

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 10 February 2015

Agenda item: 9

Wards: All wards

Subject: Performance monitoring and Annual Residents Survey

Lead officer: Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Performance, Children Schools and Families

Lead member(s): Councillor Maxi Martin; Councillor Martin Whelton.

Forward Plan reference number: n/a

Contact officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Service Manager Policy, Planning and Performance.

Recommendations: That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel;

- A. Note the current level of performance as at December 2014 for the reporting year 2014/15 (appendix 1)
- B. Note findings from the Annual Residents and Young Residents survey 2014

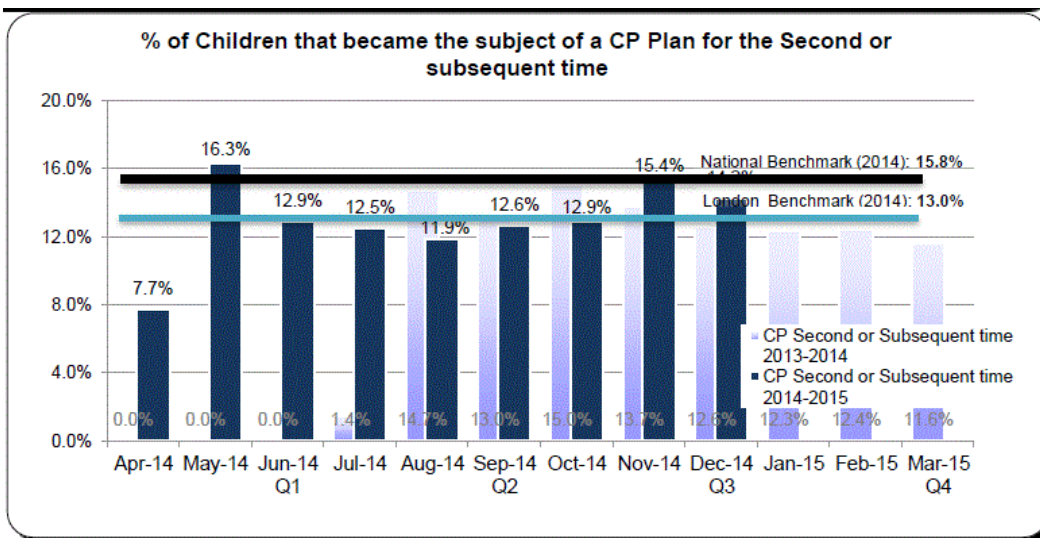
1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. To provide the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel (CYP panel) with a regular update on the performance of the Children, Schools and Families Department and key partners. Data provided in appendix one is as at the end of December 2014, at the point of publishing this report the January 2015 data had not yet been validated (report due to be published 3 February 2015).
- 1.2. An analysis of the recent Annual Resident and Young Resident Survey is also provided in section four with a specific focus on Children Schools and Families services.

2. **DETAILS**

- 2.1. At a Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in June 2007 it was agreed that the Children Schools and Families department would submit a regular performance report on a range of key performance indicators. This performance monitoring report would act as a 'health check' for the Panel and would be over and above the more detailed performance reports scheduled to the Panel which relate to specific areas of activities such as the annual Schools Standards report, Corporate Parenting Report, safeguarding performance report etc. This performance index is periodically reviewed and revised by Members. A new dataset was agreed at the last Scrutiny meeting and this will be implemented from April 2015 in line with the new financial year.
- 2.2. **December 2014 Performance commentary**
- 2.3. Appendix one presents the performance dataset for 2014/15 comments are provided below on exception only for those indicators reporting as Red or Amber below.
- 2.4. **Line 6 Percentage of children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time (NI 65) – Red.**

