state what impact you think the reorganisation will have on response times in Merton
 - d) describe the rationale and evidence used in concluding the above.

Answer – see response to Question 3 below

2. What communication has the BCU Commander had with the Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime (or any other member of MOPAC) in connection with future plans for Wimbledon and/or Mitcham police stations?

Answer - I have regular contact with Andrew Davis from MOPAC with regard to the estates strategy.

3. Will the government's planned increase in Police numbers lead to a change in the estate management strategy and could this mean that Wimbledon Police station will remain open?

Answer - Answers to Question 1a), 1b), 1c), 1d), 1e) and 3 are all covered by the following answer:

In the light of the Prime Minister's promise of an extra 20,000 police officers across the UK, the Metropolitan Police and MOPAC are reviewing their estate strategy. The exact impact will depend upon the allocation of the additional officers that the MPS receives and the subsequent operational allocation of that uplift to different types of police services in different locations within the service; both these aspects could impact the exact requirements for the size of the estate.

4. If the government does provide 20 000 more police officers, what numbers would the BC hope to have for our area and how would she deploy them?

Answer - We don't yet know the numbers of additional officers that will be coming to the Metropolitan Police. The Met is represented on the National Policing Board that has been set up to oversee the uplift, and is also working internally to get ready, both through strategic planning and logistical arrangements. The Commissioner has said publicly that the Met aims to gain about 6000 of the 20000. I hope that a significant number would come to local policing and the twelve Basic Command Units (BCUs), including South West. I think that all five strands of the BCU require more officers (Response Policing, Neighbourhoods Policing, Safeguarding (rape and serious sexual offences, child protection, domestic abuse, hate crime, mental health liaison & multi-agency work with partners), CID including gangs and proactive plus the HQ function that is the glue that binds the five strands together and includes professional standards, Operations Room, criminal justice team, Local Resolution Team. I

anticipate there will be some central steer on where the additional officers on BCUs will be posted as well as a degree of local scope for me as BCU Commander, to best meet the needs of the South West London boroughs.

5. How do the response times to both reports made through 999 and 101 in Merton compare to the other boroughs within the BCU?

Answer - The table below shows the percentage of “Immediate” graded calls (emergency calls that we aim to attend within 15 minutes – there is no distinction between calls to 999 or 101, both can be graded as Immediate) that we attended within 15 minutes. The August figures are not yet available.

	May	June	July
Merton	81%	82%	81%
Kingston	78%	80%	76%
Richmond	85%	83%	81%
Wandsworth	84%	83%	81%

6. How do you measure the effectiveness of neighbourhood police teams? And if they are falling below those standards, what action is taken to make improvements?

Answer - Assurance and governance of local neighbourhood policing teams is delegated to the neighbourhood strand superintendent. Effectiveness is assessed across a range of quantitative and qualitative measures set locally by the BCU Commander and centrally for the Met by the Commander for neighbourhoods. Weekly and monthly performance conversations are held within the strand and a monthly local Performance Review is chaired by the BCU Commander. South West BCU ensure that we perform against Key Performance Indicators and the cross strand delivery of these. Actions to address performance are managed through this meeting structure.

Performance is also managed through working in partnership to intervene early, reduce demand and engage with vulnerable individuals. Ward, Schools, Youth Engagement, Integrated Offender Management and Youth Offending Teams all contribute to this. The key performance measurement of the partnership in Merton is discharged through the Safer Stronger Merton Executive, Youth Offending Board, and Youth Crime Prevention Board. The key performance contribution within these areas is to reduce reactive demand.

7. What can be done to tackle anti-social behaviour before it escalates?

Answer - This is answered in the paper to be presented by the Head of Community Safety, titled ASB, Knife crime and Street Drinking – the challenges, successes and future work streams

8. What do you think your officers in Merton should be focusing on and what are the goals you have set them?

Answer - The Met's seven year strategy "Met Direction" provides the framework for me to set local goals. The Met's operational priorities are:

- Focus on what matters to Londoners – violence tops the public's concerns and tackling it is our top priority. This includes terrorism, knife and gun crime, sexual offending, domestic abuse and safeguarding vulnerable people from predatory behaviour.
- Work more closely with partners and the public
- Achieve the best outcomes in the pursuit of justice and in the support of victims.

On the South West BCU, I have set five Key Performance Indicators to measure progress and focus efforts, although of course we measure a wider range of operational performance indicators both on our own and in partnership with Safer Merton; these include the local crime priorities set by Merton Council.

These are the five Key Performance Indicators for the BCU:

- Stop and search – increase the amount we are doing
- Emergency response – get there safely and as quickly as possible
- Wanted offenders and outstanding suspects – reduce the overall number
- Domestic abuse – increase the arrest rate
- Robberies – solve more

9 What is the Borough Commander doing with her force to deal with low level ASB which is causing local residents concern and making them feel unsafe? (such as motor bike taking and driving, graffiti in local parks and groups of youngsters gathering riding bikes on road in residential areas).

Answer - This is answered in the paper to be presented by the Head of Community Safety, titled ASB, Knife crime and Street Drinking – the challenges, successes and future work streams.

10. Please provide figures on the number and nature of crimes reported that can be attributed to the Eastern Electrics festival on 3rd & 4th August this year, and the number of arrests made and charges brought. Please provide comparable figures for last year's Eastern Electrics festival.

Answer -

In 2017 at EE there were 5 recorded reports of anti-social behaviour and 1 report of sexual assault by touching.

In 2018 at EE there were 7 recorded reports of anti-social behaviour on police indices, 1 report of common assault, 4 of theft, 1 of possession of drugs and 3 of possession with intent to supply drugs.

In 2019 there were 35 recorded crimes over the two days and 297 Stop and Searches carried out by police. Details of the 35 crimes recorded were as follows:

Possession of drugs with intent to supply x 8, possession of drugs x 17, stabbing x 3, robbery x 4 (including a GBH), assault on police x 2, public order offence x 1.

11. What could the police have done better to avoid the stabbings at the EE festival in Morden Park?

Answer - Whilst the benefit of hindsight provides greater information, the policing plan was commensurate with the intelligence picture prior to the event.

The learning from the event continues and the police will consider an appropriate response to any future application. Inspector Whitehead the Merton Neighbourhood Inspector is leading discussions at this stage but I'm not going to comment further on matters as that may then impact upon possible future legal proceedings.

12. What is the ongoing strategy for knife prevention locally and are there Gang influences starting to take hold in the Borough?

Answer - This is answered in the paper to be presented by the Head of Community Safety. The knife crime strategy is a community safety partnership (Safer Merton) priority.

13. Post the Wimbledon Burglar (WB) what are the Police doing to do raise awareness that just because the WB has been caught residents should not become complacent in case of new targeting?

Answer - We have raised this point at a number of meetings after Astrit Kapaj was detained and the Dedicated Ward Officers continue to work extremely hard with residents and the Neighbourhood Watch to stress that he was not the only burglar to target Wimbledon. Whilst there has been a small year on year rise in burglaries over the last 12 months, the last few months have seen low numbers. Our Proactive team, Burglary and Robbery Investigation Team (BRIT) and the Dedicated Ward Officers continue to work extremely hard to protect residents and identify and prosecute offenders when possible.

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Merton Daily Dashboard



Select BCU \ Borough
Merton

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12	
TNO	TNO	13,722	14,405	5.0%	1,706	1,396	12.4%	9.7%	●
	Total	13,722	14,405	5.0%	1,706	1,396	12.4%	9.7%	●
Burglary	Total	1,472	1,609	9.3%	60	128	4.1%	8.0%	●
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	35	50	42.9%	11	5	31.4%	10.0%	●
	Robbery of Personal P..	335	349	4.2%	25	16	7.5%	4.6%	●
	Total	370	399	7.8%	36	21	9.7%	5.3%	●
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	95	78	-17.9%	9	5	9.5%	6.4%	●
Theft Person - Mobile Phone	Total	99	110	11.1%	1	1	1.0%	0.9%	●
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	494	487	-1.4%	119	106	24.1%	21.8%	●
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	873	894	2.4%	141	109	16.2%	12.2%	●
	Total	1,367	1,381	1.0%	260	215	19.0%	15.6%	●
Domestic Abuse	Total	1,617	1,842	13.9%	320	325	19.8%	17.6%	●
Sexual Offences	Rape	107	128	19.6%	5	4	4.7%	3.1%	●
	Other Sexual Offences	242	240	-0.8%	24	25	9.9%	10.4%	●
	Total	349	368	5.4%	29	29	8.3%	7.9%	●
Total Gun Crime	Total	34	36	5.9%	4	10	11.8%	27.8%	●
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	6	5	-16.7%	2	5	33.3%	100.0%	●
Total Knife Crime	Total	200	240	20.0%	33	29	16.5%	12.1%	●
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	17	27	58.8%	-	-	-	-	●
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	1,515	1,751	15.6%	52	34	3.4%	1.9%	●
	Bicycle Theft	378	336	-11.1%	7	3	1.9%	0.9%	●
	Shoplifting	1,093	812	-25.7%	211	116	19.3%	14.3%	●
	Theft from Person	244	260	6.6%	1	3	0.4%	1.2%	●
	Total	3,230	3,159	-2.2%	271	156	8.4%	4.9%	●

I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	3,785	4,243	12.1%
ASB Repeat Callers	71	86	21.1%
I Calls In Target	88.0%	83.1%	
S Calls In Target	81.7%	66.0%	

Kingston upon Thames Daily Dashboard

Reporting Period Ending: 1
September 2019



Select BCU \ Borough
Kingston upon Thames

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12	
TNO	TNO	12,016	13,231	10.1%	1,454	1,240	12.1%	9.4%	●
	Total	12,016	13,231	10.1%	1,454	1,240	12.1%	9.4%	●
Burglary	Total	996	1,060	6.4%	39	47	3.9%	4.4%	●
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	26	34	30.8%	5	6	19.2%	17.6%	●
	Robbery of Personal P..	200	296	48.0%	9	7	4.5%	2.4%	●
	Total	226	330	46.0%	14	13	6.2%	3.9%	●
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	51	98	92.2%	2	3	3.9%	3.1%	●
Theft Person - Mobile Phone	Total	160	221	38.1%	1	-	0.6%	-	●
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	326	340	4.3%	86	72	26.4%	21.2%	●
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	867	906	4.5%	142	119	16.4%	13.1%	●
	Total	1,193	1,246	4.4%	228	191	19.1%	15.3%	●
Domestic Abuse	Total	1,238	1,433	15.8%	272	252	22.0%	17.6%	●
Sexual Offences	Rape	122	164	34.4%	4	1	3.3%	0.6%	●
	Other Sexual Offences	219	242	10.5%	22	31	10.0%	12.8%	●
	Total	341	406	19.1%	26	32	7.6%	7.9%	●
Total Gun Crime	Total	17	25	47.1%	3	4	17.6%	16.0%	●
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	1	2	100.0%	2	1	200.0%	50.0%	●
Total Knife Crime	Total	123	153	24.4%	18	14	14.6%	9.2%	●
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	22	18	-18.2%	-	-	-	-	●
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	1,501	1,398	-6.9%	25	19	1.7%	1.4%	●
	Bicycle Theft	579	609	5.2%	3	4	0.5%	0.7%	●
	Shoplifting	1,091	1,016	-6.9%	220	142	20.2%	14.0%	●
	Theft from Person	394	533	35.3%	5	2	1.3%	0.4%	●
	Total	3,565	3,556	-0.3%	253	167	7.1%	4.7%	●

I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	3,274	3,625	10.7%
ASB Repeat Callers	79	78	-1.3%
I Calls In Target	84.5%	75.8%	
S Calls In Target	81.8%	69.4%	

Richmond upon Thames Daily Dashboard

Reporting Period Ending: 1
September 2019



Select BCU \ Borough
Richmond upon Thames

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12	
TNO	TNO	12,796	12,841	0.4%	1,125	804	8.8%	6.3%	●
	Total	12,796	12,841	0.4%	1,125	804	8.8%	6.3%	●
Burglary	Total	1,765	1,676	-5.0%	70	73	4.0%	4.4%	●
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	12	24	100.0%	3	5	25.0%	20.8%	●
	Robbery of Personal P..	281	437	55.5%	7	25	2.5%	5.7%	●
	Total	293	461	57.3%	10	30	3.4%	6.5%	●
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	91	123	35.2%	-	10	-	8.1%	●
Theft Person - Mobile Phone	Total	78	81	3.8%	-	-	-	-	●
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	352	300	-14.8%	93	52	26.4%	17.3%	●
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	684	600	-12.3%	92	58	13.5%	9.7%	●
	Total	1,036	900	-13.1%	185	110	17.9%	12.2%	●
Domestic Abuse	Total	1,258	1,202	-4.5%	283	190	22.5%	15.8%	●
Sexual Offences	Rape	108	82	-24.1%	4	4	3.7%	4.9%	●
	Other Sexual Offences	186	187	0.5%	15	16	8.1%	8.6%	●
	Total	294	269	-8.5%	19	20	6.5%	7.4%	●
Total Gun Crime	Total	15	17	13.3%	3	2	20.0%	11.8%	●
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	1	1	0.0%	-	-	-	-	●
Total Knife Crime	Total	122	194	59.0%	11	17	9.0%	8.8%	●
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	19	18	-5.3%	-	-	-	-	●
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	1,316	1,445	9.8%	42	29	3.2%	2.0%	●
	Bicycle Theft	850	767	-9.8%	7	7	0.8%	0.9%	●
	Shoplifting	556	594	6.8%	69	64	12.4%	10.8%	●
	Theft from Person	256	243	-5.1%	2	4	0.8%	1.6%	●
	Total	2,978	3,049	2.4%	120	104	4.0%	3.4%	●

