

Merton Council Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 16 February 2022
Time: 7.15 pm
Venue: Merton Civic Centre

AGENDA

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| 1 | Declarations of pecuniary interest | |
| 2 | Apologies for absence | |
| 3 | Minutes of the previous meeting | 1 - 4 |
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| 5 | Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26 | 211 - 262 |
| 6 | Safer Merton - Safety of Women and Girls | 263 - 274 |
| 7 | Repurposing the High Streets - Task Group report (To follow) | |
| 8 | Work programme | 275 - 282 |

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Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

Councillors:

Peter Southgate (Chair)
Peter McCabe (Vice-Chair)
Ben Butler
Sally Kenny
Billy Christie
Paul Kohler
Nick McLean
Aidan Mundy
John Dehaney
Thomas Barlow

Substitute Members:

Edward Foley
Simon McGrath
David Williams MBE JP
Omar Bush
Nick Draper
Joan Henry

Co-opted Representatives

Mansoor Ahmad, Parent Governor
Representative - Secondary and Special
Sectors
Roz Cordner, Church of England Diocese
Dr Oona Stannard, Catholic 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. 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 3864 or by e-mail on scrutiny@merton.gov.uk. Alternatively, visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Agenda Item 3

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

19 JANUARY 2022

(7.15 pm - 9.05 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Southgate (in the Chair),
Councillor Peter McCabe, Councillor Ben Butler,
Councillor Billy Christie, Councillor Paul Kohler,
Councillor Nick McLean, Councillor Aidan Mundy,
Councillor John Dehaney, Mansoor Ahmad, Roz Cordner and
Dr Stannard

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mark Allison, Councillor Owen Pritchard, Councillor
Natasha Irons, Councillor David Williams, Councillor Nick Draper

Hannah Doody (Chief Executive) and Caroline Holland (Director
of Corporate Services)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr Sally Kenny (with Cllr Nick Draper as substitute) and Cllr Thomas Barlow (with Cllr David Williams as substitute).

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 previous meeting were agreed.

4 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE 2022-2026 (Agenda Item 4)

The Director of Corporate Services provided an update following on from the meeting of the Commission in November which scrutinised the first stages of the business plan and rolling forward of the MTFS.

To the December Cabinet we took some revenue savings to help mitigate the gap that we had identified and looked at the inflation, pay and prices provisions we had set aside.

Particularly of interest for this panel was the level of savings that have been identified and so we had looked to mitigate the gap, particularly in 2022/23, and there were savings being brought forward for 2023/24, but very few further savings in those later years.

We have built in some monies to assist with tackling our deficit ahead of information from the DfE about the outcome of the safety valve discussions.

The position as at the end of December was a balanced budget for 2022/23 but still a gap of £12.8 million in 2023/24. We had at that stage built in the 2% Council Tax increase and the 1% Adult Social care precept.

There will be further updates on the actual settlement at Cabinet in February. Certainly overall, it was a good settlement. However, it was still only a one-year settlement, so that is disappointing.

In response to questions, the Director of Corporate Services expanded upon key areas of interest for the Commission;

With regards to the DSG, we expect to hear shortly from the DfE on the outcome of the safety valve discussions.

We have put some additional resources into the business plan of £1.1 million per annum over the next five years to assist and give some capacity to Children, Schools and Families department to help deliver some of those changes required. The challenge is that whilst we asked for some monies, we do not know the level and size of the pot that was available, or our share of it, because the DfE were looking to help five other local authorities also.

Our current outturn position, which is a deficit, could potentially swing into a surplus position depending on the amount of funding we get because of the money we have currently set aside for the DSG. So there is quite a few moving bits and pieces still to come through with regards to the monies that we have set aside currently to fund our DSG deficit - What we have currently set aside in 2022/23 is £10.5 million.

The statutory override that is in place ends at the end of 2022/23.

We are looking at expansions to our primary and secondary schools and potentially a new special school. If we're successful with the safety valve funding then those will be grant funded and we can bid for some more grant funding to support those.

With regards to inflation (running at about 5%);

At this stage, we have looked at increasing the inflation allowance to 2.5% but we are keeping that under review. Additional monies for utilities have also been added in.

Looking at the Capital Budget, the Chair requested details of any late additions from the last meeting in November:

- Contribution from Section 106 monies to the Carbon Offset Fund to help those who are fuel poor in Merton.
- Around 2,000,000 for the Customer Relationship Management system - we are bringing in a technology partner to assist with the infrastructure changes that are needed.
- As part of the closing of last year's accounts, we set aside £2 million for the Climate Change fund.

- Set aside £1,000,000 for Your Merton - December and January Cabinet papers show we have utilised and made allocations for the £1,000,000 for the Your Merton funding for the short term deliverables that have arisen out of the consultation process.

Commission Members debated the budget referral received from the Sustainable Communities Panel:

“The Panel RESOLVED to recommend Cabinet hold saving ENV2022-23 03, regarding Deen City Farm, on the basis that it is a saving to be made in 2023/24 and in anticipation of finding an alternative saving”.

It was formally moved by Cllr Nick McLean that it should be forwarded to Cabinet and seconded by Cllr David Williams. There were eight votes in favour and two abstentions. Motion passed.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission proposed the following referral to Cabinet:

1. Commission members welcome the opportunity to scrutinise the Budget and Business Plan 2022-26, and acknowledge the difficulties officers have faced in finalising it while the legacy costs of the pandemic remain unfunded and unresolved.
2. Because of the timetable for the budget process, the Commission has consistently been one step behind the Cabinet e.g. scrutinising the third (December) iteration of the budget on 19 January when Cabinet has approved the fourth iteration two days earlier, on 17 January. The timetable should be reviewed to see whether the final Commission meeting can be delayed to ensure scrutiny of the latest budget iteration, while still allowing time to feed back to the final Cabinet meeting on 7 February.
3. In recent years heavy reliance has been placed on the Balancing the Budget Reserve to close the gap and set a balanced budget ((£11.5m in 2022/23). The text notes: “It should be recognised that the use of reserves is a one off form of funding and alternative ongoing savings need to be identified to address the budget gap over the long term”. Is the Cabinet satisfied that this dependence on the BtBR is sustainable?
4. Resolution of the DSG deficit is now tantalisingly close, with the potential to impact the final budget for 2022/23. Cabinet will be faced with various options for allocating the provisions released, including amongst others:
 - replenishing the Balancing the Budget Reserve
 - cancelling “unachievable” savings
 - funding priorities identified by “Your Merton”
 - moving forward with the Climate Change Action Plan
5. Cabinet is requested to ensure that scrutiny members are involved in the discussion of these alternatives.

The recommendation was seconded and put to a vote.
There were four votes in favour, three against and three abstentions. Motion passed.
The Commission RESOLVED to send the reference to Cabinet.

5 SCRUTINY PANELS COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE
BUSINESS PLAN - TO FOLLOW (Agenda Item 5)

Taken with Item 4.

6 IDENTIFY QUESTIONS FOR THE BOROUGH COMMANDER (Agenda Item
6)

Members were asked to consider their questions for the Borough Commander.

7 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 7)

The work programme was noted.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 16th February 2022

Wards: All

Subject: Merton Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26

Lead officer: Peter Clifton, Interim Head of Community Safety

Lead member: Councillor Agatha Akyigyina

Contact officer: Katy Saunders, Community Resilience Officer

Recommendations:

- A. For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review Merton's Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26 and to make any comments on the report for consideration by Cabinet.
- B. For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to note the content of the report in terms of work being undertaken on the hate crime agenda and consider how this work can be supported going forwards.

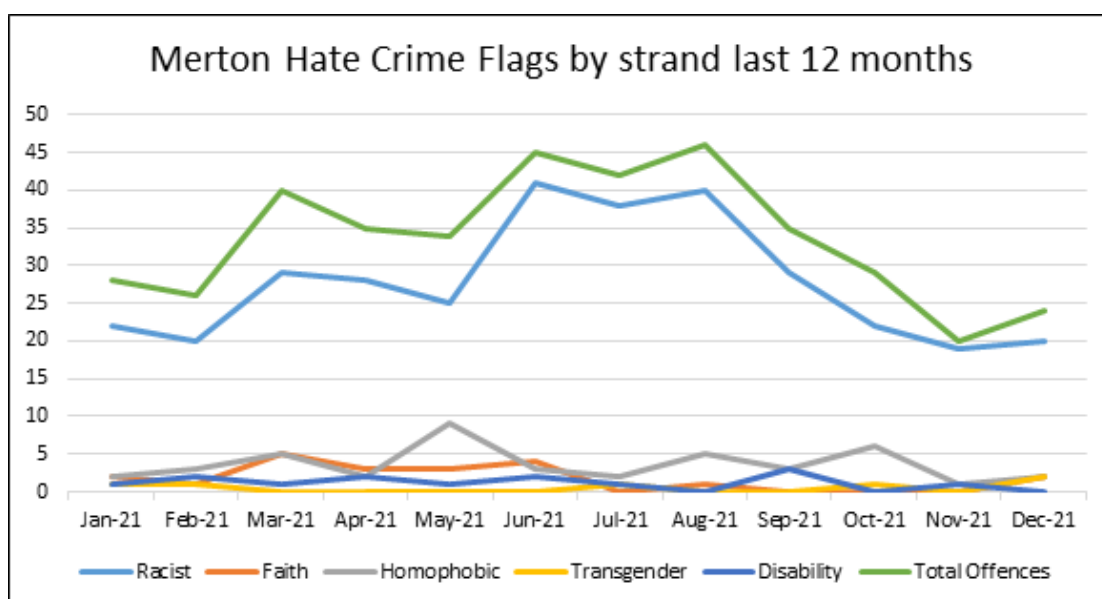
1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Merton's Hate Crime Strategy to cover 2022-26 and the work being undertaken on the hate crime agenda.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Hate crime is defined by the CPS as *"any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity."*

2.2.



- 2.3. In December 2021, hate crime offences in Merton rose slightly, with 26 separate hate crime flags, of which racial hate crimes accounted for 20 offences.
- 2.4. Overall, hate crime offences in Merton were up by 19 offences (5%) in the calendar year 2021 compared to 2020. Nearly 80% of recorded hate crimes in Merton are racially motivated. *A more in depth analysis of statistics can found in Merton's Hate Crime Profile 2021, which is refreshed on an annual basis.*
- 2.5. Whilst the number of reported hate crimes is increasing year on year, it is acknowledged that there is likely to be under reporting, particularly within certain groups such as the disabled community. Many victims may not recognise what happens to them as a hate crime, feel a sense of shame in coming forward to report or do not understand what can be done to address the issue. Therefore raising awareness of hate crime and giving victims the confidence to report is a key pillar of our work.
- 2.6. Hate crime is a strategic priority for Merton's Community Safety Partnership and a Mayoral priority for London, with the Mayor of London taking a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime.
- 2.7. As a result, hate crime is a strand of work within the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan 2017-21 and draft plan for 2021-25. This focuses on the following elements; promoting integration and standing in solidarity with London's diverse communities against hatred and abuse, ensuring victims receive specialist support and offenders' behaviour is addressed, working with the MPS to identify and eliminate barriers to reporting and improving training and awareness of hate crime issues and justice outcomes.
- 2.8. Strategic delivery and oversight of hate crime has been within Safer Merton's portfolio since September 2016 and has, due to challenges faced nationally and internationally, been an increasing area of focus and attention.
- 2.9. A strategic work plan was developed which ran 2017-21 and developed a solid base from which to continue this important work going forwards.
- 2.10. Key pieces of work included:
- *The formation of Merton's Hate Crime Strategy Group. The group has membership from voluntary and community sector representatives covering each strand of hate crime, police and relevant council departments. It is independently chaired by a representative from a community organisation, which ensures real community engagement and direction.*
 - *Launch of tailored hate crime branding, including an information leaflet and wallet card.*
 - *Refresh of the hate crime page on the Safer Merton web page, with clear signposting to relevant services.*
 - *Funding the production of a video 'Protect Yourself from Hate' on hate crime and how it affects young people developed, scripted and produced by students at Merton College.*

- *Launch of Merton's Hate Crime Advice Surgery, a monthly drop in service run in partnership with Tell MAMA and other community partners offering help and support to victims.*
- *The formal marking each year via community engagement events led by Safer Merton for National Hate Crime Awareness Week and IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia).*
- *The launch in March 2020 of Merton's Hate Crime Third Party Reporting Scheme, providing additional avenues of reporting to victims who may feel barriers reporting directly to the police.*

2.11. **Merton's Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26**

2.12. Following discussion with the Hate Crime Strategy Group, it was agreed going forward to split the document into a separate strategy and annual work plan.

2.13. An updated strategy has been drafted to cover 2022-26. This uses the previous strategy as a basis and builds on the work completed during the previous four years. It has been developed in consultation with membership of the Hate Crime Strategy Group and their community contacts.

2.14. It also incorporates findings from the council's Residents Survey, Your Merton consultation and Safer Merton Community Safety Survey, all conducted in 2021.

2.15. The strategy is based around four strategic aims:

- *Preventing hate crime*
- *Protecting the victim and reducing repeat victimisation*
- *Providing suited support to people who have experienced or are supporting victims of hate crime*
- *Developing and implementing an integrated, robust, and coordinated approach to tackling suspected perpetrators*

2.16. The strategic aims will be delivered via an annual work plan. The work plan for 2021-22 was finalised in May 2021 and its actions reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Hate Crime Strategy Group.

2.17. Based on these actions, an annual report will be produced at the end of each financial year illustrating the work done and the priorities going forward. This will be circulated to the community to raise awareness and provide reassurance that hate crime is a priority in Merton.

2.18. The work plan for 2022-23 will be produced in consultation with members of the Hate Crime Strategy Group and their communities and finalised in April 2022.

2.19. Following the murder of Sarah Everard in London in March 2021 and campaigning by women's groups, the Government announced that police forces in England and Wales will be required to record crimes motivated by hostility based on sex or gender on a trial basis from autumn 2021. In January 2022, the House of Lords voted to make Misogyny a hate crime in England and Wales as part of the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Bill.

The bill will now return to the House of Commons for elected representatives to have their say.

2.20. **Other key updates and work in the year ahead**

2.21. Merton's Hate Crime Strategy Group continue to meet quarterly. Since 2019 the group was chaired by Maureen Bailey of Inner Strength Network. Thanks are noted to Maureen, whose leadership has played a key part in steering the work of the group. In December 2021 a new chair was elected, Naomi Martin of Commonsense Community Development Trust and Trustee of Polish Family Association.

2.22. Hate Crime Awareness Week 2021 took place 9th-16th October 2021, with a variety of online and face to face community engagement events led by Safer Merton and partners in the Hate Crime Strategy Group. These covered the different strands of hate crime and included the national theme of Transgender hate crime. There was also a social media campaign to pledge support including a video from the captain of AFC Wimbledon.

2.23. Work continues on the expansion of Merton's hate crime Third Party Reporting scheme, with AFC Wimbledon, Tooting and Mitcham FC and 10 Coaching signing up to the scheme during 2021.

2.24. On 3rd December 2021 the Stop Hate UK Helpline was launched in Merton. This is a 24 hour, seven days a week helpline for victims and witnesses of hate crime to get support and advice, including making a third party report to police. The service is fully charitably funded for three years and will add to the capacity of our existing Third Party Reporting Centres within the community. Awareness raising sessions for residents and councillors in partnership with Stop Hate UK are planned for 2022.

