Committee:	Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date:	2nd July 2015

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Agenda item:

Wards: All

Subject: Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2015/16

Lead officer: Stella Akintan Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Peter McCabe, Chair of Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Forward Plan reference number: n/a

Contact officer: Stella Akintan: stella.akintan@merton.gov.uk 020 8545 3390

Recommendations:

That Members of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

  i) Consider their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year, and agree issues and items for inclusion;

  ii) Consider the methods by which the Panel would like to scrutinise the issues/items agreed;

  iii) Consider whether they wish to make visits to local sites;

  iv) Agree on an issue for scrutiny by a task group and appoint members to the Task Group. The new task group will begin when the current one completes its work.

  v) Identify one issue for in-depth agenda item;

  vi) Inform the Scrutiny Officer of their views on their training and support needs.

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1   The purpose of this report is to support and advise Members to determine their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year.

1.2   This report sets out the following information to assist Members in this process:

  a) The principles of effective scrutiny and the criteria against which work programme items should be considered;

  b) The roles and responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel;

  c) The findings of the consultation programme undertaken with Members, Senior management, voluntary and community sector organisations, partner organisations and Merton residents;

  d) Support available to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to determine, develop and deliver its 2015/16 work programme.

2. **Determining the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Annual Work Programme for 2015/16**

2.1   Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of Merton.

2.2   Overview and Scrutiny Panels may choose to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work. Any call-in work will be programmed into the provisional call-in dates identified in the corporate calendar as required.

2.3   The Overview and Scrutiny Panel has seven scheduled meetings over the course of 2015/16, including the scheduled budget meeting (representing a maximum of 21 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 3 hours per meeting). Members will therefore need to be selective in their choice of items for the Panel's work programme.

Principles guiding the development of the scrutiny work programme

2.4   The following key principles of effective scrutiny should be considered when the Panel determines its work programme:

- **Be selective** – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve.

- **Add value with scrutiny** – Items should have the potential to 'add value' to the work of the Authority and its partners. If it is not clear what the intended outcomes or impact of a review will be then Members should consider if there are issues of a higher priority that could be scrutinised instead.

- **Be ambitious** – Panels should not shy away from carrying out scrutiny of issues that are of local concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental well being of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.

- **Be flexible** – Members are reminded that there needs to be a degree of flexibility in their work programme to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration/comment during the year and accommodate any developmental or additional work that falls within the remit of this Panel/Commission. For example Members may wish to questions officers regarding the declining performance of a service or may choose to respond to a Councillor Call for Action request.

- **Think about the timing** – Members should ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, their findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. Members should seek to avoid duplication of work carried out elsewhere.

Models for carrying out scrutiny work

2.5   There are a number of means by which the Overview and Scrutiny Panel can deliver its work programme. Members should consider which of the following options is most appropriate to undertake each of the items they have selected for inclusion in the work programme:

Item on a scheduled meeting agenda/ hold an extra meeting of the Panel	- Panel can agree to add an item to the agenda for a meeting and call Cabinet Members/ Officers/Partners to the meeting to respond to questioning on the matter - A variation of this model could be a single meeting to scrutinise an issue that, although important, do not merit setting up a 'task-and-finish' group.
Task Group	- A small group of Members meet outside of the scheduled meetings to gather information on the subject area, visit other local authorities/sites, speak to service users, expert witnesses and/or Officers/Partners. The Task Group can then report back to the wider Panel with their findings to endorse the submission of their recommendations to Cabinet/Council - This is the method usually used to carry out policy reviews
Panel asks for a report then takes a view on action	The Panel may need more information before taking a view on whether to carry out a full review so asks for a report – either from the service department or from the Scrutiny Team – to give them more details.
Meeting with service officer/partners	- A Member (or small group of Members) has a meeting with service officers/Partners to discuss concerns or raise queries. - If the Member is not satisfied with the outcome or believes that the Panel needs to have a more in-depth review of the matter s/he takes it back to the Panel for discussion
Individual Members doing some initial research	A member with a specific concern carries out some research to gain more information on the matter and then brings his/her findings to the attention of the panel if s/he still has concerns.

2.6   Note that, in order to keep agendas to a manageable size, and to focus on items to which the Panel can make a direct contribution, the Panel may choose to take some "information only" items outside of Panel meetings, for example by email.