I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	3,465	3,597	3.8%
ASB Repeat Callers	57	62	8.8%
I Calls In Target	84.4%	79.3%	
S Calls In Target	81.0%	67.5%	

Wandsworth Daily Dashboard



Select BCU \ Borough
Wandsworth

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12	
TNO	TNO	26,202	25,609	-2.3%	2,555	2,055	9.8%	8.0%	●
	Total	26,202	25,609	-2.3%	2,555	2,055	9.8%	8.0%	●
Burglary	Total	2,629	2,779	5.7%	110	119	4.2%	4.3%	●
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	71	81	14.1%	21	18	29.6%	22.2%	●
	Robbery of Personal P..	799	682	-14.6%	42	34	5.3%	5.0%	●
	Total	870	763	-12.3%	63	52	7.2%	6.8%	●
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	208	160	-23.1%	11	14	5.3%	8.8%	●
Theft Person - Mobile Phone	Total	386	294	-23.8%	1	1	0.3%	0.3%	●
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	757	689	-9.0%	202	124	26.7%	18.0%	●
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	1,679	1,681	0.1%	214	210	12.7%	12.5%	●
	Total	2,436	2,370	-2.7%	416	334	17.1%	14.1%	●
Domestic Abuse	Total	2,520	2,546	1.0%	583	390	23.1%	15.3%	●
Sexual Offences	Rape	268	237	-11.6%	13	1	4.9%	0.4%	●
	Other Sexual Offences	469	433	-7.7%	44	38	9.4%	8.8%	●
	Total	737	670	-9.1%	57	39	7.7%	5.8%	●
Total Gun Crime	Total	78	48	-38.5%	27	14	34.6%	29.2%	●
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	6	8	33.3%	-	1	-	12.5%	●
Total Knife Crime	Total	437	378	-13.5%	68	51	15.6%	13.5%	●
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	53	41	-22.6%	-	-	-	-	●
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	3,323	3,345	0.7%	75	51	2.3%	1.5%	●
	Bicycle Theft	989	1,016	2.7%	16	9	1.6%	0.9%	●
	Shoplifting	1,457	1,289	-11.5%	172	134	11.8%	10.4%	●
	Theft from Person	777	708	-8.9%	5	7	0.6%	1.0%	●
	Total	6,546	6,358	-2.9%	268	201	4.1%	3.2%	●

I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	6,671	7,513	12.6%
ASB Repeat Callers	139	156	12.2%
I Calls In Target	86.2%	84.5%	
S Calls In Target	76.2%	66.7%	



MPS Daily Dashboard

Select BCU \ Borough
MPS

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12	
TNO	TNO	831,073	897,584	8.0%	95,680	75,916	11.5%	8.5%	●
	Total	831,073	897,584	8.0%	95,680	75,916	11.5%	8.5%	●
Burglary	Total	79,439	80,932	1.9%	4,103	3,813	5.2%	4.7%	●
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	2,381	2,596	9.0%	360	301	15.1%	11.6%	●
	Robbery of Personal P..	30,987	34,531	11.4%	1,841	1,648	5.9%	4.8%	●
	Total	33,368	37,127	11.3%	2,201	1,949	6.6%	5.2%	●
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	10,296	10,992	6.8%	658	579	6.4%	5.3%	●
Theft Person - Mobile Phone	Total	24,413	26,100	6.9%	265	156	1.1%	0.6%	●
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	24,058	23,819	-1.0%	6,580	4,710	27.4%	19.8%	●
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	53,671	54,220	1.0%	8,171	6,593	15.2%	12.2%	●
	Total	77,729	78,039	0.4%	14,751	11,303	19.0%	14.5%	●
Domestic Abuse	Total	82,845	88,190	6.5%	17,204	13,549	20.8%	15.4%	●
Sexual Offences	Rape	8,301	7,929	-4.5%	349	238	4.2%	3.0%	●
	Other Sexual Offences	12,262	12,190	-0.6%	1,297	1,007	10.6%	8.3%	●
	Total	20,563	20,119	-2.2%	1,646	1,245	8.0%	6.2%	●
Total Gun Crime	Total	2,460	2,138	-13.1%	526	428	21.4%	20.0%	●
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	386	330	-14.5%	67	67	17.4%	20.3%	●
Total Knife Crime	Total	14,932	14,762	-1.1%	2,290	1,747	15.3%	11.8%	●
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	2,033	1,641	-19.3%	-	-	-	-	●
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	110,420	132,175	19.7%	2,364	1,754	2.1%	1.3%	●
	Bicycle Theft	19,501	20,608	5.7%	243	233	1.2%	1.1%	●
	Shoplifting	45,395	44,442	-2.1%	7,257	5,258	16.0%	11.8%	●
	Theft from Person	44,001	51,183	16.3%	529	494	1.2%	1.0%	●
	Total	219,317	248,408	13.3%	10,393	7,739	4.7%	3.1%	●

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I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	241,561	267,134	10.6%
ASB Repeat Callers	6,210	6,852	10.3%
I Calls In Target	86.8%	85.2%	
S Calls In Target	81.9%	76.4%	

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Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 11 September 2019

Wards: All

Subject: ASB, Knife crime and Street Drinking – the challenges, successes and future work streams

Lead officer: Neil Thurlow – Head of Community Safety

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

Contact officer: Neil Thurlow, x3240

Recommendations:

- A. Councillors are asked to consider if they are interested in being involved with, or otherwise asked to publicise, community weapon sweeps for their wards. (2.3)
 - B. O&S panel members are asked to promote the Safer Merton Community Safety Consultation to all constituents – via email and/or in Cllr surgeries - promoting its importance in shaping future work to tackle crime and ASB (2.3.12)
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is presented to the O&S Panel to provide an update from Safer Merton regarding work on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), knife crime and problematic street drinking (incorporating the Public Space Protection Order).
- 1.2. The report focuses on outcomes achieved over the last 12 months from both the Safer Merton service alone and the wider Community Safety Partnership.
- 1.3. **ASB headlines**
 - 1.3.1 Safer Merton officers now have delegated authority to use some tools and powers under the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014.
 - 1.3.2 Safer Merton staff now issue Community Protection Warnings and Community Protection Notices. These have been issued for ASB alongside street drinking matters. In the near future, the officers will also commence issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).
 - 1.3.3 Officers are also using ASB Closure Powers to address ASB in problematic premises resulting in reduced ASB for our residents.
- 1.4. **Knife crime headlines**
- 1.5. Levels of knife crime have fluctuated over the last 12 months. Both nationally and regionally, there has been increases in both knife crime offences and knife related homicides.
- 1.6. London has seen a smaller percentage increase compared to the national picture but the risk and impact that knife crime causes is both a cross party and community concern.

- 1.6.1 Whilst Merton is not unaffected by knife crime, we remain the fourth safest borough in the Met, and knife crime incidents remain lower than the London average.
- 1.6.2 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP), led by Safer Merton, completed and returned our updated Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence (SYV) Plan to MOPACs Violence Reduction Unit in May. This plan was presented and discussed at the previous O&S meeting. The plan remains a live document, which is monitored by the CSP each quarter.
- 1.6.3 The delivery of actions contained within the plan sits across a range of governance boards including the CSPs Safer Stronger Executive Board, Locations board and CSFs MARVE panel to name a few.
- 1.6.4 In July 2019, the Home Office announced that there would be a new statutory duty placed on CSPs to address knife crime and Serious Violence. The announcement followed the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy that was released in April 2019.
- 1.6.5 Once implemented, the new duty will ensure that information is shared more effectively between agencies, and that all partners deliver targeted interventions. In the coming months Safer Merton will work to implement any requirements made of CSPs relating to this announcement.

2 DETAIL

2.1. Detail of ASB Delivery

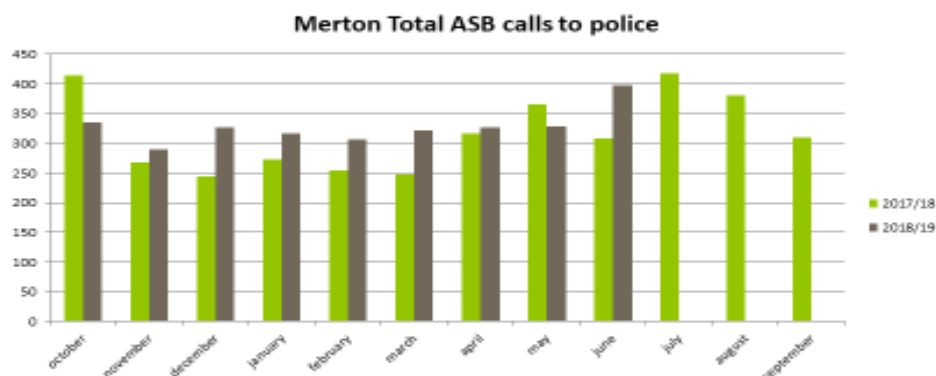
- 2.1.1 Demand placed on ASB services are increasing both within Safer Merton and across the Metropolitan police service.
- 2.1.2 Safer Merton's ASB service has dealt with, and resolved, some 1237 cases in the last 12 months (July 2018 – June 2019). This is an increase of some 363 cases compared with 874 in the previous 12 months.
- 2.1.3 The following charts illustrate the changes in demand on Safer Merton's ASB service over a wider period of time (April 2015-April 2019) and also illustrates the last two years' ASB demand being placed on Police colleagues (October 2017 to June 2019):

Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement



Safer Merton

Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement



Police ASB calls have been consistently higher in the last 8 months compared to the corresponding months last year.

Safer Merton

- 2.1.4 Both charts show that the increases are consistent with August the peak month for reports to the council.
- 2.1.5 When addressing cases of ASB, the team undertake investigations liaising with the victims, alleged perpetrators and any other community members whom are affected.
- 2.1.6 Following investigations officer use a number of interventions to address behaviours ranging from softer interventions such as warning letters, acceptable behaviour agreements and mediation through to action that is more punitive in nature.

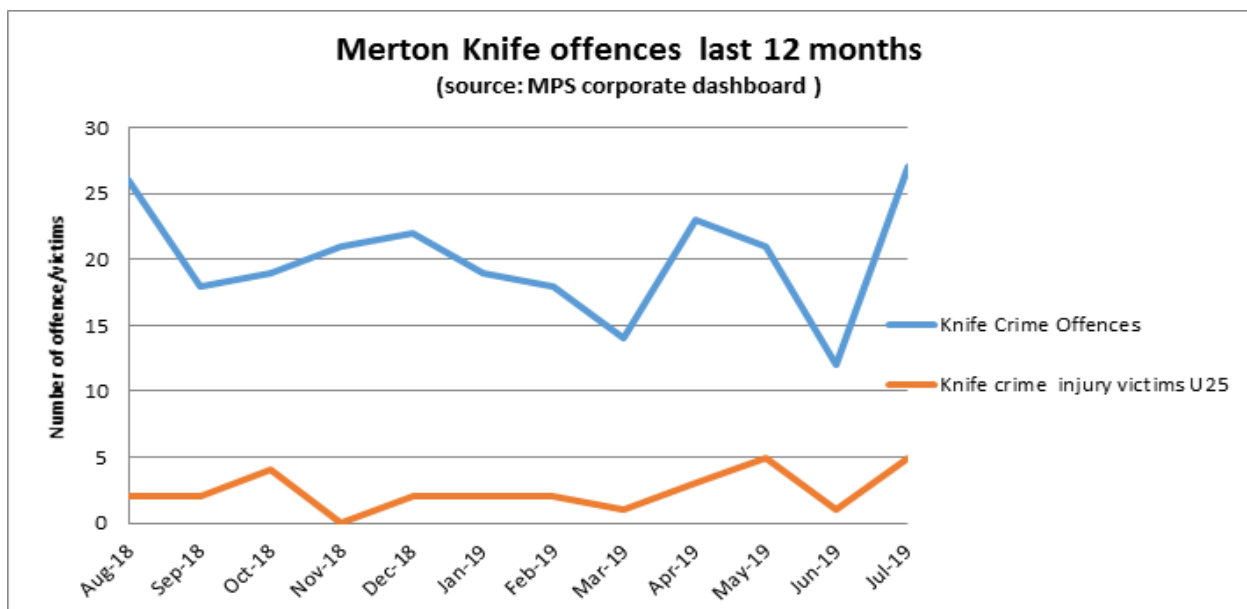
- 2.1.7 The Safer Merton service, in conjunction with Police and others, have, over the last 12 months, used both civil and criminal powers resulting in the issuing of community protection warnings, community protection notices; premises closure orders, fixed penalty notices, injunctions and criminal behaviour orders against offenders whose behaviour required a more stringent approach.
- 2.1.8 Four (4) brothels were identified in this period and closed by Safer Merton using the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The Police worked with Safer Merton on this case and at some of the brothels, arrests were made for immigration offences.
- 2.1.9 One (1) premises associated with disorder – Loud partying, congregation, intimidation, littering and illicit drug activity – was closed under the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- 2.1.10 During 2019, the team have broadened their tasking's with CCTV to capture ASB in certain hotspots. These tasking's have delivered successes including the disruption and deterrence of ASB on Martin Way / Joseph Hood Recreation Ground and street drinking in Mitcham Town centre.

