

Merton Voluntary Service Council (MVSC)
Update on the response to the scrutiny task group review of volunteering in Merton

Action Plan

Recommendation	Response and Action	Who	Timescale start	Timescale end
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u> We recommend that data on volunteering, collected in 2012 from the annual resident's survey and the council's staff survey, should be analysed to plot variations in volunteering and to build a more detailed profile of volunteering activity in Merton.</p>	<p>1.1 Annual Residents Survey (ARS) It was proposed in the Merton Partnership's Volunteering Strategy that the ARS would include volunteering questions biennially.</p> <p>1.2. Volunteering questions were submitted in the November 2014 Annual Residents Survey (ARS)</p> <p>Q12 During the last 12 months, have you undertaken any unpaid activity/voluntary work in your local community to help local groups, clubs, organisations or individuals?</p> <p>Q13. Why do you think you have not participated in any community activity in the last 12 months?</p> <p>Base: All adults (1084)/ All adults who have not done any voluntary work in the last 12 months (856)</p> <p>20% of Merton residents have done voluntary work within the past 12 months. Of the 80% that have not, the most common reason given is that they do not have time to volunteer (68%), with 10% saying that it had never occurred to them.</p>	<p>Sarah Hannigan, MVSC, LBM</p>		<p>November 2014</p>

	<p>This indicates that approximately 40,000 Merton residents give their time in some way.</p> <p>In November 2012, 19% of adults said they had undertaken voluntary work, with 81% saying not. Of the 81% who said not, 69% did not have enough time; 8% said it had never occurred to them.</p> <p>In January/Feb 2013, 'Help shape the future of volunteering', an online survey, was distributed across Merton via Merton Connected and other channels. Main findings were that 51% of respondents would give more of their time to opportunities that are flexible around their time commitments; 45% would give more time to one-off events, once or twice a year; 38% would give more time if they were made aware of what they could get involved in locally.</p>			
<p>11 February 2015 Update:</p> <p>Both the ARS and the 'Help shape the future of volunteering' survey, indicate that more people would volunteer if they had flexible volunteering opportunities; one-off volunteering opportunities; easy access to finding out what was happening locally.</p> <p>Response to these findings in 2014/15 has been the development of more flexible, 'lighter touch' volunteering opportunities, such as 'Neighbour to Neighbour', 'Out and About' and one-off opportunities such as Team Merton, which have been able to support events over the year e.g. Legends Rugby Festival, Free the Children WE Day, Mitcham Carnival, Wimbledon Village Fair, Merton Partnership Volunteer Awards, Ride London, Bonfire Night Fireworks, Light up Morden, Winter Wonderland; in addition, Team Merton Volunteers have been involved in one-off community action opportunities, such as litter-picking and neighbourhood clean-up campaigns, yarn-bombing on Phipps Bridge and other neighbourhood support.</p> <p>In February and March 2015, Merton residents will have an exciting opportunity to be selected as Team London Ambassadors to provide support at tourist venues around London, including Gatwick airport. Volunteers can sign up for particular dates and shifts, working around their other commitments.</p>				

February 2015 also sees the launch of the Merton Befriending Service pilot, funded by Public Health and a partnership between Age UK Merton, Wimbledon Guild, Carers Support, MVSC and Positive Network. Volunteer befrienders are asked to give up an average of 1 hour of their time per week for face-to-face befriending. They can also get involved in telephone befriending, again giving them more flexibility around their other commitments.

Other recommendations from 'Help shape the future of volunteering survey' were targeted recruitment campaigns, on-going focus on communications and one-stop shop into volunteering.