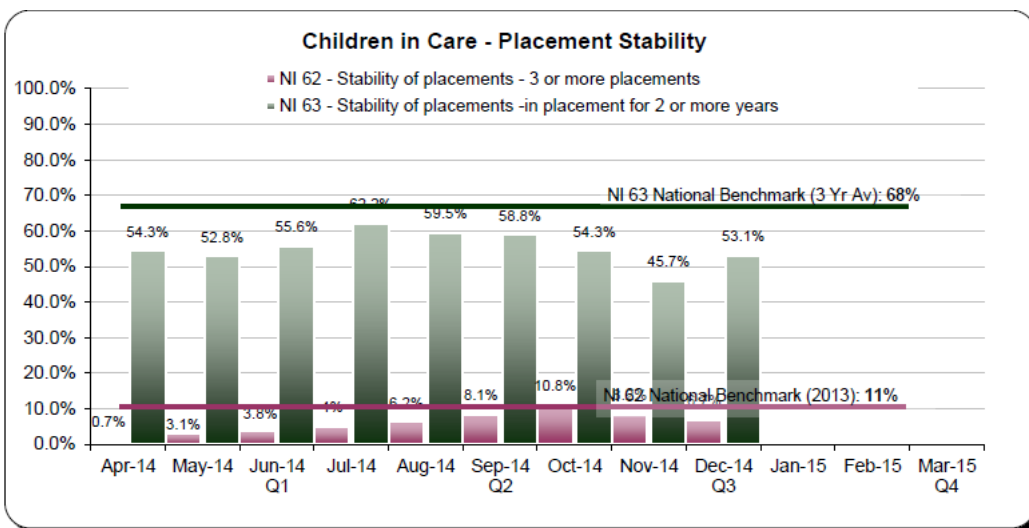
2.5. 14% of children subject to a child protection plan were the subject of a plan for the second or subsequent time. This indicator relates to 22 children with previous plans (new child protection plans started). A second plan is established where concerns which led to the original plan re-occur or where new concerns arise. It should be noted in December five family groups represented 13 of the 22 children on a second or subsequent child protection plan. Due to the small numbers of children in this cohort one or two larger sibling groups can skew performance considerably. Although higher than Merton's norm, this indicator remains in line with the national average of 15.8% (CIN 2013/14) and just above the London average 13%. Members may like to note that the national average for 2013/14 (15.8%) has increased from last year (14.9% 2012/13).



2.6. **Line 12 Stability of placements of Children in Care (length of placement) – Red.**

2.7. This length of placement indicator refers to a small cohort of children under the age of 16 who have been in care for 2 and a half years or more and have been in their current placement for 2 years or more.

2.8. Of the total number of children in care only 32 children meet these criteria, 53% of these relevant children had been in a single stable placement lasting two years or more years. This equates to 17 of 32 children.



2.9. Seventeen children have not been in their placements for longer than 2 years. Again, the smaller nature of our authority and therefore smaller cohorts of children

can skew performance. Having said that, placement stability remains a key focus for the authority and Corporate Parenting Board. There are various reasons for the placement disruptions including planned placement changes to better meet the needs of the children. The national three year average for this indicator is 68% (LAC 903). On an annual basis Merton is performing below the national benchmark, however in a like for like comparison of a three year rolling average we are in line with the national performance (Merton three year average 66%).

2.10. **Line 14 Percentage of children in care participating in their reviews – Red.**

2.11. Sixty seven per cent of children in care have participated in their reviews in the year to date through a variety of methods; this indicator excludes children under the age of 4 and therefore refers to 92 of 137 children. Where children and young people feel they need support to represent their views we provide that support through an independent advocacy service Jigsaw4U. Our looked after children continue to be represented by the Children in Care Council (CICC) which is regularly consulted on how to improve the support they receive. CICC continues to meet monthly, agenda items this year have included – developing the new website for children in care and care leavers; buddy scheme; housing; gym membership; Jigsaw 4U advocacy service and discussions on 'what makes a good [social work] visit'. In addition two representatives from the Children in Care Council made a presentation to the Merton Safeguarding Children Board in May. This is part of an initiative to strengthen links to enable looked after children's voices to inform the work and priorities of senior managers and executive leads.