2.2. Detail of Knife Crime Delivery

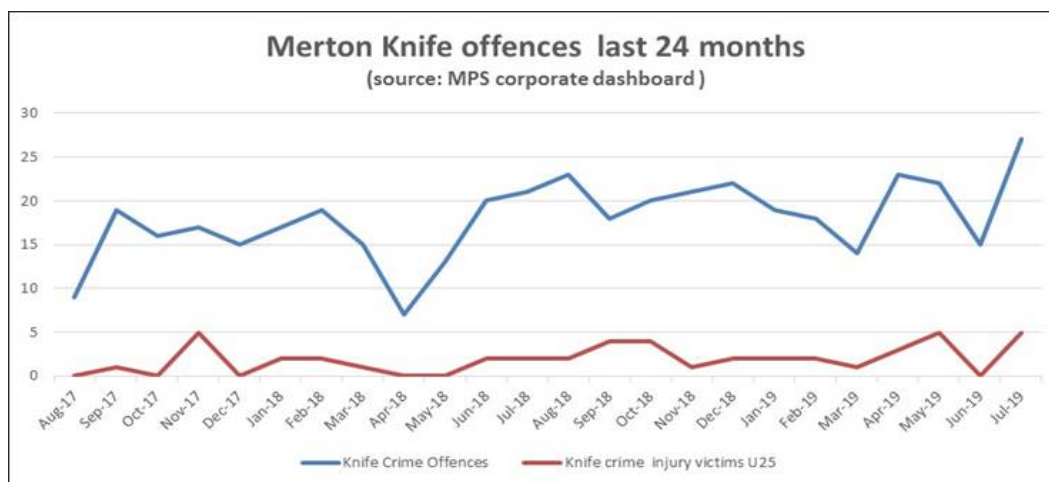
2.2.1 Statistics

2.2.2 The 12 month totals (July 2018 - July 2019) for knife crime incidents in Merton are split into knife crime (KC) and knife crime with injury (KCI). The 12-month knife crime total is 245, and the knife crime injury totals 64. These figures equate to roughly one in four knife crimes resulting in injury in Merton.

2.2.3 The chart below illustrates the split:



2.2.4 The longer-term pattern, for the previous 24 months is below. Looking at 24 months data there are no discernible patterns with peak months for either knife crime offences or knife crime with injury



2.2.5 Work on knife crime is dynamic and as such when incidents of knife crime occur, they are responded to and acted upon in the most appropriate manner.

2.2.6 **Work undertaken to address knife crime**

2.2.7 The Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence Plan was initially drafted and approved in September 2018. The existence of the plan, and the overall engagement of partners in its delivery, is an essential tool to ensuring that each organisation engages and supports the CSP in tackling this issue.

2.2.8 The plan has been brought to the O&S panel previously as it sets out a range of interventions ranging from engagement and education to enforcement.

2.2.9 Safer Merton has been working with partners to deliver the plan ensuring it remains a live and accurate document. As a partnership, we have delivered outcomes such as:

2.2.10 The 'Towards Employment' programme – delivered from colleagues within CSF the council has supported a number of young people who are ex-offenders, or vulnerable to becoming involved in crime, into employment, work experience and apprenticeships. This programme has recently secured further funding so that it can continue to deliver its valuable services.

2.2.11 The Responsive Community Engagement Team (ReCET), run from the Contextual Safeguarding and Participation team within CSF, and externally funded by the Home Office Early Intervention Youth Fund, carries out detached youth work with young people across the borough. Intelligence lead tasking's see them engage young people whom are concerned about crime and ASB in the areas where they live. The team are also working with local business owners and other community members to develop a group of 'Community Guardians'. These people, residents, community leaders, business owners, will be trained to engage in a more positive way with young people whom are vulnerable to serious youth violence, by offering them diversion opportunities and/or offering them a safe space in their business.

- 2.2.12 A Weapons sweep offer is also being developed in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police (MPS). There have been a number of community members and groups who have registered interest in being part of this offer to help maintain safety within the borough.
- 2.2.13 Residents will undertake training, delivered by the MPS and Safer Merton, which will then allow them to support co-ordinated community sweeps across the borough.
- 2.2.14 Saturday 18 May saw Safer Merton host the borough's first Knife Crime Event in Morden Baptist Church. The event, designed to raise awareness of work being done to tackle knife crime in Merton, provided information and reassurance to our residents and attendees mobilising members of the public who want to get involved as a community approach to this challenge. The event received 122 attendees, had positive feedback, and good engagement from a number of different organisations that engage in youth work, crime prevention and enforcement, and victim support. These included Crimestoppers, Catch 22, and Unique Talent.
- 2.2.15 Merton's Stop and Search group now also has a small group of community members on the reviewing panel. This group, which meets regularly, reviews some Stop and Search cases assisting the wider community, and police, to better understand some of the issues which stop and search can cause between police and community. The panel also receives feedback from the MPS as they respond to the panel's challenges and queries, and are forthcoming with providing body worn camera footage when requested.
- 2.2.16 The Youth Justice Service within the council provide a range of interventions for under 18s involved in knife crime. These include trauma informed support, a mentor offer through to breaching of orders where necessary. The MARVE panel, which takes place every month, continues to facilitate effective multi agency working, and interventions.
- 2.2.17 Bespoke care plans are put together for Looked-after Children and Care Leavers vulnerable to knife crime.
- 2.2.18 Knife test purchase operations carried out by the Trading Standards team in LBM continue to have positive outcomes, with only one retailer failing the test purchase operation, which is now under investigation. Over the last 12 months all knife retailers in Merton have been visited.
- 2.2.19 Training on knife crime, and recovery of knives have also been delivered to contractors ID Verde and Veolia on "what to do if you find a knife". This training is attached as an appendix.
- 2.2.20 ***Knife crime next steps***
- 2.2.21 Safer Merton will work with public health colleagues to ensure that all relevant partners are aware of the CAMHS referral pathway in place for young people involved in violent crime. This is particularly important as the links between mental health and knife crime become clearer.
- 2.2.22 Safer Merton will work with MOPAC and LBM's communications team, and residents to develop and embed a new critical incident response process. Particularly important for matters such as any fatal stabbings which may occur. This work will, once delivered, minimise risk of misunderstanding of

incident details being known within the community and provide reassurance to those affected residents.

- 2.2.23 Safer Merton and the wider CSP are awaiting MOPACs own post incident response toolkit which will contain guidance on how to co-ordinate a response, and provide the appropriate support to those impacted.

(i) The 'Public Health' approach to tackling serious violence is advocated by the Home Office, MOPAC and the World Health Organisation. Merton's Community Safety Partnership, as represented at the Safer Stronger Executive board will approach the new Violence Reduction Unit to seek guidance on how this approach can be best delivered, alongside the existing Knife Crime Plan and the current successful working that is already taking place. By utilising and working to the public health approach, we would seek to see, over time a constant decline in the number of knife crime incidents within Merton, and for figures to remain consistently low.

- 2.3. To deliver co-ordinated community weapons sweeps, or guidance on what to do if you find a knife. Councillors are asked to consider if they are interested in being involved, or otherwise asked to publicise this offer to community members.

2.4. **Detail of Street Drinking Delivery and Public Space Protection Order enforcement:**

- 2.4.1 Since October 2017, there has been a borough wide street drinking Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). This order, allows authorised officers to take action where street drinking behaviour is in breach of defined prohibitions and where behaviour of drinkers is likely to cause alarm, harassment or distress to others.

- 2.4.2 At this time, the majority of enforcement is taking place in, and around, the wards of Figges Marsh and Cricket Green wards, with proactive enforcement around Mitcham Town Centre.

- 2.4.3 A focused partnership enforcement approach has been operational since June 2018. This has resulted in alcohol being seized and disposed of from street drinkers alongside the issuing of Community Protection Warnings, Community Protection Notices and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN).

- 2.4.4 The enforcement is delivered with the offer of treatment and care in the first instance to ensure that, for those with alcohol dependency needs, they are offered access to the borough's alcohol treatment service – WDP. At this time no person(s) engaged in the enforcement work have taken up the offer of support implying that they do not believe they have an alcohol dependency need.

- 2.4.5 Our enforcement work has resulted in a significant reduction in visible street drinking in Mitcham Town Centre although some displacement has occurred. Enforcement work will continue, utilising intelligence to focus resource deployment.

- 2.4.6 To report street drinking, residents and members can call Police on 101 where there is need for police response, or to provide retrospective reporting this can be done via the Met Police website www.met.police.uk

- 2.4.7 Residents and members can also report incidents, intelligence and concerns to the Safer Merton service via our webpages on the councils website or via email - asbu@merton.gov.uk
- 2.4.8 **PSPO consultation process**
- 2.4.9 The current street drinking Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) is time limited. Changes in Home Office legislation introduced PSPOs but with the requirement that these are reviewed and renewed every three years with the option to extend again following another review. Merton's street drinking PSPO will expire in October 2020.
- 2.4.10 In order to gather evidence and understand the community's concerns regarding street drinking Safer Merton have launched a public consultation process which will capture the views of residents, businesses and visitors on a range of community safety matters. Street drinking is included in the consultation that runs until Friday 18 October.
- 2.4.11 The evidence from the surveys, alongside evidence gathered from LBM and Police systems will then provide a framework of options moving forward. It is hoped that, from the survey feedback and wider crime and ASB data, there will be sufficient data to support a continuation of these powers for a further three years
- 2.4.12 Members are asked to share the survey with all community contacts and to complete the survey themselves to ensure maximum numbers of responses are received.
- 2.4.13 In early 2020, the Safer Merton service will commence the formal option appraisal process taking the preferred PSPO option to members for sign off and adoption.
- 2.4.14 Members should note that if there is insufficient evidence to continue with a PSPO post October 2020 or if there is insufficient evidence to support the renewal of a borough-wide PSPO, changes in enforcement will need to be made.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. Should members wish not to review and seek to renew the PSPO from October 2020 the Safer Merton service will use the survey responses purely for business as usual matters.
- 3.2. There are no other alternative options for this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. The Safer Merton is currently out for consultation with the Community Safety Survey. The results of the survey combined with an analysis of all crimes that happen in the borough will help Safer Merton set the partnership's priorities for the year.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. In relation to the Community Safety survey, which is live between 4th August and 18th October, it is requested of members to get as many of their

constituents as possible to complete it. It is available online and paper copies are available.

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/crime-prevention-and-community-safety/safer-merton-consultation>

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The work detailed in this report is undertaken as business as usual.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. N/A this is an update report only.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. N/A this is an update report only

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. It is the statutory duty of the Crime and Disorder Act, which governs the work of Safer Merton, and the service discharges the CSPs responsibilities around this.

9.2. There are no specific crime and disorder implications for the contents of this report which members require sighting on

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. N/A this is an update report only

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

11.1. Safer Merton Community Safety Survey PDF leaflet

11.2. Safer Merton Anti-Social Behaviour Leaflet

11.3. 'What to do if I find a knife' toolbox briefing sheet

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Safer Merton

community safety survey

Safer Merton is a partnership of agencies that work together to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse in the London Borough of Merton. Please tell us what you think is important in keeping Merton safe by completing and returning the survey. Please can you provide us with general information rather than information about specific addresses or individuals.

Crime

1 Please tell us how much of a problem you feel the following crimes are in the area of Merton that you live or work, over the past year.

	Not a problem	Not very big	Neither big nor small	Fairly big	Very big	Don't know
Burglary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criminal damage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fraud/scams (including online fraud)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gangs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gun crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hate crime (race, religion, disability, sexuality etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knife crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motor vehicle crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robbery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual related crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 If you answered 'very big' or 'fairly big' to any of the answers in question 1, is this because:

- It has happened to you/you've seen it before
- It has happened to someone you know
- You have seen/heard it in the national news
- You have seen/heard it in the local news
- You have seen it via social media

Other (please state): _____

Anti-social behaviour

3 In relation to [anti-social behaviour](#), please tell us how much of a problem you feel the following issues are in the area of Merton that you live or work, over the past year.

	Not a problem	Not very big	Neither big nor small	Fairly big	Very big	Don't know
Begging and vagrancy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criminal damage/vandalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Groups of people loitering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intimidation and harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neighbour nuisance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noise nuisance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prostitution and kerb crawling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 If you answered 'very big' or 'fairly big' to any of the answers in question 3, is this because:

It has happened to you/you've seen it before	<input type="checkbox"/>	You have seen/heard it in the local news	<input type="checkbox"/>
It has happened to someone you know	<input type="checkbox"/>	You have seen it via social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have seen/heard it in the national news	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state):	<input type="checkbox"/>

5 Are there any other types of anti-social behaviour that are a concern to you not covered in the list in question 3?

Drugs and alcohol

6 In relation to [drugs and alcohol](#), please tell us how much of a problem you feel the following issues are in the area of Merton that you live or work, over the past year.