2.25. Merton's monthly Hate crime Advice Surgeries continue to take place over the phone and it is planned that during 2022, once social distancing allows, this will return to a face to face format in Merton Civic Centre.

2.26. Continued reassurance messaging will take place using the Council's social media channels that hate in any form is not tolerated in Merton and by promotion of the support services available in the borough via the #MertonStopsHate.

2.27. IDAHOBIT (International day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia) 17th May 2022 – it is hoped the marking of this important day to show solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community will return to an in-person event, with the raising of the rainbow flag at Merton Civic Centre alongside our partners in the police and community. Other key dates for the first quarter of 2022 which the Hate Crime Strategy group will be linking with in terms of hate crime: Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT+ History Month and International Women's Day.

2.28. Safer Merton benefits from great partnership work in this area. Alongside the police, our partners include BAME Voice, Inner Strength Network, Polish Family Association, Merton Centre for Independent Living, Merton LGBT+ Forum, Merton Connected and Tell MAMA, who commit time and effort to working together on this agenda. The south west BCU have a dedicated Hate Crime Officer who sits on the Hate Crime Strategy Group and ensures those who report to the police receive adequate support.

- 2.29. We would like to ask O&S members to support our work on hate crime and champion what Merton has to offer our victims, so that they feel encouraged to come forward to make a report and get the support they need. This will include the planned formal launch of the new hate crime strategy in June 2022, details of which will be shared in due course.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. None for the purpose of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. The strategy and work plan have been developed in consultation with members of the Hate Crime Strategy Group and their contacts in the community. They also take into account the findings from three pieces of public consultation carried out in 2021; Safer Merton's Community Safety Survey, Merton Council's Residents Survey 2021 and Your Merton.

5 TIMETABLE

| Action | Date |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</i> | 16 th February 2022 |
| <i>Cabinet</i> | 21 st March 2022 |
| <i>Final sign off Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26 and work plan 2022-23 by Safer Stronger Executive Board</i> | 27 th April 2022 |
| <i>Official launch of Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26 and work plan 2022-23</i> | June 2022 |

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None for the purposes of this report. Safer Merton's Community Resilience Officer being resourced to work on the hate crime agenda two days per week continues in place.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. No legal implications arise from the recommendations in this report..

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Hate crime is directly linked with community cohesion. Continuing to maintain the strong links we have with our community and letting them know the services we have to support them if they do become a victim of crime is vital in achieving our ambitions for more victims to report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Safer Merton oversee this work and ensure that all crime and disorder concerns are considered within this work.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

- 11.1 Merton Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26.
- 11.2 Hate crime work plan 2021-22.
- 11.3 List of Merton Hate Crime Third Party Reporting Centres.
- 11.4 Launch of Stop Hate UK Helpline for Merton – press release 03/12/2021.

<https://news.merton.gov.uk/2021/12/03/stop-hate-uk-helpline-to-launch-in-merton/>

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. MOPAC Draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-25

<https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/police-and-crime-plan-2021-25>

- 12.2. Merton Hate Crime Profile 2021

Safer Merton

Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

Merton Hate Crime Strategy

2022-26



FOREWORD

Councillor Agatha Akyigyina OBE

Cabinet Member for Partnerships, Public Safety and Tackling Crime

As a local councillor for 15 years and lead member for Partnerships, Public Safety and Tackling Crime I am proud to serve your borough.



Merton is a diverse and internationally known borough with over 200,000 residents speaking over 100 languages. Each year Merton welcomes millions of additional people to the borough who visit our local parks and green spaces, shopping facilities, and the annual tennis championships.

Tackling hate crime is a key part of Merton's community safety strategy, with our first hate crime strategy launching in 2016. Five years on, it is clear much positive progress has been made however we are in no doubt as a partnership that there remains much more to do. This strategy reflects on our progress so far and lays the foundation for our priorities in the coming years.

Since the previous strategy was written there have been a number of events nationally and internationally which have sadly resulted in an increase in hate crime. Events such as the EU Referendum in 2016, the terrorist attacks in London and Manchester in 2017 and the emergence in China in early 2020 of the Covid-19 pandemic all led to spikes in hate crime targeting different groups in our community.

Most recently, the murder of George Floyd in America in May 2020 has led to a global focus on race hate crime and the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement. The murders in London of Sarah Everard in London in March 2021 and Sabrina Nessa in September 2021 has led to renewed calls by women's groups to include misogyny as a monitored strand of hate crime, in order to demonstrate that the harassment of women is not acceptable and is on a level with other hate crimes.

Whilst it is encouraging to see the number of victims coming forward to the police is increasing, we know reported hate crimes are the tip of the iceberg which is why increasing victim's confidence in reporting and obtaining the support they need remains a key pillar of our strategy.

I would like to thank our partners in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors for their continued drive and commitment in responding to victims of hate crime in Merton and working with us to deliver this strategy.

We are committed to tackling all forms of hate crime and will continue to uphold the message that Merton is a welcoming place for all where hate in any form is not tolerated.

Merton is proud to be one of the safest boroughs in London and we will continue to work hard, together, to ensure that this position is maintained.

What is a hate crime?

A hate crime is defined as “any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person’s race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability, or the perception of the person of having any of these characteristics.”¹ A hate crime may also be committed against a person by association, such as against the parent of a disabled child or the partner of someone of a different ethnicity. Hate crimes are now also recognised as a form of abuse in relation to safeguarding adults at risk; this stems from the introduction of the Care Act 2014 and the revised London procedures that were launched in 2016.

Hate crime, as monitored by the Metropolitan Police, can be separated into five strands:

| |
|-------------------------|
| 1. Disability |
| 2. Race |
| 3. Religion/ Faith |
| 4. Sexual Orientation |
| 5. Transgender Identity |

In November 2018, Merton Council formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) working definition of Anti-Semitism (*See Appendix A for full definition*).

What is a hate incident?

It is important that this strategy recognises hate incidents as well as hate crimes. A hate incident is any non-crime incident which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person’s characteristics.

If the victim or any other party involved believe something to be a hate incident, then it should be logged as such by the person who is recording it. The Metropolitan Police record all reports of hate incidents however not all incidents will meet the threshold necessary to be classed as criminal offences; those that do are recorded as offences. Hate incidents can take many forms, examples of which include but are not limited to hoax calls, online abuse, offensive jokes, and displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters².

Although a hate incident may not constitute a crime, it is still important to report it as this can help ensure that victims receive any guidance and support they may need. Additionally, the police and other authorities can use this information to target resources and gain a greater understanding of the issues facing specific communities. Police presence and understanding of hate incidents could also help to prevent an ‘incident’ turning into a ‘crime’.

¹ Home Office Hate Crime Action Plan Refresh 2018

² Citizens Advice - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/discrimination/hate-crime/what-are-hate-incidents-and-hate-crime/>

Who is affected by hate crime?

Hate crime is a social problem as it not only harms the victim but is also deeply damaging to entire families and communities. A lack of action in tackling hate crime can lead to isolation and victimisation of individual people and vulnerable groups, as well as the polarisation of entire communities.

Victims can experience hate crime based on various/ multiple aspects of their selves e.g. a homosexual disabled resident may be the subject of homophobic hate crime and/ or disability hate crime.

It is important to understand that there is no specific offence of 'hate crime' in criminal law in the UK, however there are existing offences (e.g. threats, physical assault, harassment, etc.) which, when motivated by hostility or prejudice, are categorised as a hate crime. This can influence how the offence is investigated and can lead to an enhanced sentence.

It should also be recognised that hate crime may be motivated by hostility of other characteristics beyond the current monitored strands e.g. age and subculture.

Following campaigning by women's groups and in the wake of the murder of Sarah Everard, the Government announced that police forces in England and Wales will be required to record crimes motivated by hostility based on sex or gender on a trial basis from autumn 2021. In January 2022, the House of Lords voted to make Misogyny a hate crime in England and Wales as part of the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Bill³. The bill will now return to the House of Commons for elected representatives to have their say.

The Home Office and Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) strategic documents use the term 'victim' when referring to those who have a hate crime committed against them, and so this strategy will use the same terminology throughout. While this term is used to ensure consistency amongst strategies, it should be noted that this document respects the very personal and individual nature of hate crime and so recognises people's right to self-define and refer to themselves as 'survivors' or other terms if they so wish.

Our vision for Merton

London is known as a city where people from all backgrounds and occupations are able to live in freedom and tolerance. This strategy is specifically targeted at tackling the issue of hate crime in the London borough of Merton however, it also feeds into the wider aim of the Community Safety Partnership to encourage community cohesion and ensure the safety and wellbeing of local residents.

Though our ultimate vision for Merton is one in which we will see zero instances of hate crime, our current aims include seeing an increase in reporting of hate crime, demonstrating public confidence that their reports will be taken seriously by authorities. We also wish to

³ <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2839>

see a greater awareness of hate crime amongst members of the public, displaying an emotional intelligence and common respect.

Merton is fortunate in having a comparatively low crime rate in London and it has always been seen as a great place to live, with the borough enjoying high overall life expectancy and performing well with regards to education, housing, the environment, and many other factors. However, there are currently areas of the borough where residents need a greater level of support in order to reach their full potential.

The residents form a critical part of what makes Merton a great place to live and through strategies such as this, we hope to foster an environment where people are tolerant and understanding of one another, working together to better the community. In line with the Mayor of London's vision for the future of policing and crime in London, this strategy takes a victim-oriented approach, putting the victim's safety and wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.

National and local policies for tackling hate crime

The following strategies form the basis on which this strategic plan has been developed:

- **Home Office Hate Crime Action Plan 2016-2020 – 2018 Refresh**

The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime, which sets out a programme of actions to tackle hate crime.



Hate_crime_refresh_
2018_FINAL_WEB.PD

- **Mayor's Action Plan – Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing – November 2020**

In November 2020 the Mayor of London released an Action Plan to improve trust and confidence in the Met Police and address community concerns about the disproportionality in the use of certain police powers affecting Black Londoners.

<https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/action-plan-transparency-accountability-and-trust-policing>

- **Home Office Beating Crime Plan – July 2021**

This document sets out the government's plan to deliver change, resulting in less crime, fewer victims and a safer country.



Crime-plan-v10
(1).pdf

- **MOPAC Draft Policing and Crime Plan 2021-25**

A new policing and crime plan 2021-25 has been drafted which is under consultation until January 2022. Hate crime sits under one of the key themes of reducing and preventing violence. There is a no tolerance policy to all forms of hate crime and the approach focuses on three things: prevention, supporting victims and oversight of police enforcement.

[Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 | GLA \(london.gov.uk\)](#)

It should also be noted that the UK Government planned to produce a new standalone hate crime strategy at the end of 2021 which will set out their commitment to stamping out hate crimes, including their online elements. At the time of writing this it is awaiting release.

Hate crime data

National picture

- According to the Home Office in the year ending March 2021, there were 124,091 hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales; of which there were 92,052 race hate crimes, 6,377 religious hate crimes, 18,596 sexual orientation hate crimes, 9,943 disability hate crimes and 2,799 transgender hate crimes.⁴
- Excluding Greater Manchester Police who did not supply data for year ending March 2020, there was a 9% increase in recorded hate crime compared with the previous year.
- Increases in police recorded hate crime in recent years have been driven by improvements in crime recording and a better identification of what constitutes a hate crime.

Merton and London picture

The Covid-19 pandemic of 2020-21 and subsequent lockdowns during reduced movements of much of the population, thus reducing interactions between people which led to some falls in hate crime offences (the majority of hate crimes being 'aggravated' rather than 'motivated'). In late May 2020 the murder of George Floyd triggered the Black Lives Matter movement. June 2020 saw a spike in racist hate crime reports in Merton and the Metropolitan Police. It is not clear whether increased offending or increased willingness to report caused the increase, which fell back to more expected levels later in the year.

Across the Metropolitan Police for the financial year 2020-21 the overall number of hate offences increased by 10% to nearly 25,000 reports, primarily as a result of increased racist

⁴ Official Statistics Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2020 to 2021 [Hate crime, England and Wales, 2020 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

offences for the reasons outlined above. Faith and homophobic hate crimes saw year on year falls.

- Merton has seen 392 recorded hate crimes in the financial year 2020-21.⁵
- Hate crime in Merton increased by 9% in the financial year 2020-21.
- Racially aggravated offences make up the largest proportion of hate crimes committed in Merton – nearly 80% of the total.

Merton Residents’ Survey 2021 and Your Merton Consultation 2021

Merton Council regularly survey residents in the borough about their attitudes to their local area. Findings from the 2021 Residents’ Survey⁶ show that residents are less positive about community cohesion than at the time of the last survey in 2019, with an 8% fall in those who agree that the local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together.

In 2021 Merton Council also carried out the Your Merton consultation⁷ to understand the experiences of residents as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and shape a vision for the borough going forwards. Feedback established that residents want to maintain and foster the sense of ‘community spirit’ found during the pandemic.

Safer Merton Community Safety Survey 2021

Safer Merton also conducted a survey in 2021, with 328 respondents, to find out the communities concerns in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour. In terms of perception of crime, 24% of respondents listed hate crime as being a ‘fairly big’ or ‘very big’ problem.

This section has provided an overview of the data in order to give some context to the strategic plan; however, more statistical information and a breakdown of hate crime strands and wards within Merton are available in the hate crime profile embedded below.



Hate Crime Profile
2021 (2).pdf

⁵ <https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/hate-crime-dashboard/>

⁶ <https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-and-local-democracy/performance/annual-residents-survey>

⁷ <https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-and-local-democracy/get-involved/yourmerton>

What have we achieved so far?

In implementing Merton's previous hate crime strategy 2017-2021 we have worked towards achieving our strategic priorities. Some key achievements are detailed below:

Hate Crime Advice Surgeries

In 2019 Merton became the first borough in south London to host a monthly Hate Crime Advice Surgery, in partnership with Tell MAMA and other community organisations working with victims covering each strand of hate crime. The surgeries are a confidential drop-in service for victims of hate crime to be offered advice and support.



Merton Hate Crime Advice Surgery,
Merton Civic Centre

Third Party Reporting

Working closely with community organisations, Merton have developed a Third Party Reporting Protocol and network of Third Party Reporting Centres across the borough. The centres help to overcome barriers some victims of hate crime may experience, by making reports to the police on behalf of victims who do not feel comfortable reporting directly. Working to expand the network of Third Party Reporting Centres is a key priority of this strategy.

"Inner Strength Network are proud to be a third party reporting centre. Our clients find a safe space to recover and obtain support during difficult times."

"The sessions provide an opportunity for the Polish Family Association to raise awareness of how to report hate crime incidents, and strengthen relationships in the local area between Merton Council, Merton Police and the Polish and Eastern European community."

"In becoming a third party reporting site Merton CIL is now able to provide service users another way to report crime, while maintaining their independence."

"South London Tamil Welfare Group is working as a Third Party Reporting Centre. This helps to overcome barriers some victims of hate crime may experience, by making reports to the police on behalf of victims who do not feel comfortable reporting directly."

Launch of Stop Hate UK helpline for Merton

The launch of the Stop Hate UK helpline for Merton in December 2021 has helped to strengthen the capacity of our Third Party Reporting services, with the helpline being open 24 hours, seven days a week to provide support and guidance to those experiencing or witnessing hate crime.