3. **ANNUAL RESIDENTS AND YOUNG RESIDENTS SURVEY 2014**

3.1 Merton remains committed to listening to and responding to young people's views. The Council commissions an annual Residents and Young People Survey which contributes to the Children Schools and Families departmental User Voice Strategy and as such our understanding of our resident and customer needs.

3.2 Carried out during September and October 2014 Merton residents were interviewed, face to face by independent researchers, about their personal concerns, attitudes to the council and council services. Interviews were conducted with 1,084 adults and 248 young people, the sample was based on representative quotas set on gender, ethnic origin, age, working status of women and housing tenure across 104 sampling points across the borough. A London-wide survey is carried out at the same time which enables Merton to compare its results with trend and London benchmarking data.

3.3 Key messages from the survey are:

- Merton council continues to be viewed positively by young residents. There are no notable changes between 2013 and 2014 or between the London average except in relation to views about children's social services for children and families which for Merton is 4 percentage points better than last year and notably 11 percentage points better than the London average.
- Seventy seven per cent of young people feel they get the services they need (a slight increase from 2013), and 84% feel that the council does enough to protect young people (a significant increase from 2013). In relation to Merton as a place 89% of young people agreed that Merton is a good place for young people to live, 4% more than 2013/14.
- Young people's personal concerns are similar to those of adults - litter and cleanliness of the streets remain a primary concern. Concern about crime has fallen but remains the second highest concern for young people in Merton. Bullying and bad behaviour also remain key concerns, however, overall young

people are fairly positive about their health and wellbeing, with 92% reporting that they are 'fairly' satisfied with life.