Support available for scrutiny activity

2.7   The Overview and Scrutiny function has dedicated scrutiny support from the Scrutiny Team to:

- Work with the Chair and Vice-Chair of each Panel to manage the work programme and coordinate the agenda, including advising officers and partner organisations on information required and guidance for witnesses submitting evidence to a scrutiny review;

- Provide support for scrutiny members through briefing papers, background material, training and development seminars, etc;

- Facilitate and manage the work of the task and finish groups, including research, arranging site visits, inviting and briefing witnesses and drafting review reports on behalf on the Chair; and

- Promote the scrutiny function across the organisation and externally.

2.8 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel will need to assess how they can best utilise the available support from the Scrutiny Team to deliver their work programme for 2015/16.

2.9 The Panel is also invited to comment upon any briefing, training and support that is needed to enable Members to undertake their work programme. Members may also wish to undertake visits to local services in order to familiarise themselves with these. Such visits should be made with the knowledge of the Chair and will be organised by the Scrutiny Team.

2.10 The Scrutiny Team will take the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's views on board in developing the support that is provided.

3. Selecting items for the Scrutiny Work Programme

3.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Panel sets its own agenda within the scope of its terms of reference, with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission taking a coordinating role to ensure that any gaps or overlap in the scrutiny work programme are dealt with in a joined-up way.

The Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel has the following remit: -

- Formal health scrutiny, including discharging the Council's responsibilities in respect of the Health and Social Care Act 2001

- Health, including promoting good health and healthy lifestyles, mental health and reducing health inequalities

- Community care (adult social care and older people's social care)

- Active aging

- Access to care and health services

- Scrutiny of the Health and Wellbeing Board

3.1 The Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for issues to scrutinise either as Panel agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions have been received from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the police, NHS Sutton and Merton and Merton Voluntary Service Council. Other issues of public concern have been identified through the Annual Residents Survey. The Scrutiny Team has consulted departmental management teams in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the panel could contribute to the policymaking process.

3.2 A description of all the suggestions received is set out in Appendix 1.

3.3 The suggestions are to be prioritised at the panel meeting using the criteria listed in Appendix 2. In particular, panel members should identify issues that relate to the Council's strategic priorities or where there was underperformance; issues of public interest or concern and issues where scrutiny could make a difference.

4. Task group reviews

4.1 The Panel is invited to select an issue for in-depth scrutiny and establish a task group in order to carry out the review. This review will begin when the current task groups finishes its work in early 2016.

5.   Public involvement

5.1   Scrutiny provides extensive opportunities for community involvement and democratic accountability. Engagement with service users and with the general public can help to improve the quality, legitimacy and long-term viability of recommendations made by the Panel.

5.2   Service users and the public bring different perspectives, experiences and solutions to scrutiny, particularly if "seldom heard" groups such as young people, disabled people, people from black and minority ethnic communities and people from lesbian gay bisexual and transgender communities are included.

5.3   This engagement will help the Panel to understand the service user's perspective on individual services and on co-ordination between services. Views can be heard directly through written or oral evidence or heard indirectly through making use of existing sources of information, for example from surveys. From time to time the Panel/Task Group may wish to carry out engagement activities of its own, by holding discussion groups or sending questionnaires on particular issues of interest.

5.4   Much can be learnt from best practice already developed in Merton and elsewhere. The Scrutiny Team will be able to help the Panel to identify the range of stakeholders from which it may wish to seek views and the best way to engage with particular groups within the community.

6.   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1   A number of issues highlighted in this report recommend that Panel members take into account certain considerations when setting their work programme for 2015/16. Overview and Scrutiny Panels are free to determine their work programme as they see fit. Members may therefore choose to identify a work programme that does not take into account these considerations. This is not advised as ignoring the issues raised would either conflict with good practice and/or principles endorsed in the Review of Scrutiny, or could mean that adequate support would not be available to carry out the work identified for the work programme.

6.2   A range of suggestions from the public, partner organisations, officers and Members for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme are set out in the appendices, together with a suggested approach to determining which to include in the work programme. Members may choose to respond differently. However, in doing so, Members should be clear about expected outcomes, how realistic expectations are and the impact of their decision on their wider work programme and support time. Members are also free to incorporate into their work programme any other issues they think should be subject to scrutiny over the course of the year, with the same considerations in mind.

