

# Merton Council Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 13 July 2022

Time: 7.15 pm

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

## AGENDA

Page Number

1	Apologies for absence	
2	Declarations of pecuniary interest	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 4
4	Questions to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive	
5	CHAS Proposals	5 - 16
6	Identify questions for the Borough Commander	
7	Work programme	17 - 24

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The meeting room will be open to members of the public from 7.00 p.m.**

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## Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

### Councillors:

Edward Foley (Chair)  
Mike Brunt (Vice-Chair)  
Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE  
Billy Hayes  
Usaama Kaweesa  
Paul Kohler  
Gill Manly  
Nick McLean  
Stuart Neaverson  
Tony Reiss

### Substitute Members:

Stephen Mercer  
Thomas Barlow  
Martin Whelton  
Anthony Fairclough  
John Oliver  
Edith Macauley MBE

### Co-opted Representatives

Mansoor Ahmad, Parent Governor  
Representative - Secondary and Special  
Sectors  
Becky Cruise, Parent Governor  
Representative  
Dr Oona Stannard, Catholic Diocese  
Roz Cordner, Church of England Diocese

### Note on declarations of interest

Members are advised to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting. If a pecuniary interest is declared they should withdraw from the meeting room during the whole of the consideration of that matter and must not participate in any vote on that matter. 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](mailto:scrutiny@merton.gov.uk). Alternatively, visit [www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny)



# Agenda Item 3

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

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

16 MARCH 2022

(7.15 pm - 8.35 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Southgate (in the Chair),  
Councillor Peter McCabe, Councillor Ben Butler,  
Councillor Sally Kenny, Councillor Billy Christie,  
Councillor Paul Kohler, Councillor Aidan Mundy,  
Councillor John Dehaney, Councillor Thomas Barlow and  
Mansoor Ahmad

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors

Cathryn James (Interim Assistant Director, Public Protection)

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

Apologies were received from co-opted members Roz Cordner and Dr Oona Stannard.

### 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 were agreed with one amendment requested by the Chair, of an additional sentence added to the 'Repurposing the high streets' item:

"The Chair explained that only the summary report and recommendations had been circulated to Members. The report to Cabinet would include sections on each of the five high streets plus the SWOT analysis".

### 4 SAFER MERTON (Agenda Item 4)

Peter Clifton, Interim Head of Service for Safer Merton, gave a brief overview of the report contents including an update on antisocial behaviour, overall patterns and trends and the work undertaken to tackle antisocial behaviour.

The Interim Head of Service commented that it is clear from the consultation activity that antisocial behaviour is a significant concern for local residents, as is the case across most boroughs in London.

Attention was drawn to an error at point 1.34 of the report which is a table providing data on the London Ambulance call-outs for alcohol-related calls. The labels in the first column are the wrong way round – it is actually the wards in the PSPO which

should be in the bottom row of that table (they did not see an increase in call-outs) however it is the wards outside the PSPO which saw the increase.

In response to Commission Members questions,

- Additional CCTV cameras have been placed in anti-social behaviour hotspots and environmental crime hotspots.
- The enforcement of fly-tipping and environmental offenses takes place under the Enforcement Team in the Public Spaces department not Safer Merton. The Safer Merton team seeks to support that work by placing temporary cameras in hotspots to try to increase the probability of catching footage that can be used as evidence.

Action: Peter Clifton to ask Public Spaces team how money generated from fines is used.

- We have a very effective CCTV service that captures around three and a half thousand incidents a year and results in around 600 pieces of evidence, either being shared with police or different teams in the council for investigation and/or enforcement. However the equipment is old and has aged so a lot of the planned upgrade is around replacing that equipment with newer technology and software improvements.

Action: In response to a request from a Commission Member, the Interim Head of Service agreed to look at the normalization of data by ward.

## 5 BCU COMMANDER - CRIME AND POLICING IN MERTON (Agenda Item 5)

The Chair welcomed the South West BCU Commander, Chief Superintendent Elisabeth Chapple, to the meeting.

Members welcomed the opportunity to hear further detail to the answers provided in the report.

All the London boroughs are participating in the 'walk and talk' initiative to address the issues raised in the violence against women and girls' strategy. The 'walk and talk' scheme is advertised on Eventbrite and we have found that if officers and community members get to know each other in their local area then that builds confidence in policing, not only in those individuals, but also in the rest of the community that see these interactions.

Safer Neighbourhood team have been very active in terms of raising awareness of keyless car thefts as well as giving residents the means to prevent these.

The catalytic converter thefts across the BCU and in Merton are concentrated in more affluent areas. Our best weapon is crime prevention - packs are available from the manufacturers with an additional bolt to secure the catalytic converter.

In response to supplementary questions, the Borough Commander:

- Agreed to send separate officer and staff figures.
- Confirmed that all BCU's will align their neighbourhood teams to the new ward boundaries
- Agreed to send further information on the CBT fund to Members. The recently announced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy fund means that we can nominate young people, who might otherwise be involved in crime, to receive extra support from partners.