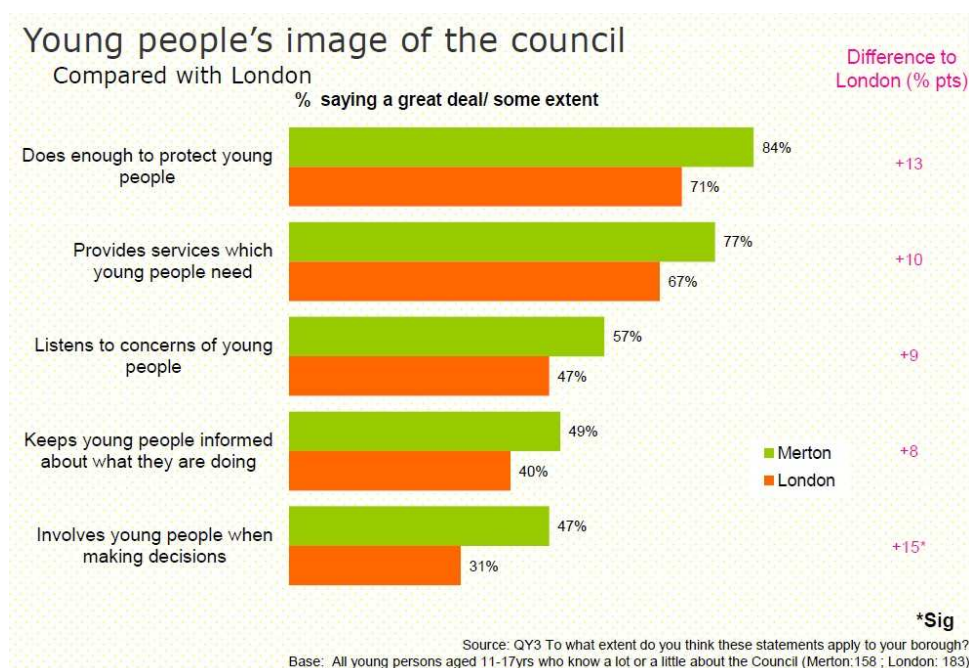
4 RESULTS OF THE 2014/15 SURVEY

4.1 Image of the council

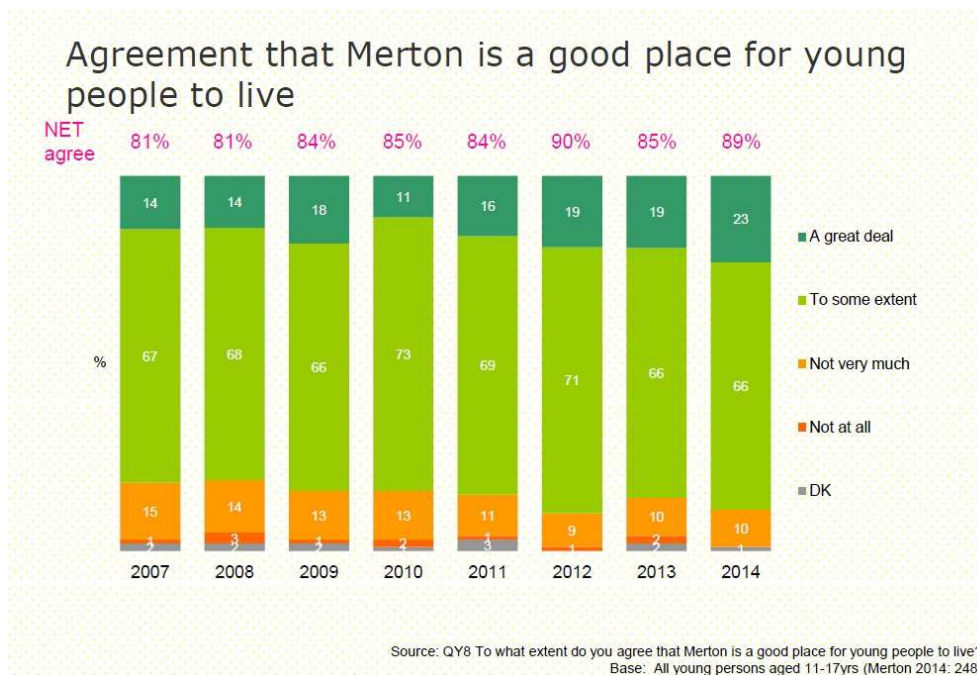
4.2 Adult residents continue to be positive about Merton council with the proportion of residents agreeing that Merton is doing a good job remaining at 79% for the third consecutive year; this is a significantly higher rating than the London average.

4.3 Merton council also continues to be viewed positively by young residents, with 77% feeling they get the services they need (a slight increase from 2013), and 84% feeling that the council does enough to protect young people (a significant increase from 2013). Eighty nine per cent of young people surveyed agree that Merton is a good place to live, whilst significantly more young residents in Merton felt that the council involved young people when compared to the London average.

4.4 It is notable that in each of the indicators in relation to young people's 'image of the council' (presented below) Merton is performing better than London and has improved since last year.



4.5 In relation to Merton the place 89% of young people agreed that Merton is a good place for young people to live (+4% compared to 2013/14). Around 1 in 4 young people agreed with this statement 'A great deal', over all this is the second highest rating about 'Merton the place' by young people in the eight years that this survey has been run.