National Hate Crime Awareness Week

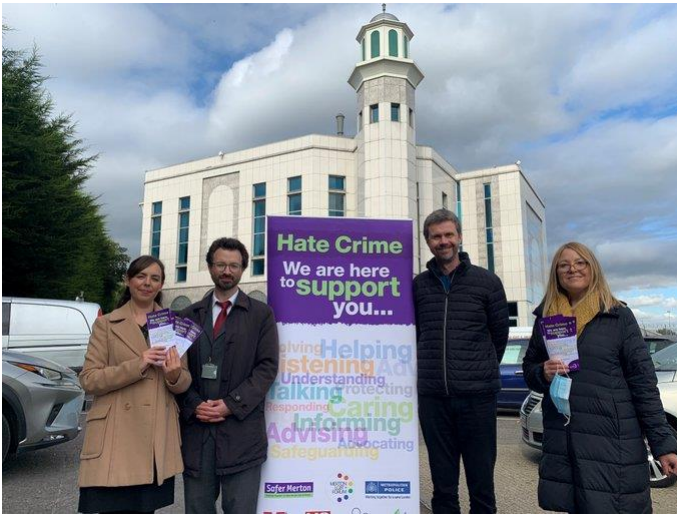
In October each year Merton holds a week of engagement events to mark National Hate Crime Awareness Week. The week aims to raise awareness amongst residents of what a hate crime is and to encourage the reporting of hate crimes and incidents.

In 2019 alongside our partners in the police and community we held a conference 'Hate Crime: Your Voice, Your Experience Matters' for young people at Merton College with over 100 young people from schools across the borough in attendance.

In 2021 the launch event focused on a panel of speakers discussing the national theme of Transgender hate crime. This was combined with a session focusing on working together against race hate crime, a coffee morning with the Polish Family Association and an engagement stall at the Baitul Futuh Mosque, Morden.



'Hate Crime: Your Voice, Your Experience Matters' event for students at Merton College, October 2019



Leader of Merton Council, Councillor Mark Allison with members of the Safer Merton team at Baitul Futuh Mosque, October 2021

International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT)

This important day has been marked in Merton each year since 2017, with a rainbow flag raising ceremony attended by police and partner organisations to show solidarity with our LGBTQ+ residents and encourage those who have become victims of hate crime and intolerance to come forward and get the support they need.



IDAHOBIT 2019, Merton Civic Centre

Communications

A dedicated web page on the Merton Council website⁸ provides information about hate crime and the support services available to residents in Merton.

A hate crime information leaflet and wallet card have also been developed, which signpost victims to appropriate support services across the different strands of hate crime. These

⁸ <https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/crime-prevention-and-community-safety/hate-crime>

have been useful to raise awareness and as an engagement tool when attending events in the community.

In addition, regular reassurance messaging is posted on Merton Council’s social media channels letting victims know that Merton does not stand for hate in any form and that support is available.

How will the strategy be delivered?

Merton’s hate crime strategy, outlined in this document, aims to develop a victim-oriented, multi-agency approach to tackling all forms of hate crime across the borough. Over the next four years, the council will continue to come together with partners including the Metropolitan Police and groups representing the local community to foster a strong approach to tackling hate crime and supporting its victims. The following strategic aims will be carried out through a coordinated strategy implemented by all relevant partners.

| | |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I. | Preventing Hate Crime |
| II. | Protecting the victim and reducing repeat victimisation |
| III. | Providing suited support to people who have experienced or are supporting victims of hate crime |
| IV. | Developing and implementing an integrated, robust, and coordinated approach to tackling suspected perpetrators |

I. Preventing Hate Crime

Prevention work regarding hate crime needs to operate through a multi-level approach in order to be effective. Prevention of hate crimes will come about through a robust combination of educating communities in cultural understanding and acceptance, strongly enforcing the law, treating hate crime as the serious issue it is, and publicising successful prosecutions to act as a deterrent and to make it clear this kind of behaviour is not accepted within our society.

One of the largest issues around hate crime is its underreporting which severely hinders the authorities’ ability to respond to such issues. For this reason, awareness campaigns are an important part of prevention as they can help to ensure people are aware of what hate crime is, what their rights are, and how/ where they are able to report incidents. This information can give victims more confidence in reporting these crimes and thus lead to a stronger response from the appropriate authorities.

Educating communities on the value of diversity and cultural understanding and thus encouraging greater social integration is the best defence against hatred and intolerance. A

particular focus should be on educating children in such issues so that these values are instilled from a young age. This being said, it is crucial that this strategy considers the entire family unit with regards to education.

Migration to the UK must also be considered when developing an approach to hate crime awareness; it is possible that those from certain backgrounds will carry over rivalries from their home countries to the new communities within which they settle. Thus, it is important to make those entering the UK aware of the stringent laws that govern hate crime and the zero-tolerance approach that the police take. Equally, those already residing in the UK must develop an awareness of other cultures and traditions and so should understand and celebrate the migration that sees a community becoming more diverse.

II. Protecting the victim and reducing repeat victimisation

Ensuring the safety of residents is this strategy's ultimate priority and work can be done to achieve this through the promotion of relevant available resources that aid residents in seeking help and support. The use of technology for personal safety and hate crime reporting should be explored further to consider its role as part of the borough's hate crime strategy. An example of this is the True Vision hate crime reporting website.⁹

While technical solutions can provide assistance and a sense of security to many, there remain those who are vulnerable and will not feel comfortable in using, or have access to, this technology. This cohort must also be considered and provided for within this strategy. This can be achieved through community outreach events in which police officers and community partners speak with people face to face, offering one-to-one support to build future resilience and facilitate more conversations around hate crime.

III. Providing suited support to people who have experienced or are supporting victims of Hate Crime

Supporting victims of hate crime should take the form of counselling and emotional support as well as support during the reporting process. The reporting process, and seeing it through to a successful prosecution, can be a very stressful time for the victim and so multi-agency support must be made available for people going through this.

Coordinating this approach will involve the Safer Merton team, the Metropolitan Police, and guidance from community groups within the borough. This will result in shared practice and better communication between agencies, resulting in a clearer and smoother reporting path for the victim. Every resident's experience of hate crime will be unique and thus any support offered to victims should be suited to their needs.

⁹ <https://www.report-it.org.uk/>

From the Council's perspective, it is of great important to support community organisations in their abilities to take reports of hate crime and provide support for victims. Some residents do not feel comfortable in speaking directly with the police and so wish to report their experiences to those whom they trust. Community organisations play an integral role in providing support and guidance, and will be at the heart of the hate crime third party reporting network. It is acknowledged that some organisations need financial as well as other forms of support to carry out this role.

IV. Developing and implementing an integrated, robust, and coordinated approach to tackling perpetrators

This will involve robust policing of hate crimes in which every report is taken seriously and the victim is treated with respect. An improvement in police response and in prosecution rates will be partly facilitated by building public confidence in reporting such crimes as well as furthering knowledge of what information is required by police to increase the chances of a successful prosecution. Past cases have demonstrated how a series of low-level offences have escalated into serious crimes (in rare cases even murder) and so a commitment to identify and act on multiple incidents will be made.

Furthermore, where hate crime perpetrators are caught, they will need to be prosecuted to the full extent of the law; the responsibility for this would lie between the Metropolitan Police and the Crown Prosecution Service. Other methods of taking action against perpetrators will be investigated, such as reviewing the terms of their tenancy if they currently reside in rented accommodation.

Hate incidents and hate crimes can be equally as distressing to the victim and so the authorities' response should take consideration of this, providing services for those perpetrators who are often younger and whose actions are below the threshold of what is considered prosecutable.

The strategic work plan

To deliver the strategic aims set out in this strategy there will be a focus on the following themes via an annual work plan.

Themes of the work plan

1. Co-ordination

Aim: To develop an understanding of the victims' needs and their journey through the criminal justice system to ensure that Merton's residents can access reporting and support services easily and efficiently

How: By ensuring that both conversations and actions regarding hate crime are made with input from all stakeholders and that this be embedded into service plans and coordinated effectively

2. Prevention

Aim: To provide our residents with the knowledge and skills to stay safe, whilst challenging those who identify with the perpetration of hate crime. Developing and strengthening community cohesion through unifying our residents

How: Raising awareness through regular campaigning, projects, and programmes with a focus on Hate Crime Awareness Week in October. Educating the community, with particular attention paid to young people and children, on the importance and merits of diversity and fostering emotional intelligence. Building greater interaction between the police, enforcement agencies and young people to build a trusted relationship outside of crime and punishment.

3. Provision

Aim: To ensure Merton is able to deliver the best support services possible, with a focus on supporting voluntary and community sector groups in the delivery and development of third party reporting routes

How: By working with partners and the community to provide a range of support services which assist in a practical sense with regards to reporting hate crimes and in providing emotional support to victims

4. Protection

Aim: To provide a robust response to hate crime across the partnership, taking the most robust enforcement action possible against borough-based perpetrators

How: By ensuring that the police and partners are given training to identify factors which could flag a regular crime as being motivated by hate, in the process ensuring these are taken seriously and acted upon accordingly

Governance

Merton's Community Safety Partnership commits to working together in order to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, whilst increasing community confidence and cohesion.

The Hate Crime Strategy Group is responsible for the monitoring and delivery of Merton's hate crime strategy. The group meets quarterly and is made up of representatives from community organisations representing the different strands of hate crime, police and other statutory and voluntary agencies. It is independently chaired by a representative from a local community organisation.

The Safer Stronger Executive Board is the primary mechanism through which the Hate Crime Strategy Group is held to account for the delivery of the hate crime strategy's objectives. The Hate Crime Strategy Group reports to the Safer Stronger Executive Board annually.

Measuring success

The strategy's objectives will be delivered via an annual work plan which will be reviewed by the Hate Crime Strategy Group on a quarterly basis. At the end of the financial year a highlight report will be produced detailing the key pieces of work which have taken place over the past 12 months and indicating the priorities to be focused on in the year ahead. This will be circulated to the community.

Appendix

Appendix A

The IHRA definition of Anti-Semitism is *“a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”*

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of anti-Semitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- a) Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- b) Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- c) Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- d) Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- e) Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- f) Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- g) Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- h) Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

- i) Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- j) Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- k) Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

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Merton Hate Crime Work Plan 2021-2022

- This work plan sets out the key objectives and work to be delivered on hate crime in Merton in 2021-22.
- It will be monitored by Merton's Hate Crime Strategy Group and be updated quarterly by the Hate Crime Strategic Lead.
- Rag Rating is:

| | | | |
|---------|-------------|-----------|--------|
| On Hold | In Progress | Completed | Behind |
|---------|-------------|-----------|--------|

Theme 1: Co-ordination: *Ensure that the response to Hate Crime is shared by all stakeholders, embedded into service plans, and coordinated effectively*

Page 235

| Monitor and understand the picture of hate crime in Merton | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce an annual hate crime profile using available hate crime data to understand the issues currently facing the borough. • Consult with the community to hear their voice and their experiences of hate crime when updating the hate crime strategy and annual work plan. | Safer Merton, Hate Crime Strategy Group | Hate crime profile for 2021 complete. Community feedback on 2021-22 work plan and strategy requested via Hate Crime Strategy Group. Safer Merton Community Safety consultation took place July-Oct 2021. Your Merton consultation took place summer 2021. Results incorporated into strategy and will feed into 2022-23 work plan. |

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| 2. | Share hate crime information and data between relevant divisions of the council and Community Safety Partnership | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication between divisions of the council and Community Safety Partnership in order to better understand hate crime and the implications it has on different members of the community, ensuring the right support is offered to vulnerable victims. Audit safeguarding cases to ensure hate crimes are flagged as a safeguarding adults concern. | Safeguarding Adults, Police, Safer Merton | Safeguarding and DOLs Team Manager sits on the Hate Crime Strategy Group. Auditing process is in place which ensures steps are taken to reduce missed opportunities to identify when a hate crime has taken place. |
| 3. | Support a partnership approach to tackling hate crime and hate incidents | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| Page 236 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hate Crime Strategy Group meet quarterly, with updates via email on a regular basis. Group to be made up representatives from the community sector covering the different strands of hate crime, police and council. Provide up to date information on hate crime and support services available on the Safer Merton website and via promotional materials. Promote the Community Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (Community MARAC) so that agencies supporting hate crime victims are encouraged to make appropriate referrals to access multi-agency support to manage risk to the victim, perpetrator or community. | Safer Merton | Quarterly meetings scheduled for 2022. Safer Merton web page updated with the Stop Hate UK helpline details December 2021. |
| 4. | Encourage greater community integration as the best defence against hatred, celebrating how Merton's diversity makes it a wonderful place to live and work | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on events celebrating Merton as a multicultural and harmonious borough. Mark events such as Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT+ History Month, and International Womens' Day. | Policy, Strategy & Partnerships, Inner Strength Network, Safer Merton | Will link in with council's planned events for Holocaust Memorial Day 27/01/2022. |

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| 5. | Continue to develop a strong network of third party reporting centres throughout the borough which reflect the diversity of the community | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore potential new sites for Third Party Reporting Centres which target different groups in the community. Offer training and continued support to Third Party Reporting Centres. Publicise Third Party Reporting Centres via the Safer Merton website and promotional materials. | Safer Merton | <p>November 2021 – discussions with All England Club re joining the scheme.</p> <p>Stop Hate UK Helpline for Merton launched December 2021. 24hr, seven days a week service.</p> |
| 6. | Organise and hold a range of engagement events with our partners to raise awareness and promote mechanisms for reporting a hate crime | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| Page 237 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alongside our partners coordinate a full programme of engagement events during national Hate Crime Awareness Week each October. Mark International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) annually via a rainbow flag raising ceremony to show solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community. | Hate Crime Strategy Group | <p>HCAW 2021 ran 9th-16th October 2021. Combination of online and face to face engagement events covering the different strands of hate crime, alongside a social media campaign for partners to pledge their support. Launch event focused on national theme of Transgender hate crime.</p> |
| 7. | Support BTP, Safer Transport and TFL in any future campaigns around hate crime on public transport | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint campaigns adapted to a Merton context where possible to ensure the best outcome. | BTP | |
| 8. | Explore funding options available and develop bids for hate crime projects | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise funding opportunities when they become available e.g. MOPAC Safer Neighbourhood Board Community Engagement Funding. Provide relevant support to community organisations where necessary when making bids. | Safer Merton | <p>Inner Strength Network successful in bid to obtain funding 2021-22 for continuation of hate crime Third Party Reporting scheme.</p> <p>Ongoing scanning for funding opportunities and awareness raising taking place. Hate Crime Strategy Group to consider making a joint bid for Third Party Reporting.</p> |
| 9. | Promote the work of the Hate Crime Strategy Group amongst the community | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| Page 238 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a review of the annual work plan using info graphics to illustrate to the community what work has been achieved. | Hate Crime Strategy Group | |

Theme 2: Prevention - Preventing Hate Crime through a change of people's attitudes and proactive policing

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|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 10. | Consider hate crime in the context of education of children and young adults | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a range of programmes in schools to increase young people's understanding of hate crime and challenge prejudices. Increase the number of Third Party Reporting Centres accessible to young people to encourage them to report hate crime. Link in with the council's work on the safety of women and girls to encourage respect and emotional awareness, providing advice and support to those who are victimised. | Merton School Improvement, Safer Merton | |