Action taken in 2014/15

- National Volunteers' Week, 1-7 June 2014:
¼ page in My Merton to promote and celebrate volunteering
16 SHOUT ABOUT YOUR VOLUNTEERING stories
Merton Partnership Volunteering Awards – 11th June. Developed to include a volunteer recruitment 'marketplace' in addition to the awards. Over 200 people attended event, with 25 organisations at the marketplace. Food was donated by a local church. Event was supported by Team Merton volunteer stewards.
- Volunteering projects, Neighbour to Neighbour, Out and About and Manage Your Money were launched.
- Volunteer recruitment fair held at the Ahmadiyya Mosque, 6th June. 60 women attended and all stalls reported it as a success.
- Volunteer networks set up in Morden Primary school, Priory, St Peter and Paul. Work being done with Gorrington, Abbotsbury and Merton Park Primaries.
- Trustees Week Networking event held in November 2014 at Geeks, Morden. Publicised widely to voluntary, public and private sectors through Merton Connected, LBM and Chamber of Commerce. Representatives from all sectors attended, with over 20 voluntary organisations seeking trustees. A lawyer from Morrisons solicitors spoke about being a trustee of a voluntary sector organisation. Feedback from the event was that organisations and prospective trustees found it very useful and there were at least 4 successful 'matches' made. To be repeated in November 2015.
- January 2015: Outreach volunteer recruitment sessions held at 'Coffee in the Wood' Colliers Wood and MVSC's Fayre and Square shop in Centre Court, Wimbledon. Aim is to build on the regular bi-weekly group recruitment sessions currently held at Vestry Hall and to offer a variety of venues and recruitment options.
- One-stop shop for volunteering: This is an objective of the Volunteering and Community Strategy 2013/14. New portal in late

<p>stages of development to combine MVSC and VCM websites, with 'Call to Action' boxes on front page, one of which is 'I want to volunteer'. By clicking on this box, people will be able to access local volunteering opportunities in Merton and apply for them instantly.</p>				
<p><u>Recommendation 2</u> We recommend that future Mayors consider continuing to give out a Mayoral crest pin badge to residents and staff who have made a significant contribution to the community, including those who have made a significant impact through volunteering. Clearly this will be at the discretion of the Mayor.</p>	<p>2.1 The current Mayor supports the recommendation.</p>			
<p>11 February 2015 update:</p> <p>Mayoral pins were distributed to award-winning volunteers at the Merton Partnership Volunteer Awards, June 2104 and at the Mayoral thank you to Team Merton Volunteers in January 2015. They are much appreciated by volunteers.</p>				
<p><u>Recommendation 3</u> We recommend that the Cabinet consider the provision of a certificate to recognise the volunteer's service to the Council and to provide a form of reference for prospective employers. It is proposed that there would be regular award ceremonies at which these certificates would be given out by the Mayor.</p>	<p>3.1 Volunteers involved in Council services References are good practice and will need to continue to be promoted as such to Council staff who are involving volunteers.</p> <p>3.2 A brief guide about involving volunteers to be designed and circulated to LBM staff as part of the shift to involving volunteers in adding value to public services.</p> <p>3.3 To investigate a 'thank you' certificate for Council volunteers that will be signed by the Chief Executive of LBM and the Mayor.</p>	<p>Head of Volunteering (MVSC)</p> <p>Head of Volunteering</p>	<p>December 2013</p> <p>September 2013</p>	<p>January 2014</p> <p>October 2013</p>