	Not a problem	Not very big	Neither big nor small	Fairly big	Very big	Don't know
Behaviour related to drug use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug paraphernalia discarded (canisters)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug paraphernalia discarded (syringes and foil)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug possession	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supply/selling of drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol disorder/behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Street drinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Underage drinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Underage alcohol sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7 If you answer 'very big' or 'fairly big' to any of the answers in question 6, is this because:

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| It has happened to you/you've seen it before | <input type="checkbox"/> | You have seen/heard it in the local news | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It has happened to someone you know | <input type="checkbox"/> | You have seen/heard it via social media | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You have seen/heard it in the national news | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please state): | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8 Please provide any further information that you would like us to know. For example, on areas of the borough where you would like to see our activities focused. Please do not include any personal information.

Crime and anti-social behaviour in Merton

9 If you were a victim of a crime in the past year in Merton, was it reported?

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wasn't a victim of crime | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

10 If you did report the crime, where did you report it?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Police via 999 or 101 | <input type="checkbox"/> | To a third party/other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police online reporting | <input type="checkbox"/> | London Borough of Merton | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Crimestoppers | <input type="checkbox"/> | Local councillors | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11 If you didn't report the crime, why not?

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Little chance of catching perpetrator | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fear of reprisal/victimisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police would not have been bothered/interested | <input type="checkbox"/> | Previous bad experience of police | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Too trivial/not worth reporting | <input type="checkbox"/> | Previous bad experience of courts | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No loss or damage occurred | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reported to other authorities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Inconvenient/too much trouble/didn't have time | <input type="checkbox"/> | No insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dealt with matter myself/ourselves | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please state): | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12 Thinking of the scenarios below, how safe or unsafe do you feel in your local area?

	Very safe	Fairly safe	Neither safe or unsafe	Fairly unsafe	Very unsafe	Don't go out/ never use	Don't know
When outside in daylight alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When outside after dark alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When on public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13 How would you rate the overall level of crime in Merton today compared with the overall level one year ago?

Much greater today	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly lower today	<input type="checkbox"/>
Slightly greater today	<input type="checkbox"/>	Much lower today	<input type="checkbox"/>
About the same level	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

14 How would you rate the overall level of anti-social behaviour in Merton today compared with the overall level one year ago?

Much greater today	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly lower today	<input type="checkbox"/>
Slightly greater today	<input type="checkbox"/>	Much lower today	<input type="checkbox"/>
About the same level	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

15 How informed do you feel about community safety issues?

Very well informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not informed at all	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairly well informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not very well informed	<input type="checkbox"/>		

16 Would more information about crime and community safety in your local area:

Increase your concern of crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make no difference	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decrease your concern of crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

17 What, if any additional information, would you like to receive?

18 Which of the following is the best way for us to give you information and advice about local community safety issues?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local newspapers/radio | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Community websites | <input type="checkbox"/> | My Merton magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neighbourhood Watch | <input type="checkbox"/> | Social media | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Safer Neighbourhood teams | <input type="checkbox"/> | Merton Council website | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Merton Police | <input type="checkbox"/> | Email | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (please state):

19 Where did you hear about the consultation?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local newspapers/radio | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Community websites | <input type="checkbox"/> | My Merton magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neighbourhood Watch | <input type="checkbox"/> | Social media | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Safer Neighbourhood teams | <input type="checkbox"/> | Merton Council website | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Merton Police | <input type="checkbox"/> | Email | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (please state):

About you

You do not have to answer these questions but doing so helps us see how representative the responses to the survey are. This will help us plan improvements to our services more effectively. What you tell us is strictly confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than analysing this consultation.

20 This question is about your gender identity. Do you identify as:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woman/girl | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary/genderqueer/agender/gender fluid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Man/boy | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transwoman/transgirl | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transman/transboy | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

21 What is your age group?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 35–44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65–74 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17–24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45–54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 or over |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25–34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55–64 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

22 Do you consider that you have a disability?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

23 What is your religion?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu | <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

24 How would you describe yourself (tick one box only):

- | | |
|--|--|
| White | <input type="checkbox"/> White – English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> White – Irish |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Irish Traveller |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background |
| Black or Black British | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> African |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background |
| Asian or Asian British | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic groups | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Mixed background |
| Other ethnic group | <input type="checkbox"/> Arab |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | |

25 Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/straight | <input type="checkbox"/> Gay/lesbian | <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | |

26 Locality

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I live in Merton | What is your home postcode?
_____ |
| | What ward is this in (if known)?
_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I work in Merton | What is your work postcode?
_____ |
| | What ward is this in (if known)?
_____ |

Completed forms can be sent to Safer Merton, London Borough of Merton, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX.

Neighbourhood Watch is active in Merton and if you would like to find out more about schemes in your area please visit www.mertonnhw.co.uk or alternatively contact mertonnhw@met.police.uk or 020 8649 3213.

If you have any questions about the consultation please contact Safer Merton on 020 545 4146 or email safer.merton@merton.gov.uk

Anti-social Behaviour

We are here
to **support**
you...

Harassment
Problem Solving
Rough Sleeping
Street Drinking
Begging
Neighbour Disputes
Graffiti
Supporting
Safeguarding
Drugs and Alcohol

merton.gov.uk/safermerton

Safer Merton

Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

merton



What **IS** anti-social behaviour?



ASB can be:

- ✓ Alcohol-related criminal behaviour
- ✓ Vandalism and verbal abuse
- ✓ Vehicle abandonment, nuisance or inappropriate use
- ✓ Rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour
- ✓ Drugs and alcohol misuse and paraphernalia
- ✓ Prostitution
- ✓ Begging or vagrancy.

What **IS NOT** anti-social behaviour?



Living noise – for example:

- ✗ Noise from children running and playing.
- ✗ Noise from opening and closing cupboards.
- ✗ Noisy washing machines and toilets flushing.
- ✗ Loud music, television and loud conversations from the adjoining property.
- ✗ Disagreements about boundary walls, fences and parking.
- ✗ Rubbish left outside of a neighbour's property.
- ✗ Animals fouling and rodent infestations.
- ✗ Cooking smells.

How to report anti-social behaviour



- ✓ If you rent your property from a housing association, you **MUST** contact them to report the behaviour in the first instance.
- ✓ If you own your home or live in a private rented property, you can report to Merton's Anti-social Behaviour team via **020 8274 4901** or email **ASBunit@merton.gov.uk**

Once reported:

- ✓ We will require you to complete a diary sheet over a period of 7-10 days.
- ✓ You can download a diary sheet and obtain more information from **www.merton.gov.uk/safermerton** or you can call the service on the number above and we will post a paper copy to you.

Safer Merton works in partnership to make sure Merton is a safe and united borough. Please contact Safer Merton or the relevant partners if you or someone you know has a complaint, alternatively call the Contact Centre on **020 8274 4901**.

Safer Merton

Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

Other useful agencies and contact numbers:

Merton Council Switchboard – 020 8274 4901.

Planning Enquiries – 020 8545 3777.

Environmental Health Noise Service

Monday to Friday – **020 8545 3025** (9am-5pm).

Out of hours – **020 8543 9750.**

Join your local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Neighbourhood Watch can help bring neighbours together to create strong, friendly, active communities where crime and anti-social behaviour are less likely to happen. To find out more, please visit our website at **www.mertonnhw.co.uk** or contact the Neighbourhood Watch manager on **020 8649 3213** or **mertonnhw@met.police.uk**



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Crimestoppers

Call **0800 555 111**

or report online at

www.crimestoppers-uk.org



Call anonymously with information about crime

Metropolitan Police

If you are a victim of a crime, please call **999** in an emergency or **101** in non-emergency situations.



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Working together for a safer London

Victim Support

You do not have to report a crime to the police to receive help. Contact Victim Support at any time regardless of how long ago the crime happened. Call free on **08 08 16 89 111.**



merton.gov.uk/safermerton

Safer Merton

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What to do if I find a knife or weapon?

If you locate a knife or anything you consider to be a weapon (excluding firearms), it is important that it is dealt with in an appropriate manner to best enable Police to give the most appropriate response, This leaflet is designed to give guidance on this.

If you find a knife please consider the circumstance of finding, the location and how the knife has been placed/hidden, any recent events you may be aware of and any obvious forensic opportunities, the most notable being blood contamination as this may indicate its use in an offence. All of these points will need to be passed to the Police operator for it to be assessed and responded to in the appropriate manner.

I will give three examples of finding a knife and the appropriate response.

POSSIBLY LINKED TO CRIME

Gardener finds a knife in a bush not particularly well hidden, near to a recent assault with a knife which appears to have blood residue on it.

All of these factors would give a strong indication that the knife is likely to have been used in the assault. Therefore it is imperative that it is dealt with in a manner that will preserve its forensic integrity and limit contamination.

LEAVE THE KNIFE IN PLACE.

DO NOT TOUCH IT.

CALL POLICE ON 101 and pass all information

STAY WITH IT UNTIL POLICE ARRIVE (unless unsafe to do so)

IF IT IS RAINING OR SNOWING AND IT IS POSSIBLE WITH AFFECTING THE KNIFE IN ANY WAY PLEASE COVER IT.

HIDDEN NO OBVIOUS LINK TO CRIME

Lighting engineer conducting maintenance checks finds a kitchen knife hidden in trunking on a staircase, no evidence to suggest it has been used in crime (no obvious marks/blood etc.)

The circumstances in this case would indicate that the knife has been hidden intentionally for future possible use and may not have been used in an offence outside of the initial possession.

IF POSSIBLE LEAVE KNIFE IN PLACE and stay with it, If not and you can safely remove the knife do so using clean rubber gloves placing it in a safe, clean and secure location.

CALL POLICE ON 101 and follow their advice

You may be asked to place the bag in a clean plastic bag and take it to your local Police Station

UNWANTED/OLD HOUSEHOLD KNIVES.

Knife block and knives found in bin storage cupboard, thrown out and awaiting collection by Refuse services.

In this case there is no indication of crime or criminal intent and no need for police involvement.

We would ask that any old knives that are unwanted are recycled responsibly by handing them to Refuse workers or taken them to a recycling centre to be disposed of correctly.

Please do not leave knives unattended as they could be taken and used as a weapon.

FIREARMS OR ANYTHING BELIEVED TO BE A FIREARM.

DO NOT TOUCH and STAY WITH IT

CALL POLICE IMMEDIATELY ON 999?

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Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 11 September 2019

Wards: All

Subject: Findings of the CfPS scrutiny improvement review

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

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

Contact officer: Julia.regan@merton.gov.uk; 0208 545 3864

Recommendations:

- A. To discuss and comment on the findings of the review and to identify areas for improvement to be included in an action plan
 - B. To discuss and agree the process for the development of an action plan
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission agreed at its meeting on 20 March 2019 to carry out a review of the overview and scrutiny function in Merton and to develop an improvement programme, with assistance from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), funded by the Local Government Association.
- 1.2. CfPS were asked to review Merton's overview and scrutiny function and to assess our practice against the government's recently published statutory guidance. It was anticipated that this independent review would be challenging whilst also being constructive in suggesting ways to strengthen scrutiny practice and drive forward improvement.
- 1.3. The review was carried out by Ed Hammond, Director of Research at CfPS. In carrying out the review, Ed Hammond met with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members, Chief Executive and the Corporate Management Team, Scrutiny Chairs, Scrutiny Members, partner organisations and voluntary sector organisations as well as drawing on documentary evidence (such as the annual members survey, task group reports and scrutiny annual reports) and watching recordings of scrutiny meetings.
- 1.4. The findings of the review are set out in a letter to the Chair of the Commission, Councillor Peter Southgate, and are appended to this covering report.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Members of the Commission are requested to discuss the findings of the review and consider how to approach the development of an action plan to strengthen and improve the overview and scrutiny function in Merton.
- 2.2. Members will be pleased to note that the overall findings are that scrutiny in Merton is effective; that it is well respected at senior levels in the organisation; that it has a positive, significant and sustained impact and that the scrutiny officer team is well regarded. Other strengths that were identified were the support that is provided during the topic selection and

- work programming process; task group work and the carrying out of an annual member survey to assess the effectiveness of scrutiny.
- 2.3. The review has identified a number of areas where improvement could be made and has posed some challenges for the Commission to consider. The main areas that have been identified for improvement are summarised thematically below so that the Commission can focus its discussion on these and agree the approach it wishes to take to developing an action plan.
 - 2.4. Agenda planning
 - 2.5. To give more thought to the purpose and content of agenda items so that scrutiny has a clear purpose and outcome for each item – use a range of mechanisms including discussion at previous meeting, pre-meeting or agenda planning session between Chair, Vice Chair and departmental officers
 - 2.6. To consider focussing on cross-cutting issues that affect the social fabric of the borough – see section 6.1 on “hot topics and slow burn issues”
 - 2.7. To direct officers to reframe committee reports to include executive summaries and align content with member objectives for scrutiny of that issue
 - 2.8. Could committee time be used differently, for example introducing more “task and finish” items into meetings?
 - 2.9. External scrutiny
 - 2.10. To review and revive Merton’s external scrutiny protocol that sets out the respective roles in relation to the scrutiny of partner organisations
 - 2.11. Scrutiny officers to brief partner organisations prior to attendance at meetings and to follow up afterwards on how the meeting went and any agreed actions
 - 2.12. Support to scrutiny members
 - 2.13. To consider how best to support new members – perhaps through peer to peer mentoring from a pool of experienced scrutiny councillors?
 - 2.14. To provide a wider range of leadership roles in scrutiny such as policy leads on particular issues as well as chair and vice chair positions on scrutiny committees and task groups
 - 2.15. To consider mechanisms for sharing leadership roles between administration and opposition councillors
 - 2.16. Member behaviour
 - 2.17. Chairs and Group leaders to lead in re-inforcing a respectful and non-party political culture at scrutiny meetings
 - 2.18. Developing an action plan
 - 2.19. Commission members are asked to give a steer on the key improvements that they wish to be included in the action plan.
 - 2.20. Members are also asked whether they wish to delegate the drawing up of an action plan to the Chair or to a small cross-party working group supported by

the Head of Democracy Services. It is anticipated that a draft action plan will be reported to the Commission's meeting on 13 November.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. The Commission has responsibility for keeping under review the effectiveness of the overview and scrutiny function and to recommend, where appropriate, changes in structure, processes or ways of working.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The timetable for drawing up and implementing an action plan is at the discretion of the Commission.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Set out in paragraph 3.1 above.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None for the purposes of this report.