7.   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

7.1   To assist Members to identify priorities for inclusion in the Panel's scrutiny work programme, the Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for possible scrutiny reviews from a number of sources:

   a. Members of the public have been approached using the following tools: articles in the local press, My Merton and Merton Together, request for suggestions from all councillors and co-opted members, letter to partner organisations and to range of local voluntary and community organisations, including those involved in the Inter-Faith Forum and members of the Lesbian Gay and Transgender Forum;

b. Councillors have put forward suggestions by raising issues in scrutiny meetings, via the Overview and Scrutiny Member Survey 2015, and by contacting the Scrutiny Team direct; and

c. Officers have been consulted via discussion at departmental management team meetings.

8. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the financial, resource and property issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific financial, resource and property implications.

9. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Overview and scrutiny bodies operate within the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

9.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the legal and statutory issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific legal and statutory implications.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement. The reviews will involve work to consult local residents, community and voluntary sector groups, businesses, hard to reach groups, partner organisations etc and the views gathered will be fed into the review.

10.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the human rights, equalities and community cohesion issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

11.1 In line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police and Justice Act 2006, all Council departments must have regard to the impact of services on crime, including anti-social behaviour and drugs. Scrutiny review reports will therefore highlight any implications arising from the reviews relating to crime and disorder as necessary.

12. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the risk management and health and safety issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific risk management and health and safety implications.

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

13.1   Appendix 1 – Summary of topics relating to this Overview & Scrutiny Panel's remit suggested for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme

13.2   Appendix 2 – Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria to be used at the meeting on the 2nd July

14. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

14.1   None

Description of topic suggestions received in relation to the remit of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Progress with the implementation of the Care Act 2014 in particular the impact on self funders and the new processes for safeguarding adults

The Care Act will have a significant impact across adult social care services. The areas relevant to this panel include; changes to the assessment and eligibility criteria for residential care, commissioning independent advocacy services and changes to the definition of a vulnerable adult for safeguarding purposes as well as putting Adult Safeguarding boards on a statutory footing.

How could scrutiny look at it?

- Invite council officers to give an overview of progress with implementation of the care Act
- Invite Carers Support Merton and Merton Seniors Forum to share the views of residents and service users

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How do we support older people with physical and mental disabilities in the community? Is the council doing this effectively with care, consideration and responsibility?

A significant number of people with physical and mental disabilities are living in their own homes with support from social work, NHS and domiciliary care teams. The Panel has touched on some of these issues through task group reviews. A review on safeguarding adults looked at domiciliary care and a review on supported housing for people with mental health problems made recommendations about promoting independent living. The Panel therefore may wish to consider the role of befriending services other support services for this group. The Panel could look at what support they provide to people, and if there are enough services to meet the need and if necessary how it could be expanded.

 How could scrutiny look at it?

- The Panel could invite relevant voluntary groups to talk about the services they provide to people physical and mental disabilities as well as any issues and challenges that they may have.

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Supporting the Prevention agenda

The prevention agenda is at the heart of the plans for the future of the NHS, as a significant proportion of diseases are acerbated by lifestyle factors. There is an increased risk of some cancers, cardiovascular disease and diabetes due to lack of physical activity, obesity, smoking, and excessive alcohol consumption. This panel can play an important role in ensuring that the council and our partners are focussed on prevention, have identified it as a priority and are using innovative and creative ideas to promote it.

How could scrutiny look at it?

Frontline staff – Those who work directly with the public are well placed to share health messages and signpost people to services. The Panel could consider the role of social workers, health visitors the police and fire fighters in sharing prevention messages

The Panel can also ask partners to talk about their work on preventing disease and promoting health, particularly how this is identified as a priority and the subsequent impact on service delivery.

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Use of Volunteers in Day Centre Services

Last financial year the council was forced to make significant cuts within adult social care, including a change to the services provided to people at day centres. The Panel can play an important role in looking at the new models of service, how they are working and how they can be improved, particularly the use of volunteers to provide activities in the day centres.

How could scrutiny look at it?