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| 11. | Raise awareness of hate crime amongst young people through campaigns | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend events for young people such as Fresher's Week at Merton College to raise awareness and promote Merton's hate crime services. Continue to promote amongst young people in the borough the 'Protect Yourself from Hate' video made in conjunction with Merton College. Link in with Safer Schools officers during Hate Crime Awareness Week to ensure young people are engaged on the issues surrounding hate crime via assemblies, presentations and other materials. | Safer Merton, Police | Safer Merton and Inner Strength Network attended Fresher's Fair Sept 2021 with a hate crime stall. 'Protect Yourself from Hate' video and presentation recirculated to Safer Schools Officers during HCAW 2021 alongside leaflets and posters for students. |
| 12. | Further engage with primary schools to educate children in emotional intelligence from a young age | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| Page 239 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate hate crime into a session of the Junior Neighbourhood Watch programme run by Merton Neighbourhood Watch Association and police for Year 5 pupils in primary schools in Merton. | Merton NHW Association, Police | JNHW programme awaiting relaunch in schools following the pandemic - planned for summer term 2022. |
| | Draw attention to the issue of online hate crime, linking in with any future campaign activity by the Met Police | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build relationships with the Met Hate Crime Policy Development Team and participate in any future publicity campaigns about online hate crime. | Safer Merton, Police | |
| 13. | Run a series of public campaigns in order to educate and challenge attitudes around hate crime | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alongside leading events for Hate Crime Awareness Week and IDAHOBIT annually, mark other important days such as International Womens' Day, | Hate Crime Strategy Group | Social media campaign took place for HCAW 2021 asking for pledges of support. Partners such as AFC |

| | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>LGBT+ History Month, International Day of Disabled Persons and Black History Month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an events calendar to be shared with partners. • Continue to utilise avenues such as social media, existing newsletter publications, websites and campaigns such as Hate Crime Awareness Week to promote messaging that Merton is no place for hate and via the #MertonStopsHate | | Wimbledon, Mayor of Merton, Merton CIL and Inner Strength Network took part. |
| 14. | Promote the 'Ask for Angela' campaign, which is championed by Merton Council and the Met Police | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| Page 249 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure bar and security staff receive regular training. • Ensure up to date information regarding campaign is on the Safer Merton website. • Link in with any campaigns around the night time economy (high risk environments for hate crime) being run by the police and Safer Merton. | Police, Safer Merton | |
| | Support and link in with MOPAC's (Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime) plans to launch a Hate Crime Victim Service to run 2021-2023 | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the extent to which such a service will be supported and funded by MOPAC and what the responsibility of the council and local police will be. • Ensure that any services provided through MOPAC support and complement existing offers from community organisations. | Safer Merton | Await update from MOPAC. |
| 16. | Continue to reassure and support the community following the UK's withdrawal from the EU | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |

| | | | |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with relevant communities regarding community tensions related to the UK's withdrawal from the EU. Police continue to share community tension reports to flag any concerns. Regular messaging via the council and partners' social media channels that Merton is no place for hate and via promotion of our support services such as Hate Crime Advice Surgeries and Third Party Reporting. | Safer Merton, Police | <p>Regular messaging is shared with community via social media channels that Merton is a welcome place for all and hate in any form is not tolerated.</p> <p>Engagement event took place with Polish Family Association, Safer Merton and Police during HCAW October 2021.</p> |
| 17. | Roll out Bystander training to the community to improve the confidence of the public in intervening safely when a hate crime is taking place* | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| Page 24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer training sessions to community stakeholders including community organisations (in particular those who work with specific groups known to be most impacted by hate crime), businesses and residents. Exploring potential links with work around Women and Girls safety in public places. | Safer Merton | Stop Hate UK Awareness sessions during 2022 dates TBC. |
| | Coordinate the provision of training for council front line, call centre and other staff on how to recognise hate crime | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure frontline services have a consistent practice for responding to hate crime reports. Ensure employees are safeguarded in the workplace if they experience a hate crime. | Safer Merton | |

*Actions 17 and 18 dependent on budget being identified.

Theme 3: Provision - Improve provision of specialist support and reporting centres

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 19. | Continue to run monthly Hate Crime Advice Surgeries in conjunction with third sector partners | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise the Hate Crime Advice Surgeries via social media and promotional materials. Hold the surgeries in a face to face format once again at Merton Civic Centre once Covid-19 restrictions allow. | Safer Merton | Regular messaging shared via council's events calendar and social media channels. |
| 20. | Increase confidence in reporting by expanding the third party reporting scheme at different locations throughout the borough from which hate crime can be reported in a safe space | | |
| Page 242 | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin with a focus on sports clubs as hubs of the community and the ability of sport to bring different communities together. Explore how the scheme can be expanded into local businesses such as barber shops, nail bars and taxi services. Raise awareness of Third Party Reporting Centres amongst different groups in the community via publicity campaigns and materials. | Safer Merton | <p>AFC Wimbledon, Tooting and Mitcham FC and 10 Coaching signed up to Third Party Reporting scheme during 2021.</p> <p>Meeting with All England Club November 2021.</p> <p>Engagement with local businesses in town centres to be picked up in 2022.</p> |
| 21. | Develop our 'Think Family' offer | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In incidents of hate crime, always consider what the impact might be on the relatives of the victim and perpetrator. | Merton Safeguarding Children | <p>Ongoing practice.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Think Family sub-group of the MSCP will be seeking to strengthen their work on 'Think Family'</p> |

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Partnership Manager | and a sub-group has been coordinated to review the Think Family presentation that was shared with partners a few years ago to refresh it. We are also holding a joint conference with the Adults Safeguarding Board in the coming year which will have a focus on transitions, and this may be an opportunity to share Think Family themes with partners. A Task and Finish group with members of both the children's and adults boards are taking this joint conference work forward. |
| 22. | Promote the use of apps relevant to personal safety and hate crime reporting | | |
| Page 243 | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the Safer Merton website is updated with the latest apps and safety advice. Promote the use of apps such as True Vision which can be used as a mechanism to report a hate crime. | Safer Merton | Website is up to date with avenues of reporting. Also contains list of Third Party Reporting Centres. |

Theme 4: Protection - To provide effective response to perpetrators outside of and within the criminal justice system

| | | | |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 23. | Trial the recording of misogyny as a hate crime | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police to trial the recording of hate crimes motivated by a person's gender and update the Community Safety Partnership on results of trial. | Police | Await update from Met Police. |

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24. | Social housing landlords record and take appropriate actions where hate crime is a motivating or recorded factor in neighbour nuisance or housing related nuisance | | |
| | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the key social landlords in the borough. Consider approach to ensure tenancy agreements are clear on how the landlord will act on reports of hate crime (supporting the tenant, or taking action against the perpetrator). | Safer Merton and most prominent social landlords in the borough – Clarion, Moat Housing and L&Q Housing | <p>Social housing rep from Clarion Housing attends Hate Crime Strategy Group and Community MARAC meetings.</p> <p>Work ongoing with engagement with other HAs.</p> |
| 25. | Ensure that all front line police officers understand the importance of providing a robust response to hate crime | | |
| Page 244 | Actions | Lead | Progress Updates |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to ensure police officers are aware how to record hate crimes using the appropriate flags on police recording systems. Training and awareness for police officers to ensure they are aware of the support services available to victims. | Police | <p>All response team officers have been informed via training sessions of the importance of correctly dealing with hate crime and the support services that are available to victims, including the 124H form and CATCH referrals.</p> <p>Drop in sessions also held with investigating officers.</p> <p>The Hate Crime Outcomes and Performance Officer (HCOP) also supervises all open hate crime investigations from reporting to closure.</p> |



Merton Hate Crime Third Party Reporting Centres

Merton's hate crime 'third party reporting centres' have been trained to assist you in submitting a report to the police, and can make such a report your behalf.

AFC Wimbledon

Plough Lane Stadium, Plough Lane, London, SW17 0NR

Contact: Amanda Bynon

Tel: 020 8547 3528

Info: info@afcwimbledon.ltd.uk

Website: <https://www.afcwimbledon.co.uk>

Inner Strength Network

Vestry Hall, 336 London Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3UD

Contact: Maureen Bailey

Tel: 020 8274 5200

Info: maureen@innerstrengthnetwork.com

Website: <http://innerstrengthnetwork.com>

Merton Centre for Independent Living

Vestry Hall, 336 London Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3UD

Contact: Adrienne De Rizzio-Palmer

Tel: 07748 573 359

Info: adrienne@mertoncil.org.uk

Website: <https://www.mertoncil.org.uk/>

Merton Connected

Vestry Hall, 336 London Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3UD

Contact: Beau Fadahunsi

Tel: 020 8685 1771

Info: info@mertonconnected.co.uk

Website: www.mertonconnected.co.uk

Polish Family Association

66-72 Colliers Wood High Street, Colliers Wood SW19 2BY

Contact: Slawek Szczepanski

Tel: 07917 401 064

Info: info@polishfamily.org.uk

Website: <https://www.polishfamily.org.uk>

South London Tamil Welfare Group

36 High Street. Colliers Wood SW19 2AB

Contact: Shivaranjith Sivapragasam

Tel: 020 8542 3285

Info: admin@sltwg.org.uk

Tooting & Mitcham FC

Imperial Sports Ground, Bishopsford Road Morden SM4 6BF

Contact: Warren Andrews

Tel: 020 8685 6193

Info: Warren.Andrews@tmunited.org

Website: <https://www.tmunited.org>

10 Coaching

Imperial Sports Ground, Bishopsford Road, Morden SM4 6BF

Contact: Mark Smith

Tel: 07827 336 648

Website: www.10coaching.football

2021

Hate Crime Profile

Safer Merton

Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

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1. Aims of the profile – the specification

In order to ensure that Safer Merton was able to meet the needs of the partnership the following specification was drafted, circulated for comment and finalised. This specification underpins the whole of our work



| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------|
| Title | Hate Crime Profile |
| Details | Refreshed hate crime strategy |
| Authorised by | Peter Clifton, Safer Merton Team Manager |
| Author | Richard Anderson |
| Authors contact | X3623 |
| Date | 10/07/21 |

Hate Crime Profile

Aim

- To describe the extent of hate crime in the London borough of Merton and identify gaps in our knowledge and understanding of this problem.

Purposes

- To inform members of the SSE board and practitioners working on the borough
- To update the profile written in July 2020
- Provide evidence to support new projects and funding bids

Data Period Covered and Data Limitations

- The analysis used data from the publicly available MPS hate dashboard for the financial year 2020/21 to provide an annual perspective and data from the MPS internal CRIS system to look at the most recent trends.
- The profile will be a “best known” picture of hate crime on the borough, based on available data
- This profile does NOT look at Domestic Violence offences as these are addressed in a separate profile.
- Hate crime flags are applied to recorded crime reports or crime incidents in line with the definition shown on the following page. It is possible for more than one flag to be applied to a single report. This can lead to some confusion when dealing with hate crime statistics as not every reported incident may justify a crime report being created. Unless otherwise stated the statistics used in this report relate to recorded crime reports

Hate Crime Definition and the National Picture

A hate crime is defined on the MOPAC web site as “any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic; specifically, actual or perceived race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity”

MPS Hate Crime aligns with the former Home Office (APACS) guidance and is a measure identifying offences that satisfy **both** of the following criteria:

1. The offence is a notifiable offence
2. A feature code identifying a hate crime has been added to the crime report. The feature codes identifying hate crime types are:
 - Religious hate flags FH, (Faith Hate); RS & RT (Anti-Semitic); IS (Islamophobic)
 - Racist Hate Flags RI (Racial Incident)
 - Homophobic Hate Crime HO
 - Transgender Hate Crime HT
 - Disability Hate Crime VH

The flag should be applied to any incident that is perceived to be a hate crime by the victim or any other person, or any offence where the offender demonstrates hostility based on the victim’s membership of one or more of these groups.

A hate crime dashboard is maintained by the Metropolitan Police
<https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/hate-crime-dashboard/>

A revamped MOPAC Hate Crime Dashboard has been launched last year and can be found at: -

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/hate-crime-dashboard>

The interactive maps can be filtered by borough and hate crime strand

The five monitored strands are:

- Race;
- Religion/faith;
- Sexual orientation; (Homophobic)
- Disability;
- Gender-identity (Transgender)

Domestic Violence is considered a sixth stand of hate crime but because of the much larger volumes of incidents and crime it is reported separately

Hate crime recording history

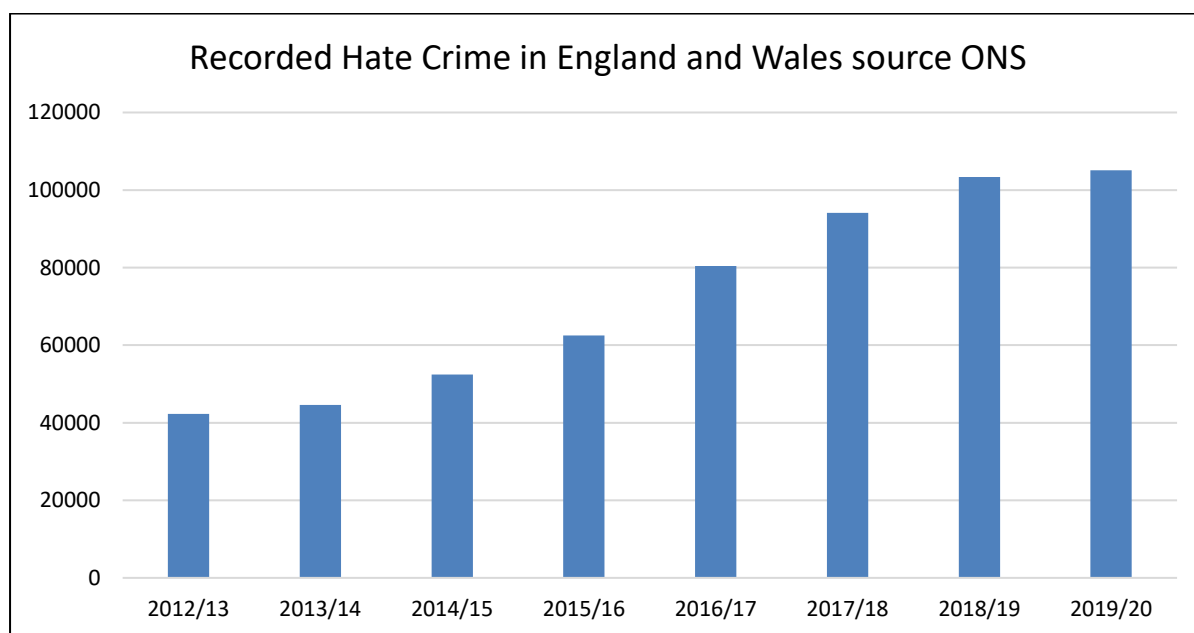
There has been a steady increase in reported hate crime since 2012. Action taken by police forces to improve their compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) led to improved recording of hate crime. Other causal factors for the rise are a greater public awareness and media attention on hate crime, and an improved confidence of victims to come forward.

Some Police forces are trialling flagging some incidents as Misogyny hate crime. This is defined as "incidents against women that are motivated by the attitude of men towards women and includes behaviour targeted at women by men simply because they are women". Whilst many types of incident considered under this definition are substantive offences in their own right such as public order or sexual offences, others such as using sexually explicit language are not. In March 2020 a private members bill the Hate Crime (Misogyny) Bill 2019-21 had its first reading in the House of Commons. The Bill is intended to make motivation by misogyny an aggravating factor in criminal sentencing; to require police forces to record hate crimes motivated by misogyny; and for connected purposes. The Bill failed to complete its passage through Parliament before the end of the parliamentary session in May 2021 and did not now progress.¹

However, an amendment to the Domestic Abuse bill which was passed by Parliament this April will require police to collect data on crimes apparently motivated by hostility towards women from the autumn.²

National Data

Hate crimes are a subset of notifiable crimes that are recorded by the police. As can be seen in the table below in England and Wales total hate crime rose by 8% in 2019/20 compared to the previous year whereas in 2018-19 the year on year increase was 10%. Figures for 2020/21 will not be published until October 2021.