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

- Findings of CFPS Scrutiny Improvement Review

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. None

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Cllr Peter Southgate
London Borough of Merton
Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
SM4 5DX

15 August 2019

Dear Cllr Southgate,

FINDINGS OF CFPS SCRUTINY IMPROVEMENT REVIEW

Thank you for inviting the Centre for Public Scrutiny to carry out an evaluation of Merton's scrutiny function. Our methodology for these reviews is still in development, as is our method for communicating findings. At the moment, our approach is to draft a letter like this one, containing key findings and evidence and suggesting areas in which actions might be developed.

The process for gathering evidence to support this review principally took place over June. I spoke to around 50 people (councillors and officers) and reviewed a range of documents produced by the council. I also watched clips of a number of scrutiny meetings, hosted online by Merton.tv.

1. Your objectives

Overall my work has looked at:

- **Culture.** The mindset and mentality underpinning the operation of the overview and scrutiny process. This will involve a focus on the Council's corporate approach to scrutiny;
- **Information.** How information is prepared, shared, accessed and used in the service of the scrutiny function;
- **Impact.** Ways to ensure that scrutiny is effective, that it makes a tangible difference to the lives of local people.

In doing so, I have looked at four main areas of scrutiny practice. These are:

- Organisational commitment and clarity of purpose;
- Members leading and fostering good relationships;
- Prioritising work and using evidence well;
- Having an impact.

Before I started I was advised of particular areas where Merton wanted us to focus. These were:

- Prioritisation and focus in the work programme (informed by a clear, well articulated role for scrutiny overall). I looked at the extent to which current arrangements result in a work programme which may be too broad, and at call-in arrangements;
- Outcomes from the scrutiny process – how these can be assessed and evaluated throughout the process;
- The way in which information is used by scrutiny councillors – how and where information can be accessed and how it can be used to triangulate, and form an accurate picture for councillors as to how services are delivered on the ground.

The questions I asked interviewees were all centred on these issues.

2. Overall

- Scrutiny in Merton is effective – particularly in task and finish groups;
- The impact of scrutiny overall is positive, significant and sustained;
- There is however a sense of disengagement from some members, based on perceptions of scrutiny’s independence and effectiveness. This has influenced some behaviour in committee;
- Work is needed to better plan and deliver work carried out in committee;
- A more directed focus for scrutiny – for example, on the “social fabric” of the borough – could help to manage these issues, particularly in the context of expected reduced officer resource for scrutiny in the near future.

Merton’s scrutiny function carries out work that makes a difference and has an impact. Generally it works well, and its work is particularly respected at senior levels in the organisation. However, the outcomes of the recent scrutiny members’ survey do raise a cause for concern. While the problems that have emerged do not yet risk the continued effectiveness of the function, they could do in the medium term, and action is required in order to arrest this risk.

There is a mismatch between the experiences of a range of members involved in scrutiny, and between officers and partners engaged in the function at all levels. For some, scrutiny is self-evidently productive and positive. For others, there is a sense of real disengagement, and with that a tendency to seek to use scrutiny for more overtly political purposes in a way that leads to the creation of tension. People have talked, expressed and articulated their views where they feel this way, but the organisation as a whole does not yet seem to have listened to and acted on these concerns.

The officer team supporting the scrutiny function is universally highly regarded; unprompted comments were made to us about this by the majority of interviewees and the point also comes through in documentary evidence. I know that there is an expectation that the scrutiny function will next year lose 0.5 FTE staff member. Experience suggests that these kinds of changes in resourcing need to be planned for well in advance; I have focused my findings to take account of this.

My work has not made any comments or suggestions on Merton’s scrutiny committee structure. Doing so at this point would I think be counterproductive. There is no obvious need to change the structure of committees or to change those meetings’ frequency. However, after putting in place some of the changes we suggest, councillors may feel that changes to structure provide a means of embedding those changes. If so, I think that May or June 2020

provides the earliest opportunity to have a serious discussion on whether that is in fact necessary.

3. Organisational commitment and clarity of purpose

I looked for evidence that scrutiny has the kind of backing that it needs from the top of the organisation to work properly.

The leadership is vocally positive about scrutiny. Senior officers are able to proactively point to a number of instances where scrutiny has made a positive difference. Some members feel that the administration attempts to “control” and “direct” scrutiny. I have found no evidence of this although I comment on the issue as evidence of some member disengagement in the section 4.1 below.

Scrutiny’s overall role is broadly expressed. As is the case in most councils, the role is said to be to hold the executive to account, to act as a critical friend, to provide support on policy development, and so on. These are all important aspects of scrutiny’s work but recent CfPS research suggests a need for more clarity and focus in how scrutiny’s role is described. This is about developing a shared understanding within and beyond the understanding of the specific niche that scrutiny will fill; a role not carried out by others; a particular and unique way for scrutiny to add value.

I explored this issue with a number of interviewees and through these conversations have developed a suggested approach. This has also been informed by a sense that scrutiny, while it is good at sniffing out “hot topics”, is less effective at identifying and tackling the “slow burn” issues which may fall below others’ radar as well. I have picked these issues up in more depth in section 6 below.

This approach is that **scrutiny should focus its attention on those cross-cutting issues which affect the social fabric of the borough.**

To explain, this means:

- Matters affecting the way that local people work and live together in the borough;
- Matters relating to the above for which the council, its partners and other agencies share responsibility – ie, where cross-cutting responsibilities are particularly complex;
- Matters where risks exist in relation to the above – financial or otherwise.

Such a focus would involve **scrutiny reflecting on the council’s responsibilities with relation to the public sector equality duty and its duties to deliver social value.**

Such an approach would by definition be outward looking and would allow scrutiny to build on previous good practice in relation to engagement with issues that are important to local people. It also presents a necessary challenge to scrutiny to strength and deepen engagement with partner organisations, a subject we discuss in more depth below.

This is of course but one way to frame a more directed focus for scrutiny. Other approaches are possible. We at CfPS have supported councils to develop a focus on risk, for example, or on understanding user need.

This kind of approach has to be **underpinned by a rigorous approach to the use and analysis of information.** Without it, members will not have the assurance that the issues on which they are focusing are the right ones. I explain more about my thoughts on information access and use in the sections below.

4. Members leading and fostering good relationships

I looked for evidence that scrutiny members feel a sense of ownership of the scrutiny function, built on a sense of organisational commitment, and that they take the lead in directing scrutiny work towards those areas where members, through their unique perspective as elected representatives, add the most value.

4.1 Member engagement

The council conducts a regular members' survey to test satisfaction with scrutiny overall. Few councils do this; the scrutiny function's ability to be reflective and to challenge its performance in this way should be commended. In this case, this survey work has revealed a growing sense of disengagement from the scrutiny process. In my evidence gathering I noted that this is felt particularly by newer members, especially opposition councillors. However, this is not to say that disengagement derives from a lack of understanding of scrutiny or a need for opposition councillors to be dissatisfied for political reasons.

There is an argument that this disengagement may be cyclical in nature – that is, that it reflects the place in the electoral cycle in which Merton finds itself. There may be some truth to this (experience from elsewhere demonstrates that relative engagement in scrutiny by councillors can have a rhythm to it, and Merton can point to longitudinal evidence from previous surveys which backs this point up). However, action to address the issue is still necessary.

The disengagement is caused by a number of perceptions, namely that:

- “Scrutiny is used politically by the administration, and the administration exerts control over scrutiny’s work”. This is a view held strongly by some councillors. The senior leadership of the council strongly express their support for and understanding of scrutiny’s independence from the executive. The open nature of the work programming process gives confidence that such control is not exerted when it comes to the choice of what scrutiny does and does not look at. However, it is less easy to say that scrutiny councillors in the majority group do need feel a pressure to show loyalty to the administration and its priorities in committee and in other spaces. If some councillors do feel this pressure, however inadvertently it may be being exerted (eg within the majority Group) **the administration needs to take steps to make clear its absolute commitment to scrutiny’s independence, and to act on that commitment.** I think that **peer to peer mentoring** within the majority group will help newer councillors, who may feel this pressure, to be paired with more experienced councillors who feel more comfortable asking challenging questions;
- “Scrutiny is used politically by the opposition”. An opposition councillor said to us, “If you can’t make a difference, you might as well make a point”, indicating that such activity is itself borne of a frustration with scrutiny. There is obviously the risk that this becomes a vicious circle – more disengagement leading to more inappropriate party political activity at committee. I think that the suggestions I make below on how work should be organised and directed at committee will help to deal with this;
- “Scrutiny’s work is superficial and ineffective”. I deal with this assertion in the section below, but it is worth emphasising again that scrutiny’s impact through task and finish work is well documented. Experience of committee work, however, could have been responsible for these viewpoints.

4.2 Member leadership

77 Mansell Street London E1 8AN

telephone 020 3866 5100 email info@cfps.org.uk twitter [@cfpscrutiny](https://twitter.com/cfpscrutiny)

Scrutiny's success is dependent on the right members, with the right capabilities and attributes, leading and managing the scrutiny function. This is dealt with in the new statutory scrutiny guidance.

Current chairs have varying levels of confidence in being able to lead and own the scrutiny function. The process for selecting chairs, as in many councils, rests in the hands of the administration. Naturally this will contribute to disengagement from some councillors, particularly opposition councillors. Some said to me that they felt the way that scrutiny was managed made it too "comfortable" for the administration.

The opportunity exists, alongside some of the other changes suggested, to **open out leadership positions to a wider range of members, including newer councillors**. Some of these leadership positions may be the subject specific "rapporteur" roles identified in section 5, below, but I also think that formal chairing positions would benefit from drawing in opposition members.

4.3 Relationships with stakeholders

Within the council, relationships are positive, as I have already noted. In relation to partners, however, things may not be wholly positive. Partners are willing to engage but some have been frustrated by their experiences at scrutiny. What feels like an overly combative and antagonistic experience can be compounded by not having a clear sense of what scrutiny members are attempting to achieve. In some instances partners have taken to adopting a defensive posture; scrutiny is something to be got through rather than a useful and positive part of working alongside the council. Relations with some partners seem to have improved with time but we do not get a sense that partners' frustrations with some of their experiences in scrutiny have been understood and acted on by scrutiny members. We pick up on some of these points in the section below on "behaviours in committee".

This having been said, **partners also need to understand that robust, public scrutiny is a necessary part of doing business with a local authority**.

As ever, opportunities exist to improve these relationships. In part, the kind of **reframing of elements of scrutiny's work which engages with partners** may help to achieve this, along the lines of the "social fabric" focus that we suggested above. Scrutiny work which is framed as "scrutiny of partner x" will always feel more antagonistic than "scrutiny of issue y, in which partner x is involved". The former often feels more institutional, less focused on local people's ultimate needs and is inevitably more adversarial than the latter.

It may, furthermore, be useful for scrutiny to **re-engage with partners to reset mutual expectations of their engagement with scrutiny** and scrutiny's powers in relation to their work. Partners can be divided into a number of categories:

- Providers; organisations with which the council contracts to deliver services. Scrutiny here may be framed around agreed performance standards and has the potential to feel combative if handled poorly;
- Advocates; organisations which represent subsets of the local population or groups of people or organisations in the borough;
- Formal partners; other institutions with whom the council must work but which are independent. This might include the NHS (locally and across London), the police (and other community safety partners), the London Mayor, TfL, the South London Waste Partnership, and others. Some of these relationships are bound up in statute and indeed

5. Prioritising work and using evidence well

5.1 Overall

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July, your Chief Executive said, “The only thing I would caution is that in my experience, scrutiny has far more work to do than time to do it, and an agenda item with just open-ended questions and responses becomes discursive”. I would agree with this, and think that the executive can do more to support scrutiny councillors (and scrutiny officers) to make an informed choice on what to look at, and how.