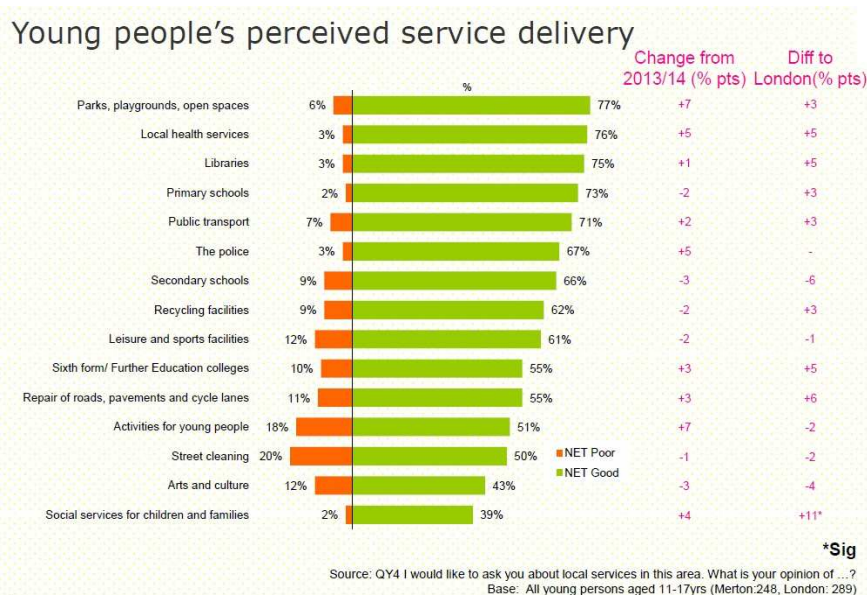


4.6 Service Delivery

4.7 The perception of many services by young people continues to be better than the London averages, this including local health services, libraries, sixth form education. It is notable that social services for children and families were perceived as being four percentage points better than last year and statistically significantly eleven points better than London.

4.8 Services such as parks, playgrounds and open space, activities for young people local health and the police demonstrate a marked improvement from last year.

4.9 Perception about services delivered by secondary schools is six percentage points less than London and has reduced from last year even though Merton was only one of six education authorities in the whole of England to have improved results GCSE for 2014 and the only authority in London to do so. Merton has also seen the fastest-improving GCSE results in London over the last five years increasing from 52.4% A* to C grades including English and Maths in 2009/10 to 64% in 2013/14 (provisional) – above the London average of 60.6% and the national average of 52.6%. Merton is now the 9th out of 32 London Boroughs for GCSE results, up from 23rd last year.



- 4.10 More young people now attend libraries and parks +17% from 2013/14 - this is the highest since 2005. More young people attend sports, gyms and after school clubs than last year. Fewer young people are now attending youth cubs and drama music classes after school.
- 4.11 Young people's concerns are similar to those of adults, with litter and cleanliness of the streets being a primary concern, a significant increase from 2013. Although similar to 2012/13 the majority of residents also report that they are satisfied with the way the council deals with graffiti (63%) and litter (61%).
- 4.12 **Health and Wellbeing**
- 4.13 Overall Merton adult residents remain positive about their health and wellbeing, with 90% reporting that they are satisfied with life, felt happy yesterday and feel that life is worthwhile. Similarly 92% of young people are 'fairly' positive about their health and wellbeing.
- 4.14 Concerns with crime, and anti-social behaviour are beginning to plateau, following a downward trend over recent years. Despite a positive overall performance there are some ward differences: as in 2013, residents in Colliers Wood, Graveney and Longthornton are significantly more worried about crime and drug users versus the Merton average. Residents of Lavender Fields, Pollards Hill and Figges Marsh are more worried about anti-social behaviour than the Merton average. Residents also feel less informed about the council's measures to tackle anti-social behaviour than they did in 2013. 'Feeling safe in your local area' is the area that most residents feel needs to be improved to improve their sense of health and wellbeing (52%). Although concern about crime has fallen significantly (11%) for young people it remains the second highest concern for young people in Merton. Bullying has remained a top three concern for our young people although concerns have reduced four percentage points from last year (25%) and are now therefore in line with the London average (26%).
- 4.15 The majority of respondents (60%) continue to agree that the council treats them in a fair and non-discriminatory way. Eighty nine percent of respondents felt that people from different backgrounds 'get on well together', with just 7% disagreeing with this statement. There is high agreement that people in the local area treat each other with respect and consideration (91%).
- 4.16 Findings from the annual resident survey alongside other user voice feedback is routinely gathered and utilised for continued service improvement and in the development of service strategies and plans.

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

Appendix 1: CYPP performance index 2014/15 (December 2014)

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1.1 CSF Performance Management Framework <http://intranet/departments/csf-index/csf-performance.htm>
- 6.1.2 London Borough of Merton Residents Survey 2014/15:
http://www.merton.gov.uk/presentation_charts_merton_residents_2014_.pdf