- Panel members could visit the service speak to service users and staff invite officers to the Panel and discuss the volunteer recruitment process and the training and support they will receive.
- The Panel can consider how the council is addressing any challenges that may have arisen with this new approach.

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Making Merton a Dementia friendly borough

The Alzheimer's Society is developing the concept of Dementia Friendly communities, which involves looking at changes that can be made within a local area to make it more supportive for people with this condition as well as their carers. The Alzheimer's society has gathered evidence from people with dementia to identify key areas which could make a difference. Areas of focus include; challenging stigma and building understanding of dementia, developing accessible community services, easy to navigate environments, respectful and responsive business services.

Dementia friendly environments not only provide support to individuals, they also provide economic benefits as improved community services help to enable people to live in their own homes rather than residential care.

How could scrutiny look at it?

- Speak to local businesses and find out what support they provide to customers with Dementia and encourage them to train their staff to recognise and support people with dementia. Possible invitees could include Sainsbury's, Boots, Iceland.
- Ensure that council run services are accessible for people with dementia –including leisure services, libraries and customer contact points.
- Panel members could meet with staff and service users at the Merton Dementia Hub to discuss what more could be done to make the borough dementia friendly.
- Invite the Alzheimer's society to discuss their vision for dementia friendly communities.

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Healthy high streets

Healthy high streets are those which seek to create a thriving business environment for the local community which also have a positive impact on public health. This includes healthy food choices and affordable financial services.

How could scrutiny look at it?

Review the work of other local authorities who are working in this area and consider how it can be applied to Merton:

Invite a member of the London Healthier High Streets working Group to talk about the work they are doing, Their current work programme includes: looking at the density of off-licenses, proliferation of betting shops and hot food take away planning policy restrictions.

Speak to the Director of Public Health about how work on this issue is progressing in Merton.

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Integrated Care

The integration of health and social care is a major local and national government priority. Merton Council is delivering this through the Better Care Fund and has pooled resources with the MCCG and other partners to deliver important objectives. This includes developing new ways of working to keep people out of hospital and supporting and protecting social care by ensuring that the wider health and social care economy used existing funds to make up for funding gaps in social care.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel could scrutinise the progress with delivering integrated care in Merton. Given that this project regularly reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board the panel may wish to look at this from a different perspective and invite service user and staff representatives to discuss the impact that this project is having,

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Out of hospital care

Last autumn, NHS published a Five Year Forward Review setting out their plans to meet the demands of health care for the future; this will involve new models of care and a change in the way in which services are delivered. The main thrust will be to strengthen out of hospital care. This will mean that care services can be shaped to meet the needs of the local population and it will help to tackle the financial burden as hospital based care is the most expensive provision.

An example includes, local areas increasing the number of multispecialty community providers which are large GP practices working in partnership with consultant physicians, nurses, therapists, social workers and others. This more integrated approach is working in some places already including parts of London and Birmingham.

How could scrutiny look at this?

The Panel could invite Merton Clinical Commissioning Group to discuss their progress with developing models for out-of-hospital care and what issues and challenges they are facing with this process. The Panel could also invite councils officers, voluntary sector and Healthwatch colleagues share their views on what new models of care could look like in Merton.

The effects of the adult social care budget cuts

Last financial year the council was forced to make significant cuts within adult social care. The Panel can look at performance data to consider any impact that the cuts may have had.

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Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 2nd July 2015

The purpose of the workshop is to identify priority issues for consideration as agenda items or in-depth reviews by the Scrutiny Panels and the Commission. The final decision on this will then be made by the Panels/Commission at their first meetings.

All the issues that have been suggested to date by councillors, officers, partner organisations and residents are outlined in the supporting papers.

Further suggestions may emerge from discussion at the workshop.

Points to consider when selecting a topic:

o   Is the issue strategic, significant and specific?

o   Is it an area of underperformance?

o   Will the scrutiny activity add value to the Council's and/or its partners' overall performance?

o   Is it likely to lead to effective, tangible outcomes?

o   Is it an issue of community concern and will it engage the public?

o   Does this issue have a potential impact for one or more section(s) of the population?

o   Will this work duplicate other work already underway, planned or done recently?

o   Is it an issue of concern to partners and stakeholders?

o   Are there adequate resources available to do the activity well?