There is robust guidance and support available at the moment to assist members in coming to reasoned, informed judgements about the work programme. This is supported by a system of work programming workshops which aim to put members in the driving seat when it comes to topic prioritisation and selection. The overall high quality of scrutiny’s task and finish work is evidence that this part of the system is working well. However, scrutiny work in committee does not benefit from the same focus. One interviewee described scrutiny work at committee as “lilypadding”, with members jumping from one topic to another without delving beneath the surface.

Much of this rests on members’ effective access to and use of information. We have not identified significant issues with members’ fundamental ability to get hold of information they need, but the method and format chosen to share that information may need reflection. This is about the executive (officers and members) committing to different approaches, and about scrutiny councillors providing clarity around their objectives and expectations when information is requested.

The statutory scrutiny guidance suggests that councils develop information digests to manage the sharing of information otherwise than in formal committee meetings.

Suggested actions here may relate to:

- **The establishment, with members, of a set of contents for an information digest.** This could form some of the information currently regularly sent to committee to provide updates – thereby freeing up that space for more substantive work;
- **Identification of issues where officers feel the need to update members face to face, and for service departments to organise such updates either for all members, or for the provision of such updates at political Group meetings** (again, reducing burdens and expectations on scrutiny);
- **Giving individual members of committees responsibility for developing specialist subject knowledge on certain areas under the committee’s terms of reference.** Such members (known in some councils as “rapporteurs”) would take responsibility, in committee and in task and finish groups, in leading scrutiny’s work relating to that particular topic. This would provide a better sense of ownership and responsibility, and a career path within scrutiny for newer councillors aspiring to chairing positions.

5.2 Task and finish work

Task and finish work is generally of a high quality. I was pointed to a range of high impact task and finish work which included:

- Care leaver transition (and wider children's services issues relating to safeguarding);
- Parking outside schools;
- Management of reconfiguration issues relating to St Helier;
- Post office closures.

Task and finish work benefits from being well scoped and well supported.

On this point, I see no reason to make changes to what is clearly a winning formula. Merton should look to its approach to task and finish working and see how elements of it can be transposed to operations in committee which, as I note below, are more variable.

5.3 In committee

Challenges with scrutiny's work in committee – making committee sessions count – is a perennial issue in many councils. Merton can make improvements here; I think that this is one of the primary means of re-engaging those members who may have become disenchanted with scrutiny in recent months.

As part of our work we observed recent meetings on Merton.tv and reviewed agendas and reports for all scrutiny meetings in the past twelve months. Most committee agendas had between 2 and 4 substantive items and one or two additional "business" items. For the majority of the substantive items there was not a clearly articulated outcome from scrutiny's consideration of the outcome. The act of scrutiny itself – forensic questioning of officers, councillors and others in a public space – has an intrinsic value. But it remains the case that scrutiny will need to demonstrate how the act of questioning, and scrutiny in public, leads to change.

The amount of business means that meetings can be lengthy, and while observation demonstrates that members by and large stay engaged throughout, heavy agendas like this are not necessarily conducive to effective work.

Committee discussion looks and feels traditional; officers provide (sometimes lengthy) presentations and updates which are followed up by questions from councillors. The quality of questioning varies; in some instances forensic, but it is often more general and exploratory and sometimes superficial. Some councillors feel that scrutiny looks and feels too "comfortable" in its approach; I note elsewhere that scrutiny in committee does have the ability to be forensic.

There are a couple of clear examples in the past year – reviews in committee of podiatry and of parking charges in particular – that demonstrates that having impact through such an approach is possible. Success here is likely to relate to how particular subjects are framed and how the perspectives of others are drawn into the discussions. It is notable that such engagement looks and feel more like traditional task and finish working.

Part of this rests on the quality and consistency of information that committees receive. Officers writing scrutiny reports and preparing other information for committee need to better understand members' motivations and objectives in considering particular items. In some cases (in respect of performance management information for example) it may be more

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appropriate for information to be provided to members through more informal means. Members can then use information to escalate particular issues to committee for more detailed discussion. The need for this more streamlined approach is we think particularly needed in respect of work relating to the council budget.

Suggested actions may relate to:

- **Framing committee items in the right way.** At the moment substantive discussions are framed as updates from officers, executive members or partners; this may lead to a lack of focus. Members could challenge themselves to express beforehand exactly what outcomes they hope to deliver from considering particular topics, with officer reports and discussion focused on those issues;
- **A clearer route from topic selection to the agreement of substantive recommendations in committee.** For a committee to have the confidence that it is looking not only at the right issues, but the right issues in the right way, a spirit of reflection and self-criticism is needed to ensure that topics chosen will really make a difference – notwithstanding the temptation to look at issues because they are interesting;
- Developing better methods for information sharing, and for the use of information to better plan agendas (as discussed above in section 5.1);
- **The composition of reports to committee themselves.** Regular use of executive summaries by report writers, the more consistent use of plain English and plain maths (in respect of budget scrutiny), and more concise explanation of key issues in a way that aligns to a clearer sense of members’ objectives. With this in place it may not be necessary for officers to give presentations at committee (although we note, in observation, that lengthy officer presentations do not appear to be too much of a problem);
- **The number of substantive items on committee agendas.** More rigorous prioritisation (and dealing with “information” items differently) should lead to a situation where meetings will have no more than 1 or 2 substantive items;
- **The establishment of regular, informal, pre-meetings** between Chairs, Vice-Chairs and link officers from service departments to discuss forthcoming agendas and to clarify exactly how members expect such matters to be dealt with.

5.4 Behaviour in committee

Above we have noted issues around disengagement, and how this can evidence itself through poor behaviour at committee. We are concerned that some poor behaviours are being normalised. Members seem to justify poor behaviour, where it does occur, by assuming it is a natural part of the “realpolitik” of being on council.

Poor behaviour is not a prominent feature of scrutiny in Merton but I have seen some of it in observation and have been told about instances of it by interviewees. Inevitably different people’s understanding of “poor behaviour” will differ but generally it seems to evidence itself by occasional, performative, overtly party political, posturing and grandstanding in public meetings, occasional performatively antagonistic questioning of witnesses (including partners, as we have noted) and other behaviour which obstructs measured, reflective scrutiny.

The opportunity exists to reappraise such behaviours before they become widespread. It is positive that members to whom I spoke recognised the negative impact of these behaviours and also recognised that they needed to change. I think that some of the other measures

highlighted in this letter to tackle member disengagement and to clarify and focus scrutiny's role will help to lessen this problem but members should reflect on their own behaviour, and have the confidence to check the behaviour of their colleagues. **Chairs have an important role in modelling better and more constructive behaviour.**

6. Having an impact

I looked for evidence that scrutiny is able to demonstrate its tangible impact, that it has a consistent way of formulating and agreeing recommendations and that relationships with those outside the council in particular are such that partners can engage productively with recommendations when made.

Scrutiny has a clear and obvious impact. Many people were able to point to a range of recent pieces of work which resulted in real change. As I noted above this focused on task and finish work. I do know that some work in committee has also had an impact (investigations into podiatry services, for example), but work in committee in general is less effective, with no formal resolutions or recommendations following on from discussions.

It is worth stating that scrutiny's overall "hit rate" seems far higher than in other councils. I was particularly pleased to note how quickly and easy it was for senior officers to set out numerous examples of scrutiny which has positively and directly impacted on their work and the services they provide to local people.

The challenge lies in learning from what makes task and finish work successful in Merton, continuing those activities, and seeing what approaches can be applied to working in committee.

6.1 Hot topics and slow burn issues

As in many councils there is a tendency for scrutiny to focus its attempts to make an impact on hot topics – issues where there is likely to be particular local interest or contention.

Such issues are important – and it is right that scrutiny should seek to influence them. But looking at issues which already have a high profile, and not necessarily adopting a different perspective in doing so, risks duplication.

There is no evidence as things stand that scrutiny's choice of items for review overall is limiting its impact, but scrutiny might be able to add more unique character to what the council understands of a topic by approaching issues in a different way.

This is what the idea of focusing scrutiny on the "social fabric" of the borough is about. It provides a way to engage in big issues, but also provokes the council to review those less high profile matters which are nevertheless critically important to local people.

Slow burn issues differ from area to area so it is difficult to say exactly what they might be for Merton. Members will hopefully be able to identify persistent local issues which do not benefit from a coherent and consistent policy response. Scrutiny has reviewed matters relating to social care and children's services but looking at the wider determinants of risk in these areas, as a part of the borough's social fabric, might provide an opportunity to reframe such scrutiny to be more strategic.

6.2 Better managing committee work to secure impact

Issues relating to the borough's social fabric are likely to involve a range of different partners and stakeholders, and changing the format of some committee meetings to bring together

panels of witnesses – and the public – to discuss such issues could be a way to change the format and impact of work in committee.

Certainly, moving “task and finish” style ways of working into the committee environment could, in general, provide a way to make committee working more effective. In practice, this is likely to mean:

- **A limit of one or two substantive items per meeting;**
- **Using a pre-meeting** to scope such discussions in the same way a task and finish meeting might be scoped (with the officer report essentially being the scope for discussion);
- Even when more traditional discussion at committee is in prospect, the use of pre-meetings to set common objectives and possibly to reach consensus on questioning lines could be experimented with. Such measures could increase the resource commitment in supporting committees; as such some discretion is probably necessary.

I hope that you, other councillors and Merton’s officers find these thoughts useful as you review what actions you propose to take to further improve scrutiny. I look forward to continuing to work with you to clarify those actions. I note that it is planned to discuss these findings at a member meeting on 11 September alongside a draft action plan, and I look forward to feeding into that process.

Of course, I am happy to provide whatever further ongoing support you might require as those actions come to be implemented.

Yours sincerely,

Ed Hammond

Centre for Public Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 11 September 2019

Subject: Results of the Residents' Survey 2019

Lead officer: Caroline Holland, Director Corporate Services

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

Recommendations:

- A. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the results of the Annual Residents' Survey 2019
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper reports the results of the latest Residents' Survey, highlighting key messages and findings. A detailed report from the research provider is available on the council's website: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/residentssurvey>

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Between 1999 and 2014 the Annual Residents' Survey was based on the Survey of Londoners model previously commissioned by London Councils on behalf of boroughs. The former provider withdrew from delivery of this survey in 2015, and in 2017 BMG was commissioned by Merton Council to provide a new survey that kept elements of the Survey of Londoners but also incorporated questions recommend by the Local Government Association (LGA). This was published in July 2017.
- 2.2 Following a new competitive procurement exercise DJS Market Research was appointed by Merton in November 2018 to deliver a new survey. As before, this is a face-to-face survey with 1,000 adults that reflect our local population – segmented by age, ethnicity, gender, tenure, residence, disability and family composition. In addition, a different survey of 271 young people aged 11 – 17 was carried out in parallel.
- 2.2 The survey fieldwork was conducted in February and March 2019 for adults, with additional surveys with young people taking place throughout March and into early April.
- 2.3 There is no longer a matching London-wide survey to compare the results against but by incorporating standard questions set by the Local Government Association (LGA) it is possible to make some comparisons against the national telephone survey commissioned by the LGA that takes place three times each year

involving 1000 adults across England. The most recently available survey took place in October 2018 so has been used for comparison.

- 2.4 Where it is possible to compare results to previous surveys in Merton the results have been tested for statistical significance to ensure that changes reflect public perceptions. Changes quoted as significant have passed this validation. Testing for different demographic groups has also been conducted and any significant differences have been highlighted.
- 2.5 Wards have been placed in clusters in order to provide more local analysis at a meaningful level and to be consistent with previous surveys. The clusters are:
- North Wimbledon: Village, Hillside, Raynes Park, Wimbledon Park
 - South Wimbledon: Dundonald, Trinity, Abbey
 - South West Merton: Cannon Hill, Merton Park, West Barnes, Lower Morden
 - East Merton and Mitcham: Lavender Fields, Pollards Hill, Figge's Marsh
 - South Mitcham and Morden: Ravensbury, St Helier, Cricket Green
 - North East Merton: Colliers Wood, Graveney, Longthornton

Highlights from the 2019 results

- 2.6 Overall satisfaction levels remain high and generally above the LGA benchmark, with particularly positive feedback on services key to the objective for the council of being a great place for families, including crime, education and leisure services, although satisfaction with environmental services has been impacted by recent service changes. The most notable results were:
- The vast majority of Merton residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (89%). This is 11-percentage points higher than the national benchmark of 78%.
 - A clear majority of residents feel safe in their local area both during the day (98%) and after dark (84%). Again, this compares favourably against national benchmarking (93% and 76% respectively).
 - Overall satisfaction with the Council has increased slightly (70% up from 67%) and is well above the LGA benchmark (60%)
 - The proportion of residents who feel the council delivers value for money, acting on the concerns of residents and informing residents are all still tracking above the LGA benchmark, despite decreases compared to 2017.
 - There was a significant increase in the rating of street lighting but most other services have seen a decrease, in particular refuse collection, recycling and street cleaning where the survey coincided with service changes that have resulted in service disruption; similar changes have resulted in an impact on satisfaction levels in other local authorities.
 - Amongst service users there was an increase in satisfaction with education provision, libraries and leisure and sport facilities.