	<p>3.4 To investigate an annual 'thank you' evening to which all Council volunteers will be invited and will receive the certificate and the Mayoral crest pin badge. The current Mayor supports this recommendation.</p> <p>3.5 Note that the deadline of October in the above two recommendations is to coincide with Compact Week.</p> <p>3.6 Volunteers in Merton A 'thank you' certificate for volunteers giving the time in Merton will signed by the Chief Executive of LBM, the Mayor and the Chair of Merton Voluntary Service Council.</p> <p>3.7 There are the Mayor's Civic Awards (April) and the Merton Partnership Volunteering Awards (June) each year. A Mayoral crest pin badge will be given to the winners and highly commended in each category.</p> <p>3.8 The voluntary and public sector will be encouraged to nominate volunteers.</p> <p>3.9 To investigate with LBM's CMT the possibility of including a volunteering award in LBM's Staff Excellence Awards.</p>	<p>(MVSC)</p> <p>Head of Volunteering (MVSC) and Mayor's Office (LBM)</p> <p>Head of Volunteering (MVSC) and Joseph Dance (LBM)</p> <p>Mayor's Office (LBM)</p> <p>Sophie Matthews (MVSC) Abby Burford (LBM)</p> <p>Simon Williams (LBM)</p>	<p>September 2013</p> <p>September 2013</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>November 2013</p>	<p>October 2013 (late notice and so possibly 2014)</p> <p>October 2013</p> <p>March 2014</p>
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11 February 2015 update:				
3.3 Head of Volunteering at MVSC recommends that 3.3 and 3.4 be amalgamated with 3.6 and 3.7.				
3.4 Merton Libraries hold an annual 'Thank You' event for all library volunteers.				
3.7 Mayoral pins were distributed to award-winning volunteers at the Merton Partnership Volunteer Awards, June 2104 and at the Mayoral thank you to Team Merton Volunteers in January 2015. They are much appreciated by volunteers.				
3.8 Merton Partnership Awards in June 2014 saw a record number of nominations from the public and voluntary sectors, including Merton Libraries, the Met Police and the CCG, and a new award for Employee Volunteering Team of the year. Awards ceremony was attended by more than 200 people. Aim for June 2015 Awards is to build on this and introduce some new awards categories.				
<u>Recommendation 4</u> We recommend that Cabinet give consideration to the provision of an offer from Merton Adult Education for those volunteers who need support with CV writing and interview skills, as well as the opportunity to gain an accredited qualification in community volunteering.	4.1 Note that voluntary groups carry out this service e.g. Grenfell.			
	4.2 A list of organisation's with this offer to be compiled and circulated to LBM and the voluntary sector.	Head of Volunteering	December 2013	February 2014
	4.3 Investigate possible volunteering accreditation / qualification options for further discussion.	Head of Volunteering	December 2013	February 2014
11 February update				
4.2 Volunteers seeking support with CV skills is embedded in the culture of volunteer-involving organisations. Support is available from , Grenfell, Young Advisors, YMCA, JobCentre Plus, Merton Adult Education and others. Should the council adopt the commissioning model for adult education, opportunities will be sought to get providers to offer this support.				
4.3 Post-merger, MVSC is investigating possible options for volunteering accreditation/qualifications, including ASDAN and City and Guilds.				
<u>Recommendation 5</u> We recommend that Cabinet should investigate the costs and benefits for volunteers who make a significant contribution to council services receiving reduced	5.1 The challenges of defining 'significant contribution' and the administrative resource required to deliver this recommendation are noted.			
	5.2 Investigate the feasibility of this recommendation.	Head of Volunteering (MVSC) and Joseph Dance	February 2014	

prices for some library and leisure services.		(LBM)		
<p>07 April 2014 update</p> <p>5.2 Consideration has been given to this recommendation. The cost of investment in setting up and administering the scheme, for a fairly low number of volunteers, means that taking forward this recommendation is not advised.</p>				
<p><u>Recommendation 6</u></p> <p>We recommend that the web-based approach to advertising volunteering opportunities should be complemented by the use of My Merton and other low-tech mechanism for those who do not access the internet, including banners and touch points.</p>	<p>6.1 Low-tech mechanisms e.g. My Merton and printed materials will be used to promote volunteering opportunities across the borough.</p> <p>6.2 Please note the remaining points for information: as part of the Merton Partnership Volunteering Strategy and merger discussions between MVSC and VCM, one online access point for volunteering in Merton will emerge.</p> <p>6.3 The online presence will have clear contact information for those requiring face-to-face support.</p>	Head of Volunteering (MVSC)	October 2013	April 2014
<p>07 April 2014 update</p> <p>6.1 There have been ongoing discussions about including volunteering in My Merton. Although It is a challenge with the requirements for space, there have been pieces on volunteering in every edition over the past year, and there is a logo which highlights all articles with an impact on volunteering.</p> <p>11 February 2015 update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.3. New online portal in late stages of development, which will combine MVSC and VCM websites, with 'Call to Action' boxes on front page, one of which is 'I want to volunteer'. By clicking on this box, people will be able to access local volunteering opportunities in Merton and apply for them instantly. They will also be provided with clear information on how to obtain face-to-face support, where required (e.g. those with disabilities, mental health issues, vulnerable young people and others who would like to speak to someone from the Volunteering Team to help them find a suitable volunteering opportunity.) They will be able to make an appointment with the Supported Volunteering Team, or book on to one of MVSC's bi-weekly Group Volunteer Recruitment sessions. This will be supplemented by regular volunteering presence (leaflets, banners etc) at public and community events around the borough. 				
<p><u>Recommendation 7</u></p> <p>We recommend that</p>	7.1 As part of the Merton Partnership Volunteering Strategy and merger discussions between MVSC and			

7.4 SHOUT ABOUT YOUR VOLUNTEERING was run again in June 2014 as part of National Volunteers' Week celebrations. In addition to the online promotion, volunteers' stories were displayed in the libraries, Centre Court Shopping Centre Wimbledon and at Merton Link.

