

# Merton Council Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 31 January 2024  
Time: 7.15 pm  
Venue: Committee Room DE, Merton Civic Centre

## AGENDA

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2 Declarations of pecuniary interest	
3 Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 4
4 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategy	5 - 42
5 Budget/Business Plan Please bring your Members Information Pack to the meeting.	
6 Budget/Business Plan - Latest Cabinet Papers	43 - 144
7 Scrutiny of the Business Plan; comments and recommendations from the overview and scrutiny panels	
8 Identify questions for the Borough Commander	
9 Work Programme	145 - 152

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

For more information about the work of this and other overview and scrutiny panels, please telephone 020 8545 3864 or e-mail [scrutiny@merton.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@merton.gov.uk). Alternatively, visit [www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny)

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### Mobile telephones

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### Access information for the Civic Centre



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- Nearest train: Morden South, South Merton (First Capital Connect)
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- Bus routes: 80, 93, 118, 154, 157, 163, 164, 201, 293, 413, 470, K5

Further information can be found [here](#)

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Agendas can also be viewed online in the Borough's libraries and on the Mod.gov paperless app for iPads, Android and Windows devices.

## Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

### Councillors:

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

### Substitute Members:

Sheri-Ann Bhim  
Caroline Charles  
Stephen Mercer  
Thomas Barlow  
Anthony Fairclough  
Robert Page

### 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)