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2018-to-2020>

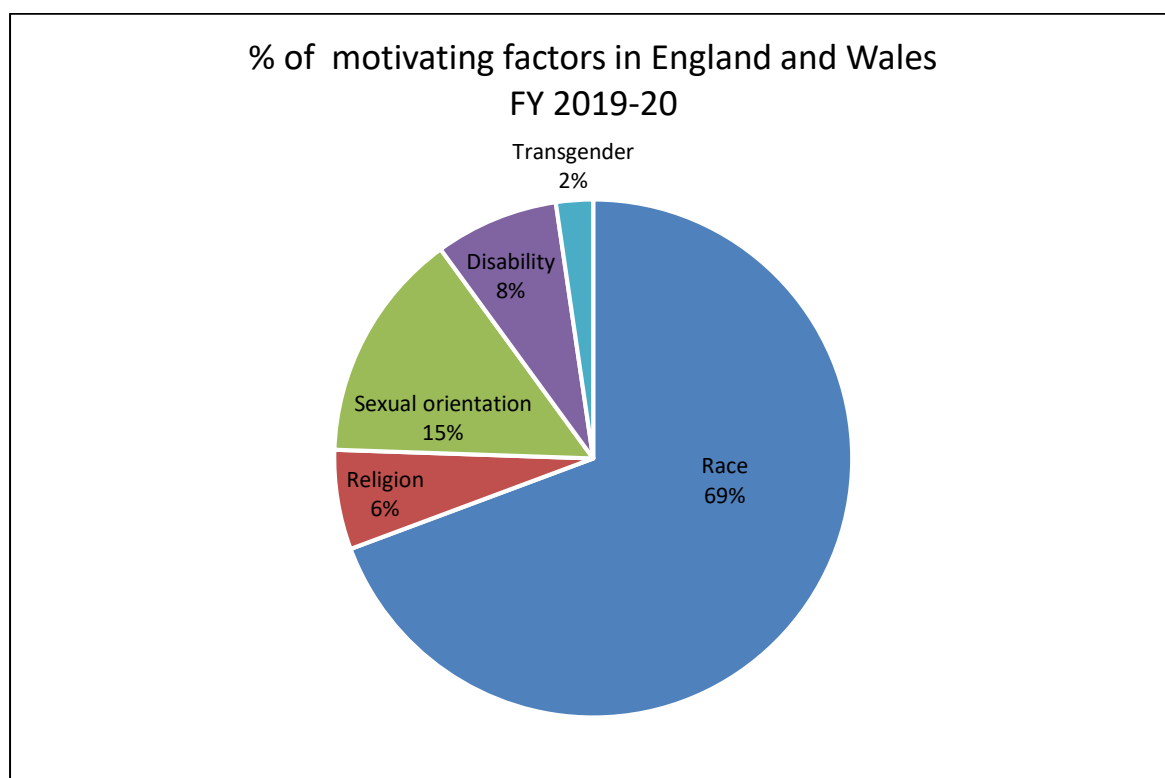
¹ [Hate Crime \(Misogyny\) Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

² <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56435550>

Types of Hate Crime

In England and Wales in 2019/20, around 53% of all hate crime offences were classified as public order and 38% as violence against the person. In the last report these proportions were 54% and 36% respectively.

In terms of the five strands of hate crime the majority of Flags (69%) relate to race hate; 15% relate to sexual orientation and the remainder are made up of the other three strands. Note some offences may be assigned more than one hate flag hence the number of motivating factors is 4% higher (109,736) than the number of offences.



Influencing factors

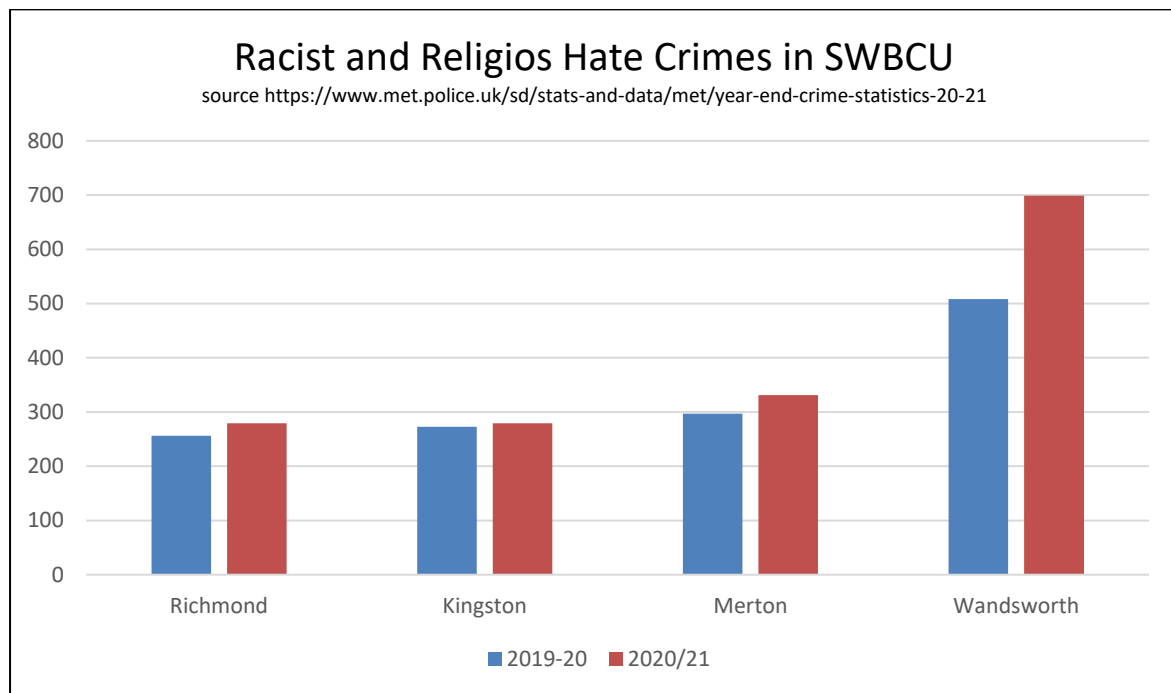
Following the last Merton hate crime report the various pandemic related lockdowns reduced movements of much of the population thus reducing interactions between people and this led to some falls in hate offences. In late May 2020 the death of George Floyd triggered the Black Lives Matter Campaign. June 2020 saw a spike in Racist hate crime reports in Merton and the MPS. It is not clear whether increased offending or increased willingness to report caused the increase which fell back to more expected levels later in the year. National figures are not available but are likely to echo that trend.

MPS Overview

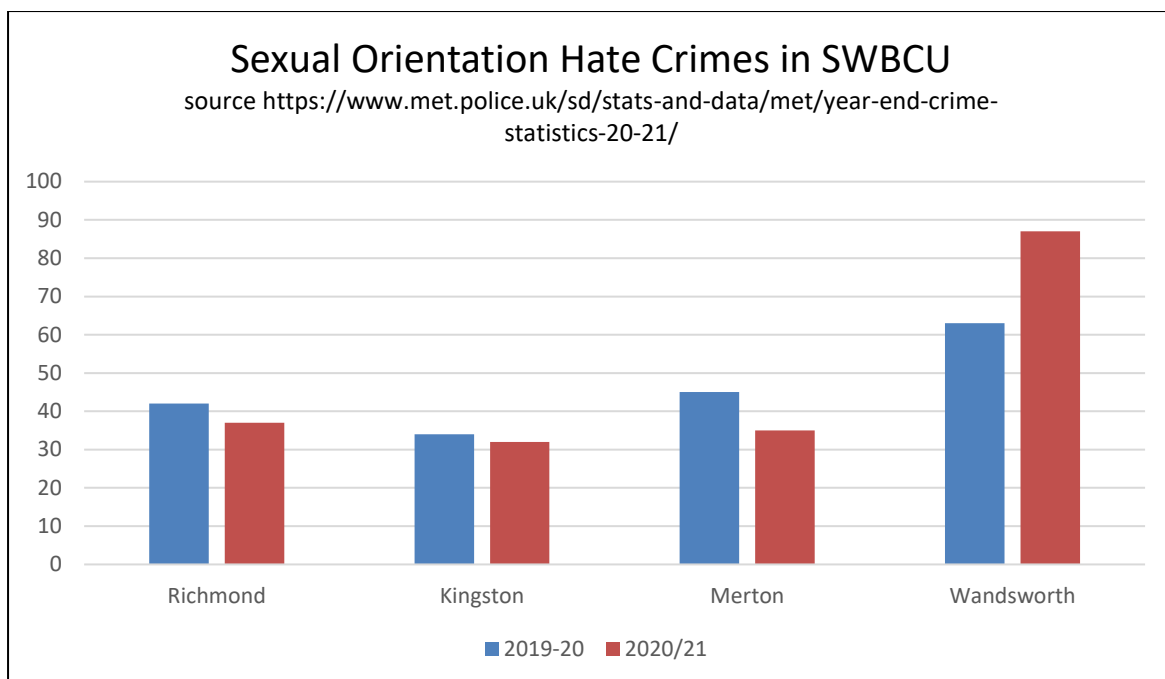
Across the MPS for the financial year 2020-21 the overall number of hate offences increased by 10% to nearly 25,000 reports primarily as a result of increased racist offences for the reasons outlined above. Faith and homophobic hate crimes saw year on year falls.

BCU comparison

All boroughs in the South West Basic Command Unit (SWBCU) saw increases in Racist and Religious Hate crimes in 2020-21 compared to last year. In percentage terms, Wandsworth had by far the largest increase with 38%. Richmond at 2% had the smallest increase with Kingston 9% and Merton by 11%. The figure for the BCU as a whole was a 19% increase compared to a 10% increase in the last report.



In respect of Sexual orientation hate crime, the picture was more mixed with Richmond and Merton seeing decreases whilst Kingston and Wandsworth increased. The largest change was in Wandsworth



Disability hate crimes across the SWBCU amounted to 55 offences compared to 34 in the last financial year. Merton had the largest number of offences at 22 up from 10 in 2019-20.

Transgender crimes across the SWBCU amounted to 17 offences unchanged from 17 in the last financial year.

The Merton Picture

Merton's Hate Crime Strategy Group continue to meet on a quarterly basis and over the past year have been working to develop a hate crime Third Party Reporting Scheme. This encourages victims who do not feel comfortable reporting direct to the police to come forward and make a report via a third party organisation. Community organisations such as Inner Strength Network, Police Family Association, BAME Voice and Merton CIL are taking part in the scheme, with recent additions to Third Party Reporting Centres including AFC Wimbledon and Tooting and Mitcham FC.

Data from the MPS hate crime dashboard shows that Hate Crime in Merton has increased by 9% in the last financial year compared to 2019-20. In the last report the increase was also 9%. The percentage swings for some of the strands are large because the base numbers are well below 100. For the MPS as a whole the rise was 16% compared to 12% in the last report.

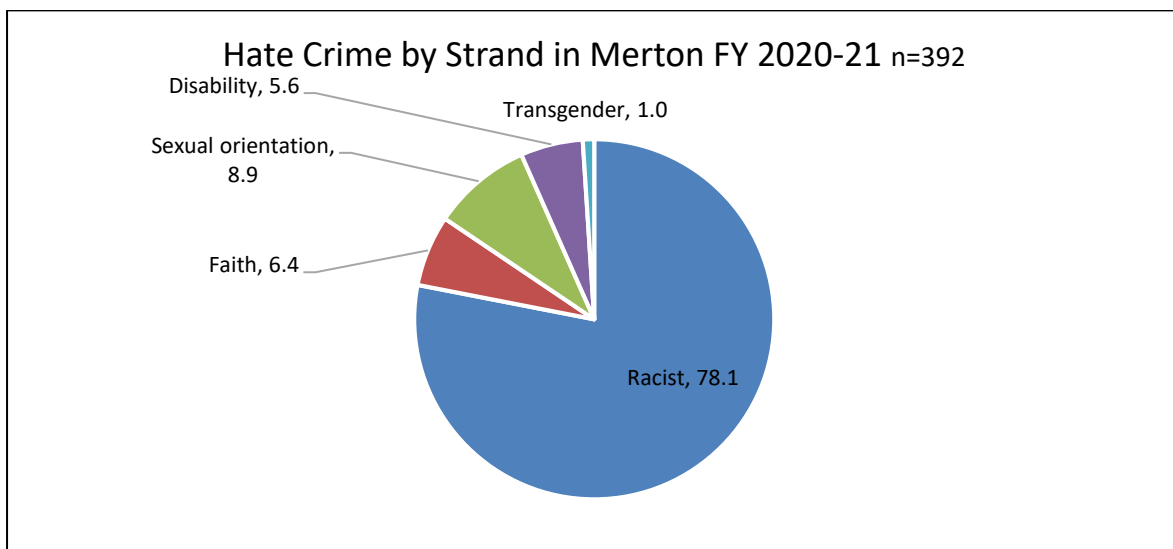
| Merton | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | % change |
|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|
| Racist | 275 | 306 | 11 |
| Faith | 23 | 25 | 9 |
| Sexual orientation | 45 | 35 | -22 |
| Disability | 11 | 22 | 100 |

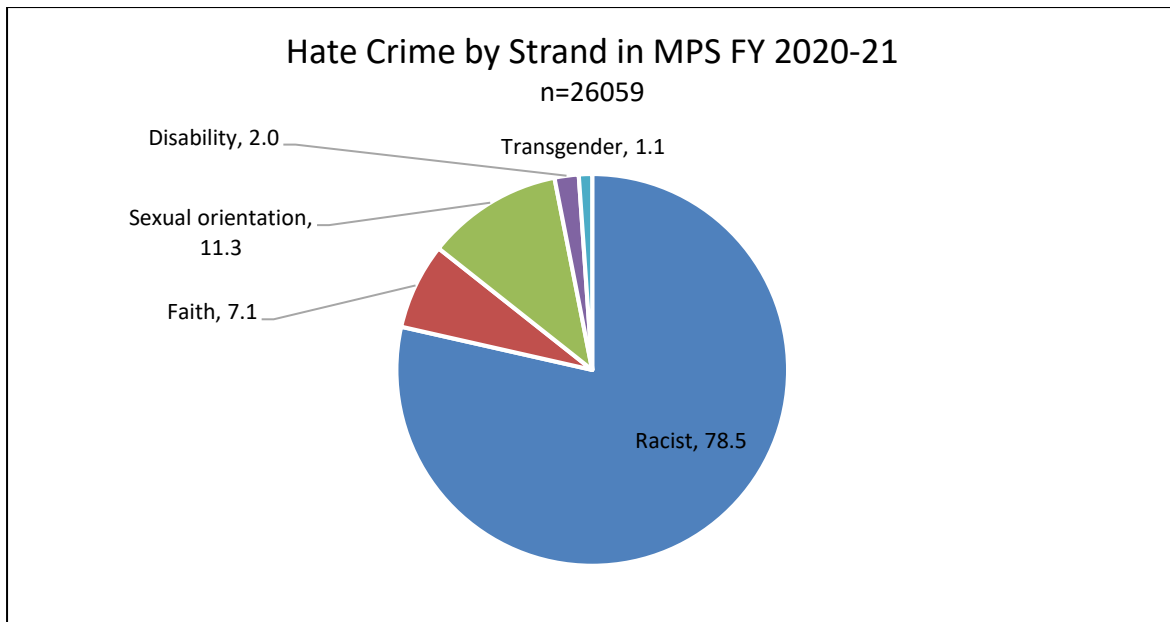
| | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Transgender | 5 | 4 | -20 |
| TOTAL | 359 | 392 | 9 |

| MPS | 2019-20 | 2020/21 | % change |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Racist | 16547 | 20466 | 24 |
| Faith | 2172 | 1854 | -15 |
| Sexual orientation | 3009 | 2933 | -3 |
| Disability | 475 | 519 | 9 |
| Transgender | 288 | 287 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 22491 | 26059 | 16 |

Proportion of the differing strands of hate crime

For the FY2020/21 the relative proportions of the hate crime strands in Merton broadly mirrors the breakdown across the MPS with nearly 80% of reports under the racist strand. This probably reflects the more diverse nature of London's population compared to England and Wales as a whole where the figure was under 70% in 2019/20. (National figure for 2020/21 are not yet available.) In the longer term the proportion of homophobic hate crime is increasing. The National figure for 2019/20 was 14% of the total compared to 7% in 2017/18.