- Residents were asked what they valued most in Merton and the top three responses were public transport, parks and open spaces and low levels of crime.
- When asked what most needs improving nearly half said affordable housing was one of their top three issues.
- Merton residents were more likely to feel positive about their well-being than residents across London and the whole UK.
- Young people gave more positive ratings for parks, playgrounds and open spaces, public transport, libraries, primary schools, secondary schools, and sixth form/further education than in 2017.

LGA Questions

- 2.7 A number of questions have been taken from the LGA 'Are you being served?' question set so that comparison can be made with a national telephone survey conducted in October 2018. These are set out in the table below.

Question	Merton 2019 % positive	LGA % positive
Satisfaction with the local area	89%	78%
Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things	70%	60%
Agree the Council provides value for money	56%	44%
Council acts on the concerns of local residents	63%	56%
Informed about Council services and benefits	70%	58%
Feel safe after dark	84%	76%
Feel safe during the day	98%	93%

- 2.8 The same question set was asked in 2017 and the table below shows the change since the last survey.

Question	Merton 2019 % positive	Merton 2017 % positive	Change since 2017
Satisfaction with the local area	89%	92%	-3%
Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things	70%	67%	+3%
Agree the Council provides value for money	56%	65%	-9%
Council acts on the concerns of local residents	63%	75%	-12%
Informed about Council services and benefits	70%	81%	-11%
Feel safe after dark	84%	85%	-1%
Feel safe during the day	98%	96%	+2%

- 2.9 In terms of cluster wards, residents of North East Merton are the least likely to be satisfied (82%) with their local area and those from South Mitcham and Morden are the most likely (96%). Levels of satisfaction have increased by 8% points in

South Mitcham and Morden since 2017, but there have been decreases of 8% points in North Wimbledon and North East Merton. Satisfaction decreases amongst residents who are new to the borough (83% compared to 91% for those who have lived here for over 5 years), and is markedly lower where residents feel refuse collection are poor (82% satisfaction with the local area) and for those who rated recycling facilities as poor (76% satisfaction with the local area).

- 2.10 Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things compares favourably to the LGA benchmarking. There are large variations in opinion by ward cluster with as many as 87% of residents in South Mitcham and Morden saying they are satisfied with the way the council runs things (and just 3% are dissatisfied), whilst satisfaction is 57% in North East Merton.
- 2.11 DJS has conducted a key driver analysis to show which views or services have the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Council. The three most important drivers of satisfaction were value for money, advocacy (those who would speak positively about the council) and street cleaning.
- 2.12 More than half (56%) agree that the Council provides value for money, 12% more than the LGA benchmark, whilst 19% disagree. This represents a 9%-point decrease since 2017 (from 65%). Agreement varies considerably by area with residents living in the most deprived areas of the borough more likely to be positive. Opinions regarding value for money are strongly related to how informed residents feel the council keeps them. Among the minority of residents who do not feel well informed by the council, just 33% believe the council provides value for money. Likewise, just 32% among the minority of residents who feel the refuse collection service is poor feel value for money is provided.
- 2.13 Close to two thirds (63%) of residents believe the council acts on their concerns. The Merton result compares well to the LGA benchmark (56%). This is a decrease since 2017 of 12% points (from 75%), although the LGA benchmark has also fallen. The proportion who feel the council does not act on their concerns has also increased in the last two years (by 11% points to 28%).
- 2.14 Seventy percent feel either very well or fairly well informed, although this is lower than in 2017 (81%). This compares well to the LGA benchmark (58%), which also experienced a fall.
- 2.15 Most residents living in the borough feel safe in their local area, both during the day (98%) and at night (84%). This is similar to 2017 and compares well against the national figures collected by the LGA when 76% of residents felt safe after dark and 93% felt secure during the day.

Image of the council

- 2.16 A number of questions about the image of the council have been continued from the former survey. The results from these questions and a comparison with the results from 2017 are set out below.

Your council....	% Strongly agree/ agree 2019	% Strongly agree/ agree 2017	Change since 2017
Is doing a good job	70%	82%	-12%*
Is efficient and well run	64%	76%	-12%*
Involves residents in making decisions	44%	62%	-18%*
Is difficult to get through to on the phone [^]	36%	50%	-14%*
Responds quickly when asked for help	56%	65%	-9%*
Has friendly and polite staff	73%	78%	-5%*
Is doing a better job than one year ago	43%	48%	-5%*
Is making the local area a better place	69%	76%	-7%*

[^]Negative polarity – disagreement is desirable

* Statistically significant change

2.17 Levels of support have fallen since 2017 when there were record levels of agreement with doing a good job; efficient and well run; responds quickly when asked for help and involves residents. The number of residents agreeing that the council is difficult to get through to on the phone has improved by 14%-points.

2.18 Residents were also asked whether they would speak positively or negatively about the Council. Just over half (51%) would speak positively, nearly four times the number who would speak negatively (14%). This compares to 64% who said they would speak positively in 2017 and 9% who would speak negatively. As with overall satisfaction and value for money residents in the East of the borough were more likely to be positive than those in the West.

Service	% Very good/good 2019	% Very good/good 2017	Change since 2017
2.19 Residents were asked to rate each service from a given list on a scale from very good to very poor, even if they do not have direct experience of the service, as well as being asked whether they or their family used those services. The table below sets out the percentage giving a positive rating from all respondents.			
Parks, playgrounds, open spaces	77%	75%	+2%
Recycling facilities	56%	71%	-15%
Street Lighting	78%	70%	+8%
Refuse collection	48%	69%	-21%*
Libraries	68%	68%	0%
Leisure and sports	59%	63%	-4%
Street cleaning	44%	53%	-9%*
Primary education	49%	51%	-2%
Parking	45%	51%	-6%*
Repair of roads	43%	48%	-5%
Nursery education	40%	47%	-7%*
Secondary education	42%	42%	0%

Satisfaction with services

*Significant change

2.20 The decrease in the ratings for refuse collection and recycling services are consistent with the impact seen following major service changes in other boroughs. For example, in LB Sutton their December 2017 resident survey saw

waste collection decrease by 22%-points compared to 2015 and recycling services by 15%-points.

2.21 Respondents were asked to identify which services they used from this list. The table below sets out the scores from service users compared to the 2017 scores.

Service	% Very good/good 2019	% Very good/good 2017	Change since 2017
Parks, playgrounds & open spaces	81%	79%	+2%
Primary education	86%	80%	+6%*
Street lighting	78%	70%	+8%*
Libraries	82%	74%	+8%*
Nursery education	79%	79%	0%
Secondary education	79%	62%	+17%*
Leisure & sport facilities	75%	68%	+7%*
Recycling	55%	77%	-22%*
Parking	45%	50%	-5%
Refuse collection	48%	69%	-21%*
Street cleaning	44%	53%	-9%*
Repair of roads and pavements	44%	48%	-4%

*Significant change

2.22 Respondents were also asked to consider how the Council deals with specific environmental issues:

Service	Satisfaction 2019	Satisfaction 2017	Satisfaction 2014
Graffiti	75%	74%	63%
Dog fouling	54%	63%	49%
Litter	47%	60%	61%
Fly-tipping	57%	59%	54%

Local area, and community cohesion

2.23 All residents were asked to choose up to three things from a list that they value the most in Merton. By far the most valued aspect of the borough is its public transport, with 56% choosing this. This is of greater importance to younger residents (61% aged 18-24 and 57% aged 25-44). Parks and open spaces are valued by around half of residents (51%) and safety/low levels of crime is valued by 48% of residents.

2.24 Following on from this, all residents were presented with another list and asked to specify which three they felt needed most improvement in the borough. The top

answers were affordable housing, which is chosen by 46% of residents, cleanliness of streets (45%), things for young people to do (30%) and traffic (27%).

- 2.25 Respondents were presented with a list of local information sources and were asked which they currently use to keep them informed about what's happening in Merton. As in 2017, the three most frequently mentioned sources of information are the Merton Council website (51% in 2019, 39% in 2017), information leaflets provided by the council (39% in 2019, 33% in 2017) and the My Merton publication (35% in 2019, 43% in 2017).
- 2.26 Respondents were read a list of neighbourhood issues and asked to rate the extent to which these are problems in their local area. Of the issues discussed, residents feel that burglary is the biggest problem with 23% citing this as a very big or fairly big problem. In comparison to 2017, there has been an increase in residents feeling that people using or dealing drugs is a problem (11% in 2017 to 20% in 2019), but a decrease in people being drunk or rowdy in public places (17% in 2017 to 13% in 2019).
- 2.27 Just over one in ten residents (12%) have offered their time to undertake unpaid or voluntary work within their local community over the last 12 months. This is a drop of 8% points since 2017 however (from 20%). On the whole, the desire to contribute to the local community becomes stronger both with the length of time that the resident has lived in the neighbourhood and with age. Residents who do not get involved in community activities cite a lack of available time due to other commitments as the main reason for non-participation (69%).
- 2.28 94% of respondents feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together, with 0% disagreeing with this statement. This is similar to the 93% agreeing in 2017.
- 2.29 Almost nine in ten (88%) residents feel that there are people in their local area who they can rely on in an emergency, with relationships commonly forged based on age and the length of time that the resident has lived in the borough.
- 2.30 Overall, three in five (59%) residents believe the air quality is good, with just 8% saying it is very good. Only 7% deem the air quality to be poor, although this increases to 20% in North East Merton. There is a difference in views between the East and West of the borough, with 65% in the West feeling the air quality is good compared to 54% in the East.
- 2.31 Standard questions used by the Office of National Statistics to measure wellbeing were added to the 2017 survey. The wellbeing scores for 2019 compare very favourably to 2017, particularly in terms of residents feeling like the things they do in their life are worthwhile. They also compare well to the UK and London benchmarks. Older residents (aged 65+) and those with a disability are significantly less happy with their life nowadays. Residents with a disability are also less likely to feel the things they do are worthwhile and less likely to feel happy.

Young People's Survey

2.32 As with the adults the vast majority of young people in Merton are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (95%). 11-15 year olds are more likely to be satisfied than 16-17 year olds. These results are similar to 2017.

2.33 Most (70%) are satisfied with how Merton Council runs things, with just 3% dissatisfied. This is the same level of satisfaction as the survey of adults, but a significant drop from 2017 (84%).

2.34 Respondents were then asked to rate the Council on a series of more specific measures relating to services and communications:

Statement	% agree 2019	% agree 2017
Provides services which young people need	50%	48%
Does enough to protect young people	49%	57%
Listens to the concerns of young people	41%	47%
Keeps young people informed about what they are doing	34%	38%
Involves young people in decision making	23%	40%

2.35 Respondents were asked to rate a series of local services in their area.

Service	% Very good / good 2019	% Very good / good 2017
Parks, playgrounds and open spaces	86%	56%
Public transport	83%	63%
Libraries	77%	65%
Leisure and sports facilities	64%	59%
Support / guidance on future jobs/careers	64%	50%
The police	54%	56%
Local health services	54%	58%
Services for children with disabilities	52%	NA
Arts and culture	44%	35%
Street cleaning	43%	42%
Activities for young people	43%	47%
Social services for children/families	41%	37%
Primary schools	83%	64%
Secondary schools	84%	60%
Sixth form/ Further Education college	71%	47%
Nurseries	58%	NA
Children's centres	43%	NA

2.36 Young residents were asked to say what they value the most about living in Merton. Their open comments were studied and the top themes were the

education provision within the Borough (47%), and parks and open spaces (41%).

- 2.37 Young residents were shown a list of 16 issues relating to their local area that could cause them to worry. One in five (20%) are not worried about anything, selecting the option None of these, whilst the top concerns were the amount of litter on the streets (28%) and not enough being done for young people in Merton (28%).
- 2.38 Young people were then asked to think of the concerns they have for themselves personally, main concerns of young people living in Merton focus on their personal safety, with 28% worried about bullying, 27% anxious about crime, 25% nervous of gangs and 21% wary of online security. None of these was also selected by 26% of respondents.
- 2.39 Young residents who expressed concerns either at a local or at a personal level were then asked to explain why they were worried about the issues that they selected. A wide range of reasons lie behind the concerns of young residents with no clear main cause, however the most consistent theme relates to hate crime and knife attacks (11%).
- 2.40 Young residents were asked to select from a given list which sources they would turn to if they needed help, with the most common responses being a family member (83%), a teacher (42%) and a friend (38%).
- 2.41 Of a list of possible ways to get involved in their community, current or previous engagement is highest in terms of doing voluntary work (20%) and being a member of a school council (10%). In addition to this, for each activity at least one in three (37%) state that they will do this in the future.
- 2.42 Respondents were asked if they attend any of a list of activities out of school hours. The most popular activities, are parks and playgrounds (63%), libraries (40%) and sports and gym (33%).
- 2.43 Respondents were also shown a list of activities and facilities and asked which, if any, they would like to attend out of school hours. Up to two responses were allowed. The most popular activities were sports activities (30%) and parks and playgrounds (24%).