## 6 TOPIC SUGGESTIONS FOR 2022/23 AND AOB (Agenda Item 6)

Members were reminded to submit their topic suggestions.

This will be the last meeting of the Commission for the Chair, Cllr Peter Southgate.

Cllr Southgate commented on how very important scrutiny has been to him, and how much it makes a difference to the Council and the way we govern ourselves.

Cllr Peter McCabe thanked Cllr Southgate for his very thorough, diligent and conscientious contributions and for continually providing Members with the opportunity to really dive into the work of those that we are here to scrutinise. Cllr Southgate will be missed greatly on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, we thank you.

Cllr Ben Butler and Cllr John Dehaney were also thanked for their contributions to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

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# Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2022/23



This table sets out the draft Overview and Scrutiny Commission's Work Programme for 2022/23 following discussions at the topic workshop on 7 June 2022.

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 Ed Foley

**Vice-chair:** Cllr Mike Brunt

## **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](mailto:rosie.mckeever@merton.gov.uk)

For more information about overview and scrutiny at LB Merton, please visit [www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny)

Meeting date: 13 July 2022 (*Deadline for papers: 12pm, 5 July 2022*)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Questions to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive - priorities and challenges for 2022/23	Verbal update with Q&A	Cllr Ross Garrod, Leader of the Council; Hannah Doody, Chief Executive	
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	CHAS Proposals	Report	Louise Round, Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership	Confidential paper
<b>Scrutiny of crime and disorder</b>	Identify questions for the Borough Commander	Discussion	Cllr Ed Foley, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Commission	Plan line of questioning for 7 September meeting
<b>Standing item</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme 22/23	Report	Cllr Ed Foley Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Commission	Discuss and approve work programme and re-establishment of the FMTG



Meeting date: 7 September 2022 (*Deadline for papers: 5pm, 29 August 2022*)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
<b>Scrutiny of crime and disorder</b>	BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton	Report and in-depth discussion	BCU Commander	To hold BCU Commander to account on crime and disorder
<b>Scrutiny of crime and disorder</b>	Safer Merton – VAWG Strategy	Report	Zoe Gallen, Domestic Abuse & VAWG Lead	Report to focus on safety of women and girls in Merton
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Public Space Protection Orders	Report	Kelly Marshall, Strategic Development Lead	
<b>Scrutiny review</b>	Scrutiny Annual Report 21/22	Report	Chair and Scrutiny Officer	Agree content before presentation at Council
<b>Setting the work programme</b>	Work programme 2022/23	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	To agree the work programme.

Meeting date: 9 November 2022 (*Deadline for papers: 5pm, 1 November 2022*)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Business Plan - budget scrutiny (Round one)	Report	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To send comments to Cabinet budget meeting on 5 December
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Equality & Community Cohesion Strategy update	Report	Evereth Willis	Update on refresh of the strategy
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Council website	Report	Sean Cunniffe, Head of Customer Contact; Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	Focus on resident experience, resident survey feedback (if available) and
<b>Setting the work programme</b>	Work programme 2022/23	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	To agree the work programme

Meeting date: 18 January 2023 (**Deadline for papers: 5pm, 9 January 2023**)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
<b>Budget scrutiny</b>	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
<b>Budget scrutiny</b>	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
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Merton as an employer	Report	Peter Little, Head of Organisational Development	Update on Workforce Strategy
<b>Scrutiny of crime and disorder</b>	Identify questions for the Borough Commander	Discussion	Cllr Peter Southgate	Plan line of questioning for meeting on 15 March
<b>Setting the work programme</b>	Work programme 2022/23	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	To agree the work programme.

Meeting date: 25 January 2023 (*Deadline for papers: 5pm, 17 January 2023*)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Voluntary Sector	Report	John Dimmer, Head of PSP; Merton Connected	Report to include information on grants and infrastructure support, exposure for voluntary groups, publicity and signposting
<b>Holding the executive to account</b>	Merton as a service provider	Report	Roger Kershaw,	External review of contract procurement
<b>Setting the work programme</b>	Work programme 2022/23	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	To agree the work programme.

**Meeting date:** 15 March 2023 (*Deadline for papers: 5pm, 6 March 2023*)

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead member and/or lead officer</b>	<b>Intended outcomes</b>
<b>Scrutiny of crime and disorder</b>	BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton	Report and in-depth discussion	BCU Commander	To hold BCU Commander to account on crime and disorder
<b>Scrutiny of crime and disorder</b>	Safer Merton Update		Kiran Vagarwal, Community Safety Manager	Report to focus on ASB and designing out crime
<b>Performance management</b>	Planning the Commission's 2023/24 work programme	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate	To review 2022/23 and agree priorities for 2023/24

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