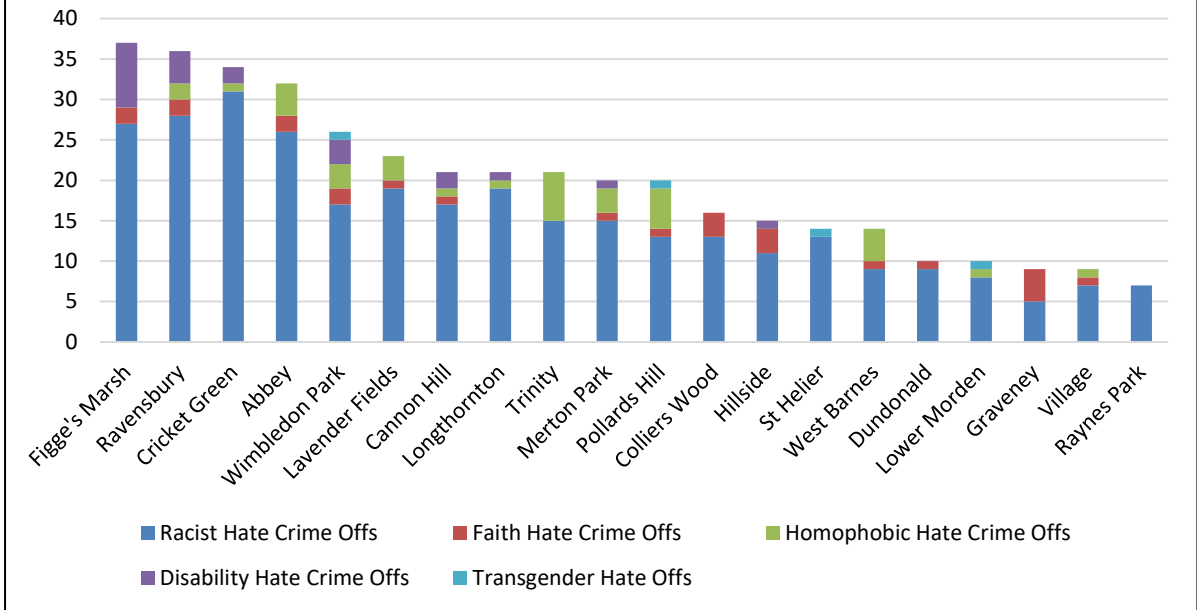
Violent Hate Crime

Whilst the majority of all hate crimes in Merton was classified as Violence against the Person (VAP) only 6% percent of the total (22 reports) was sub classified as violence with injury. The majority of VAP reports are categorised as “harassment” which was included in the range of VAP offences from 2015.

Wards with the most Hate crime reports

In the data set provided by Metstats2 for FY 2020-21, the individual wards in Merton were identified. The breakdown by ward is shown in the table below. Compared to last year Figge’s Marsh continued to have the highest number of reports. Trinity second last year fell to ninth. St. Helier went from third to fourteenth. Ravensbury and Cricket Green jumped from sixth and seventh to second and third this year whilst Abbey remained in fourth.

Merton Hate Crime Fy 2020-21 by ward n=395



Victim Profile

Repeat victims

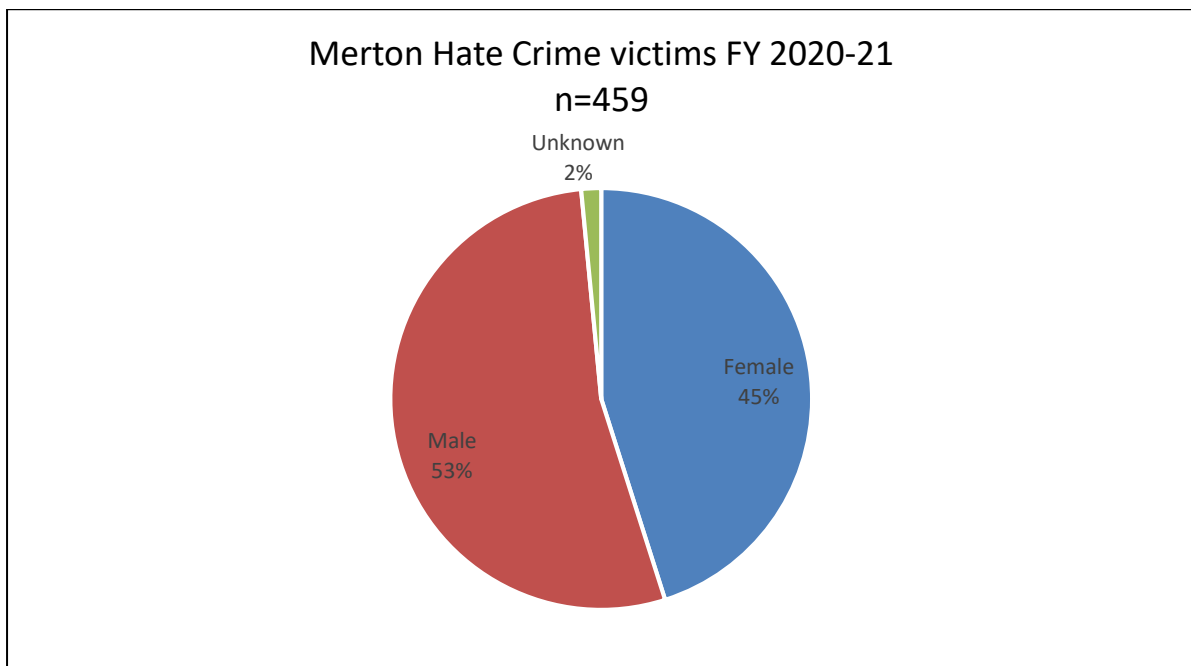
The main MPS safeguarding dashboard which recorded the level of the level of repeat victims of Hate crime has been decommissioned.

Victim profile methodology

A search was constructed on the Cris enquiries system to attempt to return information on the victims and suspects of hate crime during the period under review. Note the number of victims is larger than the number of reports and the number of suspects is lower than the number of reports. The search returned data on 95% of the relevant crime reports. The disparity in the data results from a.) the complex structure of the data b.) An element of key fields not being completed in the records and c.) The skill of the author in constructing the search terms. Whilst not definitive the data sample is sufficient to produce a good overview of these groups. For this reason percentages rather than figures are shown.

Victim gender

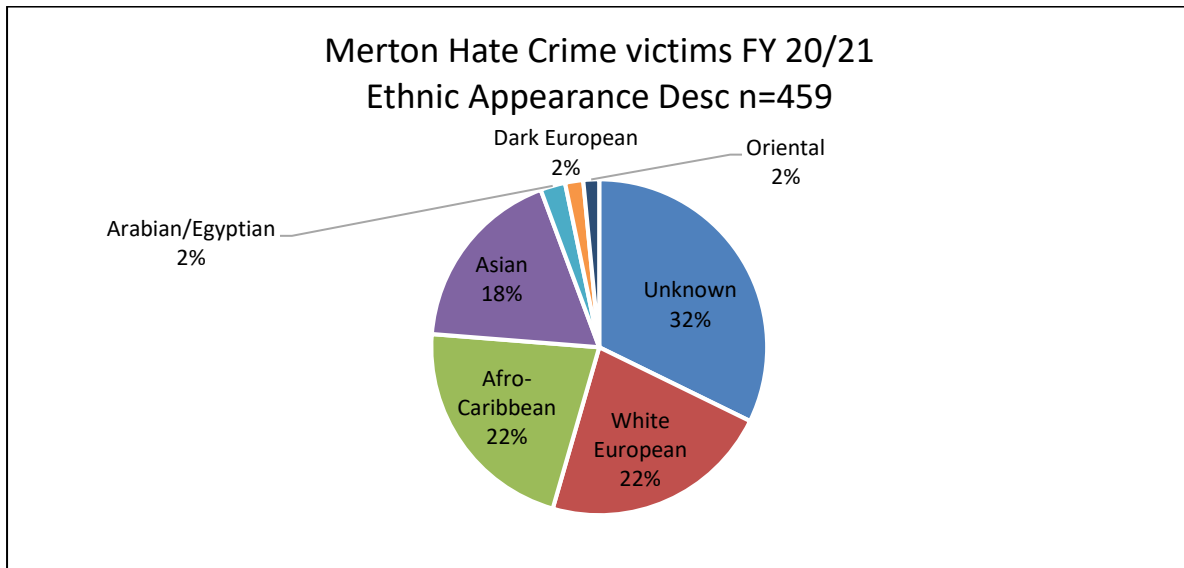
The gender split of all hate crime victims shown in the pie chart below. There has been little change in this figure since last year with no one gender being especially victimised.



Victim Ethnicity

NB. The MPS crime recording system continues to use just 6 identity codes to describe ethnicity. ³

The ethnic breakdown of victims of racist hate crimes shows 46% from a BAME group. This is 6% lower compared to the previous profile. The percentage of Unknown victim ethnicity rose by 12% to 32%. It is not clear if this is a recording practices issue which could be addressed. The percentage of Oriental victims was unchanged at 2% suggesting there was little impact on this group as a result of the covid 19 pandemic.



Victim Age

More than half the victims of hate crime in Merton were aged between 26-45 whilst 15% were aged under 25.

Suspect⁴ profile

Given the large number of suspects who are not positively identified or subsequently proceeded against for hate crime in Merton some of the findings shown below cannot necessarily be said to represent the offending community as a whole.

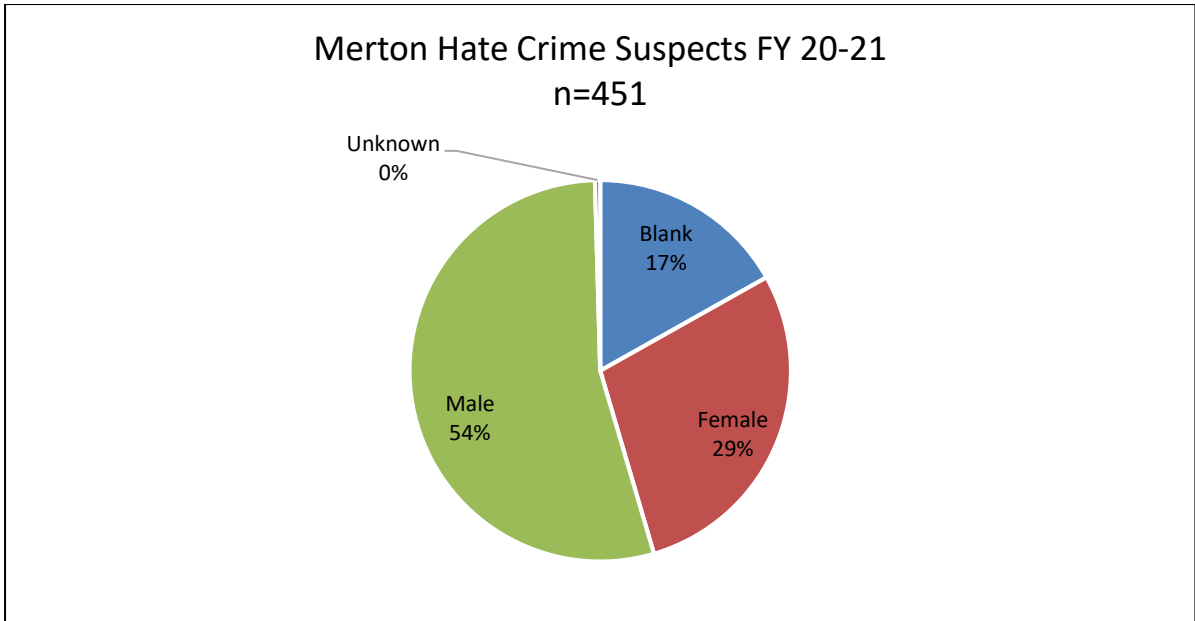
The MOPAC Hate crime dashboard⁵ previously provided an age/ethnicity breakdown for perpetrators⁶ however due to the ongoing lockdown these figures have not been updated for the 2019-20 financial year and the previous breakdown removed.

³ 0-Unknown 1 WHITE – NORTH EUROPEAN, 2 WHITE – SOUTH EUROPEAN, 3 BLACK, 4 ASIAN, 5 CHINESE, JAPANESE, OR OTHER SOUTH EAST ASIAN, 6 ARABIC OR NORTH AFRICAN

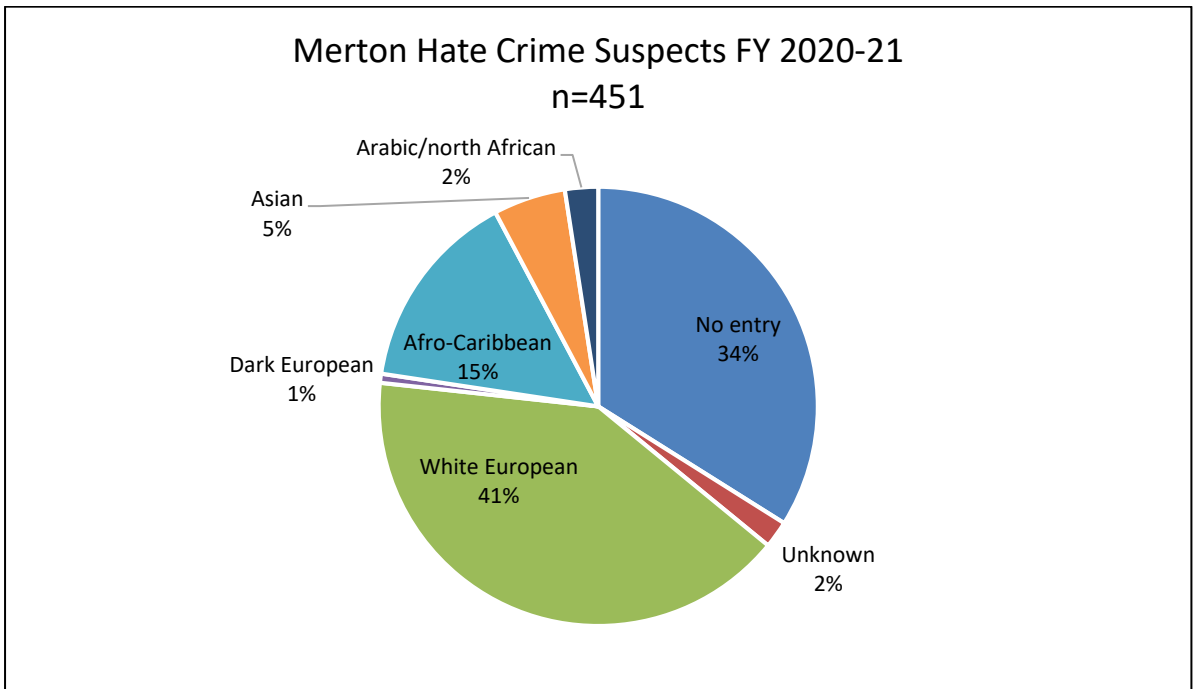
⁴ The term Suspect has been used there rather than Perpetrator as the police data detailed those named as suspects of an offence rather than those convicted of an offence

⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/hate-crime-dashboard>

⁶ The term perpetrator in this case means a person against whom proceedings were commenced.