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 None.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1 The survey was conducted with a sample of 1,000 people based on the key components of the local population. The survey is conducted by means of interviews in homes and public places, and also contains a specific set of

questions for young people, which were put to 271 11-17 year-olds.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1 The survey fieldwork was conducted in February and March 2019 for adults, with additional surveys with young people taking place throughout March and into early April.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The 2019 Residents Survey has cost £24,250. The Children, Schools and Families Department have met £3000 of this for the Young People's Survey.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council has a best value duty to consult residents and the survey helps meet this duty.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 A number of questions in the survey measure equalities and community cohesion targets. The survey also enables the Council to understand the views and priorities of local people, so that services can be tailored accordingly.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The survey is a key tool for identifying the crime and disorder concerns and priorities of local people. The findings will be fed into the statutory Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment to set priorities for 2019-20.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None.

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

- 11.1 None

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS – the following documents have been relied on in drawing up this report but do not form part of the report

- 12.1 Resident Survey 2019 Report <https://www.merton.gov.uk/residentssurvey>
12.2 Resident Survey cross-tabulations and charts.
12.3 LGA Polling on resident satisfaction with councils October 2018

Agenda Item 9

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

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION - FINANCIAL MONITORING TASK GROUP

17 JULY 2019

(7.15 pm - 9.15 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Stephen Crowe (in the Chair),
Councillor Nigel Benbow, Councillor Edward Gretton,
Councillor Natasha Irons, Councillor Paul Kohler,
Councillor Owen Pritchard and Councillor Peter Southgate

ALSO PRESENT: Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Roger Kershaw (Assistant Director of Resources), Bindi Lakhani (Head of Accountancy), Zoe Church (Head of Business Planning), David Keppler (Head of Revenues and Benefits) and Julia Regan (Head of Democracy Services)

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR (Agenda Item 1)

Councillor Stephen Crowe was unanimously elected as Chair. As Councillor Natasha Irons had joined the task group subsequent to the publication of the agenda, the Chair welcomed her to the meeting.

The task group AGREED to record its thanks to former task group members Councillors Aidan Mundy, Eleanor Stringer and David Williams for their contribution last year.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

3 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

4 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING - 4 APRIL 2019 (Agenda Item 4)

The minutes were AGREED as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to the following amendments:

Item 7 – penultimate sentence of the second paragraph should read “Research into the private rented market found that the long term modelling is comparable to that used by Merantun”.

Item 7 third paragraph final sentence to be replaced by “Although Merantun was not set up to build affordable housing, the intention is to deliver as close to 40% as would be expected from any other developer.”

ACTION: Head of Democracy Services to amend and re-publish minutes.

5 BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT 2018/19 (Agenda Item 5)

The Director of Corporate Services, Caroline Holland, introduced the report and summarised the content.

Revenue budgets

In response to a question about the extent to which overly cautious forecasts by some budget managers are cancelled out by others who put forward unachievable savings, Caroline Holland said that finance officers work closely with budget managers to provide assistance and challenge to improve forecasting and delivery of savings. The Head of Accountancy, Bindi Lakhani, added that there were no significant budget areas in which large budget variances occurred continually and that finance officers question underspends as well as overspends.

Caroline Holland provided additional information in response to questions about service budgets:

Environment and Regeneration

The underspend on waste services was partly due to the council's unexpected involvement in the testing phase of the ERF (energy from waste) facility which led to one-off savings of £1.1k.

Work is underway to improve the IT system for residents to report environmental and other issues and this will be integrated with Veolia's IT systems.

The transport services overspend and associated recruitment issues will be examined as part of the officer review of this service.

Children Schools and Families

Merton is not alone in experiencing a volatility of demand in placement and SEN transport budgets. Officers are examining the offer being made to young adults as a result of the Care Act requirement for responsibilities to continue until the age of 25. Consideration is also being given to the best way to meet the growing demand for special needs school places.

Officers are looking closely at the children's social care budget to assess whether these pressures can be met within budget or whether there is a case for action similar to that taken for the adult social care budget. The Director reminded members of the requirement for the council to set a balanced budget overall.

The negative balance on the dedicated schools grant (DSG) reserve is likely to increase. A number of councils, including Merton, have jointly written to ask the government for additional funding to meet the DSG budget pressures. If this is not successful, the council may be forced to use the General Fund reserves.

Miscellaneous debt update

The Head of Revenues and benefits, David Keppler, introduced this part of the report and drew members attention to the new table at paragraph 3.24 that shows the value of housing benefit overpayments created and collected by year. David Keppler said that the higher amount collected in 2018/19 was partly due to the provision of improved and more timely data from the Department of Work and Pensions so that adjustments can be made to payments and, where applicable, attachments applied to earnings.

Members were pleased to note that the overall collection rate of sundry debt in 2018/19 now stands at 92%.

Reserves

Caroline Holland and Roger Kershaw, Assistant Director of Finance, provided information and explanation in response to members questions.

The approach taken to each reserve will depend upon its purpose and use. Also, the availability of funds for investment or other use, such as creating revenue streams, will depend on provenance and purpose – for example, government grants are generally given for a specific purpose and remain in the reserves budget until spent.

The draft accounts show that the council has £60m investments and sets out the strategy for use. The council considers options to maximise investment income whilst protecting its capital – the housing property council is one way of doing this. The council also uses cash to reduce debt charges on the capital programme. The financing of the capital programme is set out on page 66 of the 2019/23 Business Plan – copies of which were given to task group members:

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Business%20Plan%202019-23%20%28Web%20Version%29.pdf>

The council's approach is reviewed quarterly as part of the treasury management strategy and capital programme.

Caroline Holland undertook to include detailed information on funding as part of the task group's deep dive into the capital programme. ACTION: Director of Corporate Services

Narrative Statement

Task group members praised the clear and helpful language used in the Narrative Statement (Appendix 6) and suggested that the text could be used in wider communication to staff and residents on budget issues.

Establishment control and vacancy reporting

Members noted the stability of the data.

In response to a question about recruitment and the offer made to attract staff to the authority, Caroline Holland said that the offer is set out on the council's website and includes local government pension, flexible working and the employee assistance programme as well as information about the council's ambition and reputation.

6 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 6)

The task group considered the list of suggestions and AGREED to include the following items in its work programme on dates to be advised by the Director of Corporate Services:

- Deep dive review of the future capital programme
- Report on lessons learned from the customer contact contract (report to be circulated in advance of agenda publication so a decision can be taken on whether there would be space for an additional agenda item at that meeting)
- Allocation of grants through the voluntary sector strategic partners programme

ACTION: Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democracy Services

The task group also AGREED to hold the following items in reserve in the order of preference set out below:

- Social care charging – Merton Centre for Independent Living to be invited to attend the meeting
- Review of borough's school PFI contracts

The task group noted that the passenger transport service, Clarion, Veolia and idVerde items would be reviewed by other scrutiny bodies during 2019/20 and that Merantun had been scrutinised in April. These were therefore not prioritised for inclusion in the task group's work programme.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2019/20



This table sets out the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's Work Programme for 2018/19 that was agreed by the Commission at its meeting on 4 July 2019.

This work programme will be considered at every meeting of the Commission to enable it to respond to issues of concern and incorporate reviews or to comment upon pre-decision items ahead of their consideration by Cabinet/Council.

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

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

Scrutiny Support

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

Meeting date – 4 July 2019

Scrutiny category	Item/Issue	How	Lead Member/ Lead Officer	Intended Outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Leader and Chief Executive – vision, key priorities & challenges for 2019/20	Presentation	Leader of the Council Ged Curran, Chief Executive	Context for Commission’s work programme
	Merton Partnership annual report	Report	Chief Executive John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships	Context for Commission’s work programme
	Discussion of questions for BCU Borough Commander			To agree approach to questioning for the next meeting
Scrutiny reviews	Analysis of Members’ annual scrutiny survey 2019	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	Discuss findings and agree action plan for 2019/20
	Report of the road safety around schools scrutiny task group	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To agree report for submission to Cabinet
	Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme 2017/18	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To agree work programme and task group reviews

Meeting date – 11 September 2019

Scrutiny category	Item/Issue	How	Lead Member/ Lead Officer	Intended Outcomes
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Borough Commander – crime and policing in Merton	Report and in-depth discussion	Borough Commander	To hold Borough Commander to account on crime and disorder
	Safer Merton Update	Report	Neil Thurlow, Community Safety Manager	Progress report to focus on ASB, knife crime & street drinking
Holding the executive to account	Annual Residents Survey	Report/presentation	Kris Witherington, Consultation & Community Engagement Manager	To discuss results relating to Safer and Stronger strategic themes and corporate capacity
Scrutiny reviews	Review of the overview and scrutiny function	Report of review carried out by Centre for Public Scrutiny	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To discuss review results and agree action plan
	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting on 17 July and 29 August 2019	Cllr Stephen Crowe, chair of task group Julia Regan	To note minutes of meetings

Meeting date – 13 November 2019

Scrutiny category	Item/Issue	How	Lead Member/ Lead Officer	Intended Outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Draft Sustainable Communities Plan	Report and discussion	John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships	Opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny.
	Shared services – updated list of services	Report	Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement	To assess whether there is a need for further scrutiny
	Demographic profile of councillors and senior officers	Report	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To review and consider next steps
	Universal Credit	Position statement	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To discuss and comment on the report
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan 2020/24 - information pertaining to round one of budget scrutiny	Report	Cllr Mark Allison Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To send comments to Cabinet budget meeting 9 December
Scrutiny reviews	Local Democracy Week – joint scrutiny with the youth parliament	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To receive report and agree next steps
	Road safety around schools task group	Cabinet response and action plan	Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	To receive Cabinet response and action plan
	Review of the overview and scrutiny function – action plan	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To consider the action plan

Meeting date – 22 January 2020 – scrutiny of the budget

Scrutiny category	Item/Issue	How	Lead Officer	Member/Lead	Intended Outcomes
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan 2020/24	Report – common pack for Panels and Commission	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services		To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
	Business Plan update - latest info from Cabinet 13 January (if any)	Report	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services		To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
	Scrutiny of the Business Plan 2020-2024: comments and recommendations from the overview and scrutiny panels	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services		To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
Scrutiny reviews	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting	Cllr Stephen Crowe, chair of task group Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services		To note minutes of meeting held on 12.11.19

Meeting date – 18 March 2020

Scrutiny category	Item/Issue	How	Lead Member/Lead Officer	Intended Outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Veolia contract – street cleaning	Report	Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	Case study approach to contract management
	Access to services through the council's website	Report	Sophie Ellis, AD, Business Improvement	Update on accessibility issues
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Restorative justice	Report	Neil Thurlow, Safer Merton Roberta Evans, YOT MOPAC/RJ service provider	Discussion with providers and stakeholders
	Modern day slavery	Report	Dawn Jolley/Neil Thurlow	
Scrutiny reviews	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting	Chair of task group Julia Regan	To note minutes of meeting held on 24.02.20
	Commercialisation, revenue generation and income maximisation	Report of scrutiny task group	Chair of task group Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To agree report for submission to Cabinet (on 23 March or in June)
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Discussion of questions for the Borough Commander	Discussion	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	Plan line of questioning for meeting on 2 April

Meeting date – 2 April 2020

Scrutiny category	Item/Issue	How	Lead Officer	Member/Lead	Intended Outcomes
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Borough Commander – crime and policing in Merton	Report and in-depth discussion	Borough Commander		To hold Borough Commander to account on crime and disorder
	Safer Merton Update	Report	Neil Thurlow, Community Safety Manager		Progress report to focus on domestic violence
Holding the executive to account	Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-20	Action plan	Evereth Willis, Equality and Community Cohesion Officer		To comment on progress made with action plan
Performance management	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan		To approve and forward to Council
	Member Survey Results (if available)	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan		To discuss results and agree action plan
	Planning the Commission's 2020/21 work programme	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services		To review 2019/20 and agree priorities for 2020/21
Scrutiny review	Road safety around schools –update on Cabinet action plan	Report	Chris Lee, Director Environment and Regeneration		To comment on progress made with action plan

Forward plan items relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Procurement of corporate security and support services contract

Decision due: 7 Oct 2019 by Director of Corporate Services

Feasibility and costs of a Council Tax Voluntary scheme

Report to assist Cabinet with making recommendations on the feasibility of introducing a scheme for residents in the highest Council Tax band to volunteer to pay additional council tax, or contribute to community services in other ways.

Decision due: 11 Nov 2019 by Cabinet

Award of Contract for Provision of Cleaning Services to LBM - Corporate Services Contract - April 2020

The contract for the provision of cleaning services to the Council's corporate and other operational sites has been retendered in accordance with EU regulations and Council's procurement procedures.

Decision due: 11 Nov 2019 by Cabinet

Print Managed Service Contract

To enter into a re-procured Print Managed Service contract for the supply and maintenance of corporate multi-function devices (photocopiers/printers/scanners) including replacement high volume Print room equipment.

Decision due: 10 Feb 2020 by Cabinet

Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21

Report for agreement of 2020/21 council tax support scheme

Decision due: 11 Nov 2019 by Cabinet

Decision due: 20 Nov 2019 by Council

Preparing the Council for the UK's exit from the European Union

An update on the report to Cabinet in November 2018 that sought to highlight the ways in which the council and

the services it provides will potentially be impacted by the UK's withdrawal from the European Union. The report will provide an update on the latest position relating to Brexit as it pertains to the council and the actions the council has taken during the year in preparation.

Decision due: 19 Sep 2019 by Cabinet

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