The new MVSC volunteering portal will include a regular page of 'Get inspired by other volunteers' stories'. We are also encouraging our YAVA volunteers (Youth Approved Volunteer Awards) to do short interviews on ipads about their volunteering experiences, particularly with a view to improving volunteering opportunities for young people.

<p><u>Recommendation 8</u> We recommend that the Council work with Merton Voluntary Service Council to continue to support voluntary sector groups' volunteering activities by identifying and signposting potential sources of funding</p>	<p>8.1 It is testament to the successful Compact that a grants system has been retained, administered in partnership and the amount has been increased during austere times.</p> <p>8.2 Funding opportunities in and outside of the Borough are promoted on Merton Connected and support available if required. This will continue.</p> <p>8.3 MVSC are committed to identifying new sources of funding for the voluntary sector, are founder members of United Way London and have recently launched the Merton Community Fund (see response to recommendation 12).</p>	<p>Khadiru Mahdi (MVSC)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
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11 February 2015 update
8.2 Each Merton Connected e-bulletin from MVSC includes funding opportunities which stay live on MVSC's website.

In October 2014, MVSC brought together a consortium to apply for Public Health funding. Age UK led on the bid to fund a Merton Befriending Service pilot for 2 years from February 2015. Other partners are Wimbledon Guild, Carers Support, Positive Network and MVSC.

The Community Fund continues to be promoted widely and a high-profile 'Stop Start' campaign took place in January 2015 to raise funds and awareness.

MVSC's Head of Development and Funding Advice gives tailored support to small and emerging groups on applying for appropriate funding. We also plan to provide partnership and consortia support to voluntary and community organisations to enable them to bid successfully to deliver public services.

<p><u>Recommendation 9</u> We recommend that Merton Voluntary Service Council provide information (or a link) on its Merton Connected website to help local volunteering groups make contact with other groups within the borough, to encourage them to share experiences and for advice and support.</p>	<p>9.1 Merton Connected is MVSC's website.</p> <p>9.2 MVSC are currently redeveloping their website which will include opportunities to be more interactive. Making links, advice and support are key functions of MVSC and this will improve further with the new website.</p> <p>9.3 In response to demand, MVSC are also producing a new printed edition of the Directory of Community Organisations which will also aid communication between groups.</p>	<p>Jon Stone (MVSC)</p> <p>Jon Stone (MVSC)</p>	<p>July 2013</p> <p>July 2013</p>	<p>Stage 1 – September 2013</p> <p>December 2013</p>
<p>11 February 2015 Update 9.2 Post-merger, the launch of MVSC's new one-stop shop portal in Spring 2015 will make help for groups even more accessible and interactive, in particular the incorporation of a new Virtual Info Hub, which will connect directly to the Development Team. Groups will also be able to post volunteering opportunities and seek help with volunteer management on the same part of the website. 9.3 The printed Directory of Community Organisations was published and widely circulated in April 2014.</p>				
<p><u>Recommendation 10</u> We recommend that councillors should get involved with volunteering groups in their wards, promoting the work that the groups do and helping them to forge links with other groups doing similar work.</p>	<p>10.1 In the review of the Councillor Handbook, consider including a guide on how a Councillor can support voluntary groups.</p>	<p>Ian Beever (MVSC) and Democratic services (LBM)</p>	<p>September 2013</p>	<p>May 2014</p>
<p>07 April 2014 update 10.1 The induction for new Councillors will include a section on the voluntary sector and volunteering.</p> <p>11 February 2015 update In National Volunteers Week June 2014 (and for the past 5 years), at least 10 Councillors and the Mayor took part in volunteering taster sessions with local organisations. Some of these attracted media attention and all were covered on Merton Connected.</p>				

<p><u>Recommendation 11</u> We recommend that the Council's Communications Team contact Merton University of the Third Age to discuss how they can help with publicity. Options to consider should include My Merton, resident association magazines and ward newsletters.</p>	11.1 It is positive that the Council's Communications Team will support U3A.	Abby Burford (LBM)	Ongoing	
	11.2 U3A will continue to be supported by the Ageing Well Community Connector at MVSC to promote its activities and to develop in the east of the borough.	Bec Yusuf (MVSC)	Ongoing	
	11.3 There is a volunteering communications group which meet regularly and includes voluntary and public sector partners. The aim is to co-ordinate communications to raise the profile of volunteering and ultimately encourage more individuals to give their time.			
	11.4 Whilst recognising the high demand for space in My Merton, the volunteering communications group is to consider a proposal to dedicate space in each issue highlighting volunteering.	Head of Volunteering (MVSC)	September 2013	February 2014
	11.5 This will be done in partnership with the Compact team are considering a proposal to have dedicated space for the voluntary sector.	Kate Martyn (LBM) and Ian Beever (MVSC)	September 2013	February 2014
	11.6 Communications will continue be a key part of the Merton Partnership Volunteering Strategy and volunteering infrastructure. This will include broadening communication channels.	Head of Volunteering (MVSC)	Ongoing	
<p>07 April 2014 update 11.1 and 11.2 U3A continue to get supported. 11.4 and 11. 5 A dedicated space is difficult given the demands for space. Conversations continue.</p> <p>11 February 2015 update Development of one-stop shop plus alternative to do-it website are priorities for MVSC's Head of Volunteering. Communications and promotion of volunteering have taken place via campaigns on Merton Connected e.g. Trustees Week and</p>				

supported by recruitment and promotional events.				
Aim in 2015/16 is for the Volunteering Communications Group to meet regularly and implement a programme of volunteering campaigns to maintain the profile of volunteering in Merton. Head of Volunteering and Marketing Officer at MVSC to lead.				
<u>Recommendation 12</u> We recommend that Cabinet support work to explore the feasibility of developing a "United Way" in Merton so that there is one-stop-shop approach to making charitable donations, whereby a fund is built up which can then be used to give grants to local good causes.	12.1 United Way London was launched in May 2013 at the Tower of London and Merton is one of 6 founding boroughs. 12.2 A Community Fund was launched on 17 th May and contributions are being regularly made and the aim is to increase this and continue with publicity. 12.3 LBM are supportive of the Community Fund. All staff received an e-bulletin in June/July with an e-form so that they could sign up to donate.	Kate Martyn (LBM)	July 2013	
07 April 2014 update 12.1 United Way is progressing.				
11 February 2015 update 12.2 The United Way has undergone some changes since the end of the Cabinet Office Transforming Local Infrastructure (TLI) funding. United Way London has been set up as a charity and affiliated to United Way UK, led by London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC). A payroll giving campaign has been launched with Costco to raise revenues for local charities. A process will start soon to agree priorities for London, linked to the United way priorities of income, health and education. 12.3 The Community Fund has currently raised almost £5000 with a mix of regular and one-off donations. MVSC has launched the first round for applications with the deadline on 9 th March 2015.				
<u>Recommendation 13</u> We recommend that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission continue to monitor the implementation of the Merton Partnership's Merton Volunteering and	13.1 The Volunteering Strategy Implementation Group currently consisting of Simon Williams (LBM), Evereth Willis (LBM) Khadiru Mahdi (MVSC) and Sarah Hannigan (MVSC) meet quarterly to monitor progress. 13.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission are welcome to receive copies of the reports provided by	Julia Regan (LBM)	As required	

Community Action Strategy 2012-2014 and beyond.	Sarah Hannigan, Head of Volunteering, if required.			
<p>07 April 2014 update See volunteering strategy update paper</p> <p>11 February 2015 update See volunteering strategy update paper</p>				
<p><u>Recommendation 14</u> We recommend that the Council's Corporate Management Team continue to look for new and innovative ways to involve volunteers in order to supplement service provision. Progress on this should be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on a regular basis.</p>	<p>14.1 Hayley James (MVSC) met with all Directors in February/March 2013 to discuss adding value to public services by involving volunteers.</p> <p>14.2 A report drafted by Simon Williams (LBM) and Hayley James (MVSC) has been discussed on two occasions at CMT in March and July 2013.</p> <p>14.3 Progress is underway across the council with a selective list of initiatives. <i>Good progress with Merton Council with involving volunteers in adding value to public services.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Cross-directorate "Neighbour to Neighbour" project underway with a focus on loneliness, working with Public Health. £3k has been agreed. LBM are offering up to 30 DBS checks as 'gifts in kind' to the project for 2014/2015.</i> ✓ <i>Neighbour to Neighbour: several public meetings have been held to encourage residents to share ways of being more neighbourly. Has merged with MVSC's Good Neighbours scheme, where a task force of volunteers is available to carry out one-off tasks for isolated residents. First tasks have been carried out.</i> ✓ <i>February 2015 also sees the launch of the</i> 	<p>Simon Williams (LBM) and Head of Volunteering (MVSC)</p> <p>LBM Departments</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	

	<p><i>Merton Befriending Service, funded by Public Health and delivered by a consortium including MVSC, Age UK and Wimbledon Guild. Volunteer befrienders are asked to give up an average of 1 hour of their time per week for face-to-face befriending. They can also get involved in telephone befriending, again giving them more flexibility around their other commitments</i></p> <p><i>Mitcham Head Teachers – progressing with 5 primary schools.</i></p> <p><i>Morden held a one-off day which 5 non-school volunteers got involved for. They linked with local bank Handelsen for Enterprise Week. They have currently recruited 6 Maths Mentors.</i></p> <p><i>Priory Church of England have finalised their volunteer handbook and are about to start recruiting reading mentors.</i></p> <p><i>Gorringe and Peter and Paul are drafting their volunteer handbook. Abbotsbury have shown an interest.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Linking with Direct Provision, ‘Out and About’ is a project to link adults with social needs to go out in the community with resident who is already doing the activity e.g. going to football is underway. 4 volunteers recruited for buddying. Most volunteers coming forward for role are female and most of the adults with support needs male, which has proved a barrier in some cases.</i> ✓ <i>Financial capability volunteers – linking with LBM and MLCAB a project called ‘Manage your Money’ is a volunteer-delivered workshop to support people who are not meeting their requirement to pay Council Tax. Due to be</i> 			
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	<p><i>piloted in June. 9 volunteers have been recruited Workshops delivered with volunteers and facilitated jointly by LBM/MVSC. Low take-up by clients.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Volunteer-involvement to support a Customer Contact piece of work over the next 2 years is being developed. Currently 3 volunteer roles will be available.</i> ✓ <i>“Dig Merton” is underway with Sustainable Merton taking the lead.</i> ✓ <i>Dignity in Care is being delivered into a number of care homes. 11 volunteers undertook the training and five visits have been undertaken. A review is due later in the year and sustainability will need to be considered.</i> ✓ <i>Merton Memories successfully included volunteers in archiving local history. Merton Heritage Centre has asked for help with recruiting volunteers for new funded project, ‘Carved with Pride’, recording contribution of Merton residents during WW1.MVSC Volunteering Team working with them.</i> 			
<p>07 April 2014 update See volunteering strategy update paper, objective 4</p> <p>February 2015 update. Simon Williams and the then project manager for the volunteering strategy met with every member of CMT in the first half of 2014 and this has generated a list of what is going on in each department. This is updated with directors and reported back to CMT on an occasional basis.</p>				
<p><u>Recommendation 15</u> We recommend that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission should take an ongoing interest in progress on volunteering and should</p>	<p>15.1 Agreed.</p> <p>15.2 Sarah Hannigan, Head of Volunteering (MVSC), as lead for strategy delivery on behalf of the Merton Partnership will attend also.</p>	<p>Simon Williams (LBM) and Sarah Hannigan (MVSC)</p>	<p>April 2014</p>	

ask the lead Director (currently the Director of Community and Housing) to bring an annual update on behalf of the Council's Corporate Management Team and the Merton Partnership				
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 Merton Voluntary Service Council

Lead Director: Simon Williams
 Director of Community and Housing
 London Borough of Merton