Whilst the victim population was fairly evenly split there was a clear majority of male suspects.



White people made up the largest element of the suspect cohort however there was no entry in a third of the records retrieved.

Motivations for hate crime

Whilst no form of hate crime should be condoned or excused it is worthy to consider the differing situations in which they occur. Whilst some are spontaneous acts of verbal or physical assault born out of prejudice, many result from disagreements between parties over a non hate issue such as parking or anti social behaviour. The situation then escalates resulting in a hate crime taking place.

It is impossible to judge whether the initial confrontation would have occurred if both parties had been of similar backgrounds. It is therefore hard to quantify with any certainty which are purely Hate motivated offences and which are Hate aggravated offences. However the perception is that there are more hate aggravated offences.

Where verbal abuse occurs there is a tendency for some to use whatever the eye perceives to influence their choice of language whether that be skin colour, headscarf, body shape or use of spectacles. This name-calling is an abusive way of expressing a person's anger to denigrate or control the other party.

The numbers of hate crime reports which result in people being proceeded with is low. The main reasons for this low figure are:-

- In many instances the victim and suspect are unknown to each other
- There may be no physical interaction between the parties and hence no forensic opportunities
- The incident occurs in a public place where there is no CCTV coverage
- No third party witnesses come forward.

Resultingly there are few practical lines of enquiry for police to pursue.

Sanctions and Court Outcomes

A successful outcome in any criminal offence as measured by the police is referred to as a Sanctioned Detection (SDet)⁷

The sanction detection (SDet) rate is calculated by using the following formula: $SDet\ Rate = \frac{\text{Number of SDets recorded in a particular period} \times 100}{\text{Number of offences recorded in the same period}}$

The SDet rate for Hate crime across the MPS has increased for overall hate crime, from 12% to 14% for the 12 months to March 2021. The figure for Merton borough fell from 12% to 10%

⁷ A sanction detection occurs when (1) a notifiable offence (crime) has been committed and recorded; (2) a suspect has been identified and is aware of the detection; (3) the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) evidential test is satisfied; (4) the victim has been informed that the offence has been detected, and; (5) the suspect has been charged, reported for summons, or cautioned, been issued with a penalty notice for disorder or the offence has been taken into consideration when an offender is sentenced.

Key Judgement statements

National figures are several months behind those available at force and borough level and were showing the increasing trend of Hate Crime reporting flattening out. The picture in the MPS for the last financial year showed a 10% increase but the impact from the George Floyd murder / black lives matter campaign was a clear influence. Merton saw an increase on par with the MPS as a whole. The rise in offences in Wandsworth has put the SWBCU above the MPS average . (National figures are likely to be published in October).

In Merton the sanctioned detection rates for Hate Crime fell by 2% whilst the MPS as a whole rose by 2%.

Without reading the details of individual reports it is not straightforward to identify if many hate crime flagged offences were motivated by hatred or aggravated by it. Anecdotally more are aggravated in nature.

The top wards for reported hate crime in Merton are in the socio-economically challenged wards of Figge's Marsh and Cricket Green. Trinity in Wimbledon town centre and St Helier ward both fell down the rankings in terms of total hate crimes

Over half of all victims are aged between 26-45.

Recommendations

- To refresh and revisit the profile on an annual basis to support both the hate crime strategy and the strategic assessment process.
- To use the findings of this report to shape the activities of Hate Crime Awareness Week.
- To continue to monitor the hate crime detection rate for Merton for any changes.
- To target engagement on countering Hate crime in wards with the highest volumes of offences.
- Review disability hate crimes to see if any one disability is particularly victimised.
- To look at ways to improve completion of victim/suspect details on hate crime reports in terms of gender/ethnicity.

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 16th February 2022

Wards: All

Subject: The safety of women and girls in Merton

Lead officer: Peter Clifton, Interim Head of Community Safety

Lead member: Councillor Agatha Akyigyina

Contact officer: Zoe Gallan, Zoe Gallen, DA & VAWG Lead

Recommendations:

- A. That the committee note the work undertaken and to be undertaken to help improve the safety of women and girls in Merton
 - B. That the committee endorse a recommendation to Cabinet that Merton Council sign up to the Mayor's Night Safety Charter
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of the Safety of Women and Girls officer Task Group (referred to as the Task Group within this report) which was set up to identify what additional steps the council could take to improve the safety of women and girls.
- 1.2. This report provides an overview of the existing partnership response to Violence against Women and Girls; the outcomes and activities which have taken place in connection with the work of the Task Group; plans for specific additional interventions aimed at improving the safety of women and girls (in particular in public spaces) and details of the funding which has been secured to enable the delivery of those interventions.
- 1.3. On the basis of the range of work taking place the report recommends that Merton Council sign up to the Mayor's Night Safety Charter (as a statement of the Council's commitment to improving the safety of women and girls) and seeks the committee's support and endorsement for this recommendation.

2 DETAILS

2.1. Background context

2.2. April 2021 Merton Council motion

2.3. Members raised a council motion following the murder of Sarah Everard at the April 2021 full council meeting. The motion was resolved as follows:

‘That the council consider and note the content of the report, recognising that misogyny is systemic, and acknowledging the hurt and anger expressed more recently by women and girls in response to the murder of Sarah Everard, which was in part calling for their lived experience to be listened to and real action taken to address their concerns. Council calls on Cabinet to:

- a) *Develop safe and confidential opportunities for women and girls to share their experiences with the Council and other appropriate authorities to inform their work in changing male behaviour to reduce VAWG; and*
- b) *Explore how restorative justice processes might be utilised to provide victims with an additional form of support and means of reducing VAWG.’*

2.4. Analysis of crime data and consultations

2.4.1 Overall Merton remains one of London’s safest boroughs. During 2021 there were **12,876** total crimes reported, equating to a rate of **61.1** per 1000 population (the **3rd** lowest crime rate out of 32 London boroughs). During the same period there were 4188 Violence against the Person offences, equating to a rate of **19.9** per 1000 population (the **4th** lowest rate out of the 32 boroughs).

2.4.2 We know that for certain crime types a disproportionate number of the victims are women or girls, in particular Sexual offences (**85%** of victims) and Domestic Abuse offences (**72%** of victims). In response to which a comprehensive partnership response is in place which aims to prevent Domestic Abuse through early intervention as well as support victims, survivors and their children. We are also aware that, in London, people from ethnic minorities face a disproportionately high risk of become a victim of violent crime; and also aware of the findings and recommendations from the ‘*Invisible survivors – The long wait for justice*’¹ report by HMICFRS which highlights the importance of ensuring that all women are listened to² and of working to ensure that victims of violent crime who are women from ethnic minorities do not face additional barriers when seeking help and support.

2.4.3 Recent events, including the tragic murders of Sarah Everard in Clapham in March 2021, of Sabina Nessa in Greenwich in September 2021, and of Wafah Yasmin Chkaifi in Maida Vale in January 2022, have led to an increased focus on the safety

¹

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963007/Invisible_survivors___The_long_wait_for_justice.pdf

² One step we will be taking her towards this will be through launching a Safety of Women and Girls at night survey (see section 2.36 for details).

of women and girls in public spaces. Locally, residents' responses to the Safer Merton Community Safety Survey reveal:

- An increase in the proportion of female respondents reporting feeling unsafe outside at night (**45%** in the 2021 survey compared to **38%** in the 2019 survey).
- Female respondents were almost **1.5** times more likely to report feeling unsafe outside at night than male respondents.
- Substantial difference between perception of safety between the daytime and the night time (**38%** of females reported feeling unsafe outside after dark, compared to only **5%** feeling unsafe in the daytime).

2.4.4 The importance residents place on the safety in public spaces was also reflected in some of the themes to emerge from the Your Merton Survey (conducted during spring and summer 2021) including that:

- Residents wanted the borough to be accessible, safe and clean. Residents didn't always feel safe in public spaces at night
- Residents consider it important that parks are maintained to be safe, clean and accessible shared spaces.

2.5. **What we have been doing**

2.6. Existing partnership response to VAWG

2.7. Safer Merton continues to co-ordinate the partnership approach to respond to VAWG as part of its core business. VAWG also remains a strategic priority for the Safer and Stronger Executive Board (SSEB), the statutory community safety partnership for Merton. Interventions and activities include:

- The management of the VAWG Strategic Board (Quarterly meetings).
- Developing a new VAWG strategy (the new Strategy is due to be launched during September 2022). The Merton VAWG board is looking at adding a specific priority partnership objective within the VAWG strategy to 'improve the safety of women and girls'
- Developing and delivering the annual VAWG action plan (in line with the Strategy, the new plan is due to be launched during September 2022)
- Holding the three-weekly DV MARAC meetings.
- Continuing to raise awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and VAWG across the council, partnership and community.
- Ensuring we meet the policy and statutory requirements, specifically conducting Domestic Homicide Reviews.

2.8. Commissioning and managing the delivery of front line services for victims of Domestic Abuse:

- The Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (IDVA).
- Running virtual weekly One Stop Shop drop in surgeries.
- Joint Commissioning of the complex needs IDVA service and refuge with Wandsworth, Kingston and Richmond.
- Refuge provision – 17 beds provided through Hestia.

2.9. Public realm works to improve safety in outdoor spaces

2.10. The Council is increasing its focus on safety in public spaces across the borough with a view to assessing options for crime prevention and improved safety at locations residents have raised concerns about. A recent example of this is the work currently underway in relation to Wandle Park (see 2.11 below).

2.11. In response to concerns raised by residents, the Council, working together with the Police, is conducting a review of crime prevention and safety measures in and around Wandle Park. The review is looking into how to design out crime in the park and is being supported by the Met's *Designing out Crime Team*.

2.12. The Council is also receiving a number of requests from residents to review lighting standards at various locations and we will do this as part of our work to help ensure safety.

2.13. Metropolitan Police

2.14. In November 2021, the Metropolitan Police launched the Met action plan to tackle violence against women and girls. The plan brings together all the Met's work to prevent violence against women and girls in public spaces, domestic settings and online. It also outlines an internal focus to raise professional standards of officers and staff and root out those who display unacceptable behaviour towards women.

2.15. The Met are also stepping up police activity to prevent night-time violence, piloting Project Vigilant, an operation to tackle predatory offending around the night-time economy where teams of plain clothed and uniform officers are deployed together to identify and prevent predatory offending around busy night time spots.

2.16. The Met VAWG plan³ sets out to:

- Increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice for violence against women and girls;
- Improve the processes and victim care across the criminal justice system to improve outcomes;
- Reduce the likelihood of women and girls becoming repeat victims;
- Increase women's confidence in the police and, in doing so, improve the reporting of crimes, which disproportionately affects women and girls in London;

³ Commissioner launches Met action plan to tackle violence against women and girls | Metropolitan Police

- See an increase in reporting to the police, but a decrease in prevalence;
 - Intensify work to tackle sexual misconduct and domestic violence by officers and staff;
- 2.17. Officers will also continue to work with licensing venues, delivering the refreshed safety campaign *Ask for Angela*⁴ and providing vulnerability training to staff.
- 2.18. '*Ask for Angela*' is a safety initiative which is being rolled out to bars, clubs and other licensed businesses across London. People who feel unsafe, vulnerable or threatened can discreetly seek help by approaching venue staff (at the participating venues) and asking them for 'Angela'. This code-phrase will indicate to staff that they require help with their situation and a trained member of staff will then look to support and assist them.
- 2.19. The Met has also now rolled out the Walk and Talk initiative across London, with women joining officers on patrol so that Met officers can hear first-hand what needs to change.
- 2.20. Streetsafe⁵ is an online interactive survey launched by the Met for anyone to anonymously tell the police about public places where they felt or feel unsafe, because of environmental issues, for example street lighting, abandoned buildings or vandalism and/or because some behaviours, e.g. being followed or verbally abused. Safer Merton will continue to liaise with the police to ensure that information provided relating to Merton is shared with the council to further inform our local approach to locations. More broadly the Safer Merton team will explore ways to make it easier for residents to make us aware of locations where they feel unsafe (including looking at good practice and innovative approaches being used elsewhere⁶)
- 2.21. Lone plain clothed officers, including those reacting to incidents whilst off-duty, will proactively provide verification of their identity and purpose to any lone woman they need to engage with using a video call to a uniformed supervisor in one of their police operation rooms. This is in addition to showing their warrant card.

⁴ <https://www.met.police.uk/AskforAngela>

⁵ www.police.uk/streetsafe

⁶ For example the Women's Safety in Public Places in Hackney Project
<https://hackneywomenssafety.commonplace.is/>

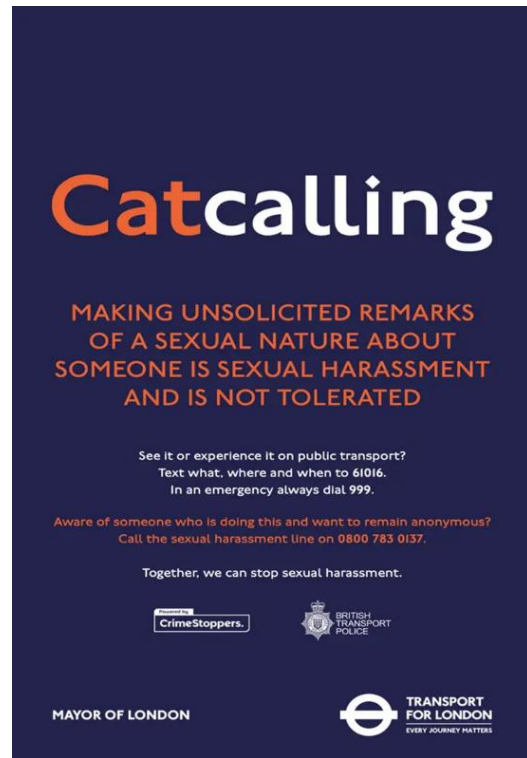
Transport for London

TFL also delivered a full publicity campaign⁷ with explicit explanations of what sexual harassment actually is and that it must stop. TFL also implemented a shared taxi for the popular night time bus routes to take the ‘last mile home’ from the bus to home.

TFL have, within their campaign, been clear on their zero tolerance approach to any form of unwanted sexual behaviour.

Victims and bystanders are encouraged to report incidents so that action can be taken against offenders.

Between 2019 and 2020, the latest data available from TFL, 1,884 sexual offences were reported on London’s transport network, the vast majority of which occurred on the Tube.



However, TfL have continues to stress that harassment goes largely unreported, with a YouGov survey from 2020 suggesting that up to 90% of offences are not reported.

2.22. SOLACE Women’s Aid

2.23. Solace Women’s Aid launched a campaign targeting men and the need to change behaviour and participate in helping women and girls feel safe. The ‘Good Guy Guide’⁸ highlights that ‘you are a good guy, but the woman walking alone on the street doesn’t know that’ and suggests a set of simple actions men can take to help women and girls feel safer.

⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-59056619>
<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/london-underground-sexual-harassment-crackdown-tfl-tube-met-police-b962637.html>

⁸ <https://www.solacewomensaid.org/news/solace-works-mc-saatchi-and-token-man-launch-good-guys-guide>

2.25. **Additional focus on improving the safety of women and girls**

2.26. In order to respond to the April 2021 Council motion (as detailed in this report in section 2.2) and to identify more broadly, what else, the council can do to improve the safety of women and girls in Merton, officers established a task group with the first meeting held in June 2021. The Task Group has focussed on:

- i. Capturing the activities of the council and its partners that supported the safety of women and girls.
- ii. Considering the wider policy and good practice on responding to the safety of women and girls.
- iii. Identifying how we can engage with and capture the experience of women and girls in Merton.
- iv. Identifying further interventions and approach that could enhance our response and resource implications

2.27. A range of activities have been carried out by or in connection with the partnership organisations supporting the work of the Task Group, these include:

- **Conducting Focus group sessions:**

- Councillors Focus Group on Safety of Women and Girls – The Safer Merton team held this session on the 29th November. At the session an outline of the work of the Task Group was provided as well as discussion exploring questions around policy, good practice, and the work of the wider partnership. The session also provided an opportunity for key points emerging from the work of the Task Group to be shared and for input and feedback to be sought from members.
- Licencing focus session: Led by the Councils Licensing Team, this session focused on exploring the opportunities for engagement with licensed premises on the borough to a) raise awareness of and increase participation in the ‘Ask for Angela’⁹ campaign and b) provide training to licensed premises which explore what vulnerability is, how to identify it and appropriate interventions.

- **Delivering training and awareness raising:**

- License premises across the borough have been contacted¹⁰ to raise their awareness of the ‘Ask for Angela’ Campaign and to encourage them to participate in the WAVE training¹¹ program which is focused on helping ensure that staff ensure staff are trained and confident to

⁹ <https://www.met.police.uk/AskforAngela>

¹⁰ During November and December 2021

¹¹ <https://www.safersounds.org.uk/news/safer-sounds-met-police-and-mayor-of-london-launch-refreshed-wave-programme>

actively assist customers in trouble and thus help prevent and reduce violent and sexual offences from taking place.

- The WAVE Programme is an initiative which has been launched by the Safer Sounds partnership working together with Safer Sounds are working with the Metropolitan Police Service and the Mayor of London. The Programme aims to help keep people safe while enjoying a night out. There are two strands to the WAVE Programme a) the Ask for Angela initiative and b) WAVE Training. WAVE Training is a training session which aims to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of those working in licensed premises focusing on identifying vulnerability and making appropriate interventions.
 - The Police have allocated a number of officers in the SWBCU to help deliver the WAVE training and Ask for Angela campaign to licensed premises across the borough.
 - The WAVE training explores what vulnerability is, how to identify it and appropriate interventions.
- **Develop proposals for new or enhanced interventions and seek to secure funding for those interventions:**
 - In July 2021 the Task Group developed and submitted a bid to the Home Office Safer Streets Fund 'Protection Public Spaces 2021/22' for funding towards interventions to improve the safety of women and girls in public places across the borough.
 - Merton also bid for funding from the Home Office's SWaN (Safety of Women at Night) fund as part of a joint bid with Kingston, Richmond, and Wandsworth.
 - Whilst both these bids were unsuccessful, the ideas that were developed formed the basis of subsequent proposals as a result of which **£38,000** has been secured to deliver a range of interventions across Merton to improve the safety of women and girls in public spaces.
 - The £38,000 is comprised of £15,000 approved by Cabinet as part of the Merton 2030 implementation and £23,328 by MOPAC under the LCPF funding. As a result of this funding a range of enhanced interventions to improve the safety of women and girls will be delivered across the borough and details of these are provided in the 'Enhanced interventions' section below.

- 2.29. **Enhanced interventions to improve the safety of women and girls**
- 2.30. Taking into consideration feedback from the consultation activities as well as analysis of crime data the Task Group has developed plans for a set of interventions aimed at improving the safety of women and girls in public spaces across the borough.
- 2.31. Thanks to the funding provided by Cabinet as part of the Merton 2030 implementation and the MOPAC LCPF funding the following interventions will be delivered:
- 2.32. Investing in extra capacity for street pastors
- 2.33. The funding will enable an additional 20 street pastors to be trained and deployed to busy night time economy locations – focusing on the areas where women have raised concerns about safety at night. This expansion of the already well regarded Merton street pastor scheme by this will make a real difference increasing the presence and safety at the key locations. (Funding in place: £26,000).
- 2.34. Targeted Training and support for NTE staff
- 2.35. The Council’s Licensing team will deploy a dedicate roving Welfare Licensing Officers to check premises are promoting welfare and safety inside their premises and checking that vulnerable customers are safe e.g. are looked after in safe haven areas within the premises, SIA door staff are not ejecting drunken customers and leaving them outside the premises in a vulnerable state. These officers will mainly be deployed being between 7pm and 4am, Friday and Saturdays. The funding will enable two officers to be deployed across eight weekends during 2022. (Funding in place: £12,328)
- 2.36. Safety of Women and Girls at night survey
- 2.37. The survey will be delivered, carried out and analysed by Crimestoppers and will seek to address the intelligence gap in relation to the safety of women and girls within the night time economy as well as considering a number of other linked issues such as exploitation and modern day slavery. The survey will be a key means of intelligence gathering around concerns that are not routinely reported to police and partners. It will offer both an anonymised response and the facility to add details for further consultation. (Funding in place £1000)
- 2.38. The survey results (and the engagment activity undertaken in the carrying out of the survey) will assist in:
- Identify potentially vulnerable locations and risk factors in the evening and night time economy.
 - Consider the level of understanding that staff and management at night time economy venues have around there role and responsibilities re reducing the potential for harm in the night time economy.
 - Help identify strategies to manage/deal with the different vulnerabilities, including non-threatening communication techniques.

- Inform the development of tools to ensure the night time economy venues are prepared and equipped to identify and manage potential vulnerability in the night time economy.
- Provide a greater understanding and insight into the disproportionate impacts of violent crime on different ethnic minorities and help us understand how we can best ensure that victims of violent crime who are women from ethnic minorities do not face additional barriers when seeking help and support.
- Help inform decisions as where to focus efforts on upskilling night time economy venues with good practice as how to identify and spot the signs and deal with vulnerability and exploitation.

2.39. **Communications**

Alongside the roll out of the above interventions the Safer Merton team and Merton Council's Communications Team will be developing and delivering a communications campaign focused on raise awareness around the safety of women and girls in the borough. The campaign will include coverage of a number of themes (linked together under the broader subject of Violence against Women and Girls), namely:

- The Safety of women and girls in public places
- Sexual Violence
- Sexual Harassment
- Modern day slavery, and
- Domestic Abuse.

2.40. **Next steps**

2.41. Mayor's Night Safety Charter

2.42. The Women's Night Safety Charter was introduced by the Mayor of London and is part of Mayors Tackling Violence against Women and Girls Strategy and London's commitment to the UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces global initiative.

2.43. To support the Women's Night Safety Charter, organisations that operate at night are asked to sign up to some simple pledges. Organisations that have signed up are published on the Mayors website. As well as business organisations, 20 London Boroughs has also signed up. The pledges are as follows:

- Nominate a champion in your organisation who actively promotes women's night safety.
- Demonstrate to staff and customers that your organisation takes women's safety at night seriously, for example through a communications campaign.

- Remind customers and staff that London is safe, but tell them what to do if they experience harassment when working, going out or travelling.
- Encourage reporting by victims and bystanders as part of your communications campaign.
- Train staff to ensure that all women who report are believed.
- Train staff to ensure that all reports are recorded and responded to.
- Design your public spaces and work places to make them safer for women at night.

2.44. The Safety of Women and Girls Task Group

2.45. Officers will take steps to implement the enhanced interventions (as detailed in section 2.29 of this report) and will provide updates as to the outcomes of those interventions. In addition during 2022/23 the Task Group will re-convene to look at the following themes:

- a) Focusing on Perpetrators,
- b) Focusing on Victims
- c) Focusing on understanding and addressing disproportionality
- d) Focusing on Schools
- e) Communications
- f) Older victims
- g) Transport

2.46. **Recommendation**

2.47. That the committee note the work undertaken and to be undertaken to help improve the safety of women and girls in Merton.

2.48. That the committee endorse a recommendation to Cabinet that Merton Council sign up to the Mayor's Night Safety Charter (as a statement of the Councils commitment to improving the safety of women and girls and in light of the range of measures being implemented).

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. That the committee does not endorse the recommendation that Merton sign up to the Mayor's Night Safety Charter (this alternative option is not recommended)

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. The safety of women and girls Task Group has taken into consideration results from The 2021 Safer Merton Community Survey, the Annual Residents Survey and the Your Merton Survey (conducted during spring and summer 2021).

6 TIMETABLE

| Action | Date |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</i> | 16 th February 2022 |
| <i>Leaders Strategy Group</i> | 7 th March 2022 |
| <i>Cabinet</i> | 21 st March 2022 |

7 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

8 There are no financial implications associated with the decision recommend in this report (i.e. to sign up to the Mayor’s Night Safety Charter). There are no financial impacts associated with the enhanced intervention activities detailed as specific funding has been secured to enable their delivery (as detailed above in 2.24)

9 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

Violence against Women and Girls can have major implications on community. The partnerships work in supporting victims, taking action against perpetrators, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and ensuring that our communities understand the work we are doing on this subject is vital in achieving our ambitions for more victims to report and for more friends, family and/or neighbours to report matters of concern.

CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

11 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Safer Merton in partnership with all council departments, continue to ensure that the council remains compliant with our duties under the Crime and Disorder Act.

12 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1. None for the purpose of this report.

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

None for the purposes of this report.

14 BACKGROUND PAPERS

14.1. MOPAC Draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-25

<https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/police-and-crime-plan-2021-25>

Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22



This table sets out the draft Overview and Scrutiny Commission's Work Programme for 2021/22 following discussions at the topic workshop on 9 June 2021.

The work programme will be considered at every meeting of the Commission to enable it to respond to issues of concern or to request new pre-decision items ahead of their consideration by Cabinet/Council.

Chair: Cllr Peter Southgate
Vice-chair: Cllr Peter McCabe

Scrutiny Support

For further information on the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission please contact: -
Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer
Tel: 020 8545 4035; Email: rosie.mckeever@merton.gov.uk

For more information about overview and scrutiny at LB Merton, please visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Meeting date: 14 July 2021 (~~**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 6 July 2021~~)

| Scrutiny category | Item/issue | How | Lead member and/or lead officer | Intended outcomes |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Holding the executive to account | Questions to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive - priorities and challenges for 2021/22 | Discussion | Cllr Mark Allison, Leader; Hannah Doody, Chief Executive | |
| Holding the executive to account | Recovery and Modernisation Programme | Presentation | Chris Lee, Director of E&R Frank Dick, Head of Recovery | |
| Scrutiny of crime and disorder | Identify questions for the Borough Commander | Discussion | Cllr Peter Southgate, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Commission | Plan line of questioning for 8 September meeting |
| Performance management | Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme 21/22 | Report | Cllr Peter Southgate, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Commission | Discuss and approve work programme and re-establishment of the FMTG |

Meeting date: 8 September 2021 (~~**Deadline for papers:** 5pm, 31 August 2021~~)

| Scrutiny category | Item/issue | How | Lead member and/or lead officer | Intended outcomes |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scrutiny of crime and disorder | BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton | Report and in-depth discussion | BCU Commander | To hold BCU Commander to account on crime and disorder |
| Scrutiny of crime and disorder | Safer Merton Update | Report | Kiran Vagarwal, Community Safety Manager | Report to focus on domestic violence and gender based violence |
| Holding the executive to account | Merton Council as an Employer | Report | Liz Hammond | Review of Mental Health support for employees |
| Setting the work programme | Work programme 2021/22 | Written report | Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer | To agree the work programme. |

Meeting date: 10 November 2021 (**Deadline for papers:** 5pm, 1 November 2021)

| Scrutiny category | Item/issue | How | Lead member and/or lead officer | Intended outcomes |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Holding the executive to account | Business Plan - budget scrutiny (round one) | Report | Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services | To send comments to Cabinet budget meeting 6 December |
| Holding the executive to account | Your Merton | Report | John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships; Catherine Dunn; Rob Francis @ Traverse | |
| Holding the executive to account | Council's Communications Service | Report | Matt Burrows, Interim Head of Customer Experience & Communications | Update on communications service; including communication priorities, complaint handling, resident satisfaction levels & Your Merton work |
| Setting the work programme | Work programme 2021/22 | Written report | Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer | To agree the work programme |

Meeting date: 19 January 2022 (**Deadline for papers:** 5pm, 10 January 2022)

| Scrutiny category | Item/issue | How | Lead member and/or lead officer | Intended outcomes |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Budget scrutiny | Business Plan Update – budget scrutiny (round two) | Report – common pack for Panels and Commission | Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services | To report to Cabinet (7 Feb) on budget scrutiny round 2 |
| Budget scrutiny | Scrutiny of the Business Plan; comments and recommendations from the overview and scrutiny panels | Report | Cllr Peter Southgate Scrutiny Officer | To send comments and recommendations from the overview and scrutiny panels to Cabinet on 7 Feb |
| Scrutiny of crime and disorder | Identify questions for the Borough Commander | Discussion | Cllr Peter Southgate | Plan line of questioning for meeting on 16 March |
| Setting the work programme | Work programme 2021/22 | Written report | Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer | To agree the work programme. |

Meeting date: 16 February 2022 (**Deadline for papers: 5pm, 7 February 2022**)

| Scrutiny category | Item/issue | How | Lead member and/or lead officer | Intended outcomes |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre decision scrutiny | CHAS proposals | Report | Louise Round, SLLP | |
| Holding the executive to account | Safer Merton update - Safety of women and girls in Merton | Report | Peter Clifton, Safer Merton | Update following the council motion on 21st April 2021 in relation to the safety of women and girls in Merton |
| Holding the executive to account | Hate Crime Strategy 2022-26 | Report | Katy Saunders, Safer Merton | |
| Task Group report | Repurposing the High Streets | Report | Cllr Peter Southgate; Stella Akintan | |
| Setting the work programme | Work programme 2021/22 | Written report | Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer | To agree the work programme. |

Meeting date: 16 March 2022 (**Deadline for papers: 5pm, 7 March 2022**)

| Scrutiny category | Item/issue | How | Lead member and/or lead officer | Intended outcomes |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scrutiny of crime and disorder | BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton | Report and in-depth discussion | BCU Commander | To hold BCU Commander to account on crime and disorder |
| Scrutiny of crime and disorder | Safer Merton Update | | Kiran Vagarwal, Community Safety Manager | Report to focus on ASB and designing out crime |
| Scrutiny Review | Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy | Report | Evereth Willis, Equality and Community Cohesion Officer; John Dimmer; Chris Lee | Comment on the refresh of the next plan, using learning from Covid 19 and other items |
| Task Group report | Preventing Gambling Harms | Report | Cllr Joan Henry; Stella Akintan | |
| Performance management | Planning the Commission's 2022/23 work programme | Report | Cllr Peter Southgate | To review 2021/22 and agree priorities for 2022/23 |

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