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Merton Council

Sustainable Communities

Overview and Scrutiny

Panel



Date: 17 March 2020

Time: 7.15 pm

Venue: Committee Rooms CDE, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, SM4 5DX

AGENDA

Page Number

1	Apologies for absence	
2	Declarations of pecuniary interest	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 4
4	Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning update (Veolia)	5 - 18
5	Design Review Panel Presentation to be given by the Head of Future Merton	
6	Housing Strategy Presentation to be given by the Assistant Director for Sustainable Communities	
7	Support for private renters	19 - 26
8	Merton Adult Education	27 - 40
9	Libraries and Heritage - Annual Report	41 - 52
10	London Borough of Culture	53 - 76
11	Performance Monitoring	77 - 84
12	Planning the 20/21 Work Programme	85 - 96

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

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- Bus routes: 80, 93, 118, 154, 157, 163, 164, 201, 293, 413, 470, K5

Further information can be found [here](#)

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Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Membership

Councillors:

Natasha Irons (Chair)
Daniel Holden (Vice-Chair)
Ben Butler
David Dean
Anthony Fairclough
Aidan Mundy
Geraldine Stanford
Owen Pritchard

Substitute Members:

Nigel Benbow
Eloise Bailey
Nick Draper
Brenda Fraser
Edward Gretton

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 Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership.

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

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

Scrutiny's work falls into four broad areas:

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

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

For more information, please contact the Scrutiny Team on 020 8545 4035 or by e-mail on scrutiny@merton.gov.uk. Alternatively, visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny