

Merton Council Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 6 July 2017
Time: 7.15 pm
Venue: Committee rooms C, D & E - Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden
SM4 5DX

AGENDA

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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. Alternatively, visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny

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Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

Councillors:

Peter Southgate (Chair)
Peter McCabe (Vice-Chair)
Hamish Badenoch
Mike Brunt
Brenda Fraser
Abigail Jones
Sally Kenny
Dennis Pearce
Oonagh Moulton
David Williams

Substitute Members:

Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE
Michael Bull
Suzanne Grocott
John Sargeant

Co-opted Representatives

Mansoor Ahmad, Parent Governor
Representative - Primary Sector
Helen Forbes, Parent Governor
Representative - Secondary and Special
Sector
Colin Powell, 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. If members consider they should not participate because of a non-pecuniary interest which may give rise to a perception of bias, they should declare this, withdraw and not participate in consideration of the item. For further advice please speak with the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance.

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. Alternatively, visit 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.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

28 MARCH 2017

(7.15 pm - 9.50 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Southgate (in the Chair), Peter McCabe, Hamish Badenoch, Mike Brunt, John Dehaney, Sally Kenny, Dennis Pearce, Oonagh Moulton, David Williams and Agatha Mary Akyigyina

Co-opted Member Mansoor Ahmad

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Edith Macauley MBE (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities) and Martin Whelton (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing)

Julia Regan (Head of Democracy Services), Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Chris Lee (Director of Environment and Regeneration) and Paul McGarry (Future Merton Manager)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Abigail Jones (substituted by Councillor Agatha Akyigyina).

Apologies were also received from co-opted members Helen Forbes and Colin Powell.

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 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 CRIME AND POLICING IN MERTON (Agenda Item 4)

The Chair congratulated Chief Superintendent Steve Wallace on his appointment as Temporary Borough Commander and thanked him for sending written responses to the Commission's questions (published as part of the agenda).

The Borough Commander said that it had been a very busy week for the Metropolitan Police in the wake of the attack in Westminster and that Merton officers had been working extended shifts as a result, and that normal service was now resuming. He added that further to his appointment as Borough Commander, Guy Collins, a very

experienced superintendent from Lincolnshire would be covering his substantive post.

Commission members asked a number of follow-up questions about the proposed Basic Command Unit (BOCU) model and how it might work in Merton. The Borough Commander said that the proposed groupings had been identified on the basis of risk, threat and harm factors for each borough. He said that the new groupings would provide resilience and would strengthen existing cross-boundary working and assured the Commission that he would ensure that Merton got its fair share of policing services under the new model. He added that co-terminosity with borough boundaries and court boundaries could be beneficial.

The Borough Commander provided additional information in response to questions:

- policing in schools is focussed mainly on secondary schools where there are more issues on which Safer Schools Officers can have an impact. Metal screening arches are used from time to time;
- there are relatively low levels of street robbery in Merton and a reasonable proportion of these are solved;
- the recent increase in burglary figures is in the context of a low baseline due to significant reductions in burglary in the last few years;
- there has been considerable police activity in Mitcham town centre to tackle loitering and street drinking as well as preventative and problem solving work;
- most fraud work is dealt with by a centralised specialist team 'Action Fraud' and so does not always show on local crime figures;
- on top of the MOPAC London priorities, the two local priorities for Merton are moped theft and household burglary
- councillors were urged to raise local concerns at meetings of the ward locations panel.

Councillor Edith Macauley, Cabinet Member for Community Safety Engagement and Equalities, added that the police had done a marvellous job in tackling crime hotspots in the borough. She also highlighted the work that the One Stop Shop had been doing in partnership with the Police to tackle domestic violence and support victims of domestic violence.

5 THE MAYOR OF LONDON'S POLICING PRIORITIES (Agenda Item 5)

Leonie Cooper, London Assembly Member for Merton and Wandsworth, said that the policing priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2017-21 differ from the previous plan in that the focus is now on crimes that have a high impact on their victims whereas the previous MOPAC priorities focussed on high volume crimes. The new focus includes standing together against intolerance and hatred, keeping children

and young people safe and tackling violence against women and girls. There will continue to be a focus on violence against the person, particularly knife crime.

Leonie Cooper said that Assembly Members had received feedback from the pilots for the proposed Basic Command Unit (BOCU) model and that learning from these would be incorporated into future proposals, particular in relation to the need for effective public engagement.

In response to questions about the BOCU model and the total number of offences in each of the four boroughs proposed (Merton, Wandsworth, Kingston and Richmond), Leonie Cooper and Chief Superintendent Steve Wallace said that Wandsworth is the largest borough and has the highest number of offences but the best way to compare would be on a crimes per 1000 population basis. Leonie Cooper said that data on the previous MOPAC 7 priorities would still be collected but may be presented differently and that the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee would ensure that performance management data would be available to hold the police to account.

In relation to reassuring Merton residents about the level of policing that would be provided, Leonie Cooper said that it would be a combination of public information and operational decisions taken by the police to direct resources to where they are needed most and will have most impact. Steve Wallace added that 999 calls would receive a response from the unit nearest at the time rather than by borough.

Leonie Cooper said that MOPAC would expect the police to bring forward improvements as a result of the changes to the model of policing. She said that other MOPAC projects such as updated IT equipment so that officers could update data whilst out and about would also lead to efficiency savings. Steve Wallace added that the four borough BOCU could enable the police to reduce the number of control rooms and other back office support to reinvest in frontline policing.

In response to a question about custody provision, Steve Wallace said that this would not be affected by the new model.

6 LOCAL AUTHORITY PROPERTY COMPANY - PRESENTATION (Agenda Item 6)

Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration, outlined the information on the slides in the agenda pack. He highlighted a number of key points:

- A local authority property company would use the council's land and capital to generate a revenue stream (estimated at £400,000 pa from years 4 to 30) for the council as well as stimulating the supply of housing;
- Over 100 councils have established or are in the process of establishing a local authority property company so there is an opportunity for Merton to learn from their experience;

- 77 housing units are proposed on a total of 4 sites initially, these will be mainly private sector rented units, around 20 of which will be affordable;
- The council retains ownership and control of the local authority property company through a Cabinet sub-group.

Chris Lee, Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), James McGinlay (Assistant Director for Sustainable Communities) and Paul McGarry (Head of Future Merton) provided additional information in response to questions:

- The proportion of affordable housing could be increased but this would reduce the revenue return to the council
- Nomination of property for groups of hard-to-recruit public sector staff would be possible but would have to be carefully managed and let at a market rent so that this would not impact negatively on voids or on the revenue stream
- The properties and sites will be owned by the council, through its stand-alone company, and can be sold at a time of the council's choosing
- The proposals have been drawn up in the context of a wider local plans, including the Local Development Plan and the Asset Management Strategy, identifying the need for housing and associated services in the borough as well as considering the most efficient use of public buildings
- How the revenue income is used will be a decision for the council, to be taken in the context of the need to balance the budget

Members welcomed the proposals as an innovative way to raise revenue from the council's assets without selling them. However, members did express some concerns about the accountability of the local authority property company. Chris Lee said that the functions delegated to the company were set out clearly in the report agreed by Cabinet. Members also stressed the need for the company's decisions to be subject to scrutiny.

RESOLVED: that the development and subsequent operation of the local authority property company should be brought to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel or to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on a regular basis

7 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT (Agenda Item 7)

RESOLVED: that the Annual Report should be updated to include content from the final Panel and Commission meetings in March 2017 and should then be presented to Council at its meeting on 12 July 2017.

8 PLANNING THE COMMISSION'S 2017/18 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 8)

RESOLVED: that the Commission:

1. Will re-establish the financial monitoring task group at its meeting on 6 July 2017
2. Agreed the agenda items for its meeting on 6 July as set out in paragraph 2.12 of the report
3. Agreed that members will email suggestions for agenda items and task group reviews to the Head of Democracy Services

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Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 6 July 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Merton Partnership Annual Report 2016-17

Lead officer: Ged Curran, Chief Executive

Lead member: Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Leader of Merton Council and Chair of Merton Partnership

Contact officer: John Dimmer, john.dimmer@merton.gov.uk; 020 8545 3477

Recommendations:

- A. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the progress of the Merton Partnership in 2016-17, as set out in the draft Annual Report at Appendix I to be presented to the Merton Partnership Executive Board at its meeting on 5 July 2017
-

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 One of the key recommendations from the LBM Internal Audit of the Merton Partnership, agreed by the Merton Partnership Executive Board in September 2014 was that the “Merton Partnership should produce an Annual Report, as indicated in the Governance Handbook, for review by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and subsequently publish it.” Additionally, this report should outline performance over the previous year.
- 1.1.1 The draft annual report of the Merton Partnership for 2016-17 is attached at Appendix I for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. This includes a general update on the progress of the four thematic partnerships against the community plan themes over 2016-17 and an annual performance update. The report format has been updated for 2016-17 to ensure that only the most relevant information is included.
- 1.1.2 The attached report is draft and subject to amendments. In addition to the report being considered by the Commission, a final draft version will be taken to the Merton Partnership Executive Board on 5 July 2017 for discussion and agreement. The final report will then be published on the Merton Partnership website www.mertonpartnership.org

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Merton Partnership was established in January 2002 as the overarching strategic partnership for the borough. Its aim is to work together with all partners on issues that are key to local people – including residents, workers and visitors – as reflected in the Community Plan.
- 2.1.1 The Partnership’s primary objectives are to deliver the Community Plan along with other plans and strategies adopted by the Merton Partnership such as the Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy.

2.1.2 The Merton Partnership agreed the latest refresh of the Community Plan in May 2013. The Community Plan sets out the vision and priorities for the borough going forward.

2.2 Structure of the Merton Partnership

2.2.1 The Merton Partnership consists of senior representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Members are recruited on the basis of their capacity to represent their organisations and not their individual interests.

2.2.2 The Partnership has an ‘Executive Board’ model, and consists of a number of key groups:

- Merton Partnership (annual themed conference);
- Executive Board;
- Thematic Partnerships; and
- ad hoc working groups.

2.2.3 A total of 15 INVOLVE (Community Engagement) Network elected representatives sit on the various bodies within the Merton Partnership structure, both to raise and to report back on issues relevant to the voluntary and community sector.

2.2.4 There are four thematic partnerships. These bodies are tasked with coordinating delivery of the priorities of the Merton Partnership, as identified in the Community Plan. The main areas of work and responsible thematic partnerships are set out below:

Theme	Responsible body and work areas
Sustainable communities	Sustainable Communities and Transport Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable housing ▪ Environment (including street scene) ▪ Transport ▪ The economy (including adult learning and skills)
Safer and stronger communities	Safer and Stronger Strategy Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preventing and reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse ▪ Community cohesion and active citizenship ▪ Public safety (including fire safety and civic contingencies)
Healthier Communities	Health and Wellbeing Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving health outcomes ▪ Reducing health inequalities ▪ Independent living ▪ Supported living
Children and Young People	Children’s Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education ▪ Children’s social care ▪ Youth services

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The audit of the Merton Partnership recommended that a report is produced annually. Failure to do so would mean that the performance of the partnership is not reported.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1 Thematic Leads have been consulted on this report.

5. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal or statutory implications arising from this report.

7. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None for the purposes of this report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None for the purposes of this report.

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

- 10.1 Appendix I – Merton Partnership Annual Report 2016-17.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None.

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MERTON PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

(DRAFT)

CONTENTS

- 1 THE MERTON PARTNERSHIP**

- 2 PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS: 2016-17**
 - 2.1. A healthy and fulfilling life
 - 2.2. Better opportunities for youngsters
 - 2.3. Keeping Merton moving
 - 2.4. Being safe and strong

- 3 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE 2016-17**

1. THE MERTON PARTNERSHIP

This is the Annual Report for the Merton Partnership 2016/17. It provides an overview of the work of the Merton Partnership and its key achievements.

The [Merton Partnership](#) was established in January 2002 as the overarching strategic partnership for the borough. Its aim is to work together with all partners on issues that are key to local people – including residents, workers and visitors – as reflected in the Community Plan.

The Partnership's primary objectives are to deliver the Community Plan along with other plans and strategies adopted by the Merton Partnership such as the Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy.

The Merton Partnership agreed the latest refresh of the Community Plan in May 2013. The Community Plan sets out the vision and priorities for the borough going forward.

The Merton Partnership consists of senior representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Members are recruited on the basis of their capacity to represent their organisations and not their individual interests.

The Partnership has an 'Executive Board' model, and consists of a number of key groups:

- Merton Partnership (annual conference)
- Executive Board;
- Thematic Partnerships; and
- ad hoc working groups.

A total of 15 INVOLVE (Community Engagement) Network elected representatives sit on the various bodies within the Merton Partnership structure, both to raise and to report back on issues relevant to the voluntary and community sector.

There are four thematic partnerships. These bodies are tasked with coordinating delivery of the priorities of the Merton Partnership, as identified in the Community Plan. The main areas of work and responsible thematic partnerships are set out overleaf.

Theme	Responsible body and work areas
Sustainable communities	Sustainable Communities and Transport Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable housing ▪ Environment (including street scene) ▪ Transport ▪ The economy (including adult learning and skills)
Safer and stronger communities	Safer and Stronger Strategy Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preventing and reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse ▪ Community cohesion and active citizenship ▪ Public safety (including fire safety and civic contingencies)
Healthier Communities	Health and Wellbeing Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving health outcomes ▪ Reducing health inequalities ▪ Independent living ▪ Supported living
Children and Young People	Children's Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving overall outcomes for children and young people • Multi-agency partnership practice ▪ Education including Early Years ▪ Children's Social Care ▪ Youth services including Youth Offending ▪ Children's Community Health

Delivery Groups

Delivery groups sit under each of the thematic partnerships and work with local groups within the community to deliver the priorities identified by the Partnership.

Members of the Merton Partnership Executive Board

The following organisations and individuals are members of the Merton Partnership Executive Board:

- Chair of Merton Partnership / Leader of Merton Council (Chair)
- Chief Executive, Merton Council (Deputy Chair)
- Borough Commander, Merton Police (Deputy Chair)
- Director of Public Health, Merton Council
- Chair, Merton CCG
- Sutton and Merton Service Director, South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust
- Borough Commander, Merton Fire (LFB)
- Chief Executive, Merton Chamber of Commerce
- Chief Executive, Merton Voluntary Services Council
- Customer Service Operations Manager, Jobcentre Plus
- Principal, South Thames College (Merton campus)
- Managing Director, Clarion Housing
- Community Engagement Network (CEN) representative x2

The Executive Board now meets six times a year and the Merton Partnership meets collectively at its annual conference.

The last annual conference took place on 14 November 2016 and focused on sustaining a thriving voluntary sector in Merton. The conference provided an opportunity to inform and guide the final recommendations of the Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy. There were a range of workshops and speakers including Tom Leftwich, Head of Sector Sustainability Projects, Office for Civil Society.

2. PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS: 2016-17

The Partnership has presented its achievements under the following four Community Plan themes:

1. A healthy and fulfilling life
2. Better opportunities for youngsters
3. Keeping Merton moving
4. Being safe and strong

Achievements against key outcomes in 2016-17, and key priorities for 2017-18 are set out under each theme.

2.1 A HEALTHY AND FULFILLING LIFE:

Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB)

Health and Wellbeing Boards are statutory partnerships formed to deliver strategic, local leadership in health and wellbeing. The work of HWB, focused on addressing health inequalities, is central to informing the commissioning of health and social care services in Merton. It has a core role in encouraging joined up, integrated services across the Council, CCG, acute providers, the voluntary sector and other local partners to improve health and wellbeing across the borough.

Outcome 1: Tackling Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is a big problem. In Merton c. 4,500 children (age 4 - 11 years) are overweight or obese, with nearly a third of children leaving primary school overweight or obese. This impacts on children's health and potentially their life chances. Tackling childhood obesity was one of two priorities for Merton HWBB in 2016/17. Actions and achievements in 2016/17 include:

- [The Child Healthy Weight Action Plan](#) developed working with partners and the Director of Public Health's Annual Public Health Report for 2016-17 which provides an easy reference to evidence on what works in [Tackling Childhood Obesity Together](#)
- Engagement and conversations with the local community through for example the [London Great Weight Debate](#) and now a Merton Great Weight Debate, focusing on engaging residents in the east of the borough, BAME communities, children and young people to shape Merton's approach further.
- Engaging local partners such as All England Lawn Tennis Club, Sustainable Merton, schools clusters and Merton School Sports Partnership to help increase physical activity and improve the food environment e.g. promoting the 'daily mile' for schools, Early Years Activation Pilot and developing a food poverty action plan.
- Developing and expanding the Healthy Catering Commitment for businesses in the east of the borough to improve the food environment e.g. through working with fast food outlets to offer healthier options and make smaller portion sizes available.
- Work to make the Wilson an exemplar in healthy weight environment combining design expertise with ideas from the community about what promotes healthy living.

Outcome 2: Social Prescribing

Social prescribing (SP) is a means of enabling primary care services to refer patients with social, emotional or practical needs to a range of local, non-clinical services, often provided by the voluntary and community sector. Developing a social prescribing pilot in Merton was agreed as a 2016/17 priority for the HWBB.

- The SP Implementation Group is managing delivery of the pilot with representation from Public Health, CCG commissioning, General Practice, MVSC and CLCH.
- The pilot is based on Wide Way and Tamworth GP practices (population 17,400). A Social Prescribing Coordinator was appointed based in the practices (and hosted by MVSC).
- The pilot became operational from January 2017. Patients eligible for the service are those with issues relating to social isolation, low level mental health problems and frequently presenting at general practice. Over 60 new referrals were seen by the SP Coordinator in the first 3 months, and these patients are accessing a range of community services.
- The intention is that the pilot will be expanded to a number of neighbouring practices over the

next few months and an evaluation project has been commissioned and will be in place at the start of June 2017, with a baseline report being produced in July (funded through the SW London Health Innovation Network).

- A Big Lottery funding bid will be prepared in June/July to secure funding to cover the scaling up of the service to all practices in 2018.

Outcome 3: Health and social care integration

Nationally government is looking for a place based narrative about what integrated care will look like by 2020. The Health and Wellbeing Board is working towards an integrated all age approach across service delivery and commissioning, as well as the model of health and wellbeing for east Merton through the Wilson. Actions and achievements in 2016/17 include:

- Central London Community Healthcare staff now working from the civic centre.
- Joint children and young people's commissioning team has been established.
- Improvement over the year in the DTOC (delayed transfer of care) position.
- CQC inspection of health function in the learning disabilities team received a Good rating.

Outcome 4: Dementia Friendly Merton

Dementia is becoming one of the most feared conditions in society. In Merton there are 1,782 people (over 65) living with dementia and this is predicted to rise by over 50% by 2030. Actions and achievements in 2016/17 include:

- In early 2017 the first in a series of engagement event was held with people with dementia and their carers to understand the challenges of day to day life.
- The Merton Dementia Friendly community launch took place with over 60 organisations and people with dementia and their carers attending. The event also focused on the re-energising of [Merton Dementia Action Alliance](#) and offered Dementia Friends awareness training.
- During Dementia Awareness Week, CLCH (Central London Community Healthcare), the Alzheimer's Society and Merton Council staff raised awareness on dementia among residents, shoppers and workers in Wimbledon town centre and promoted [Dementia Friends](#) training. They also trained 67 civic centre staff to become dementia friends.
- Seven new Merton organisations have now joined the Dementia Action Alliance and at least ten other organisations are considering joining.

Outcome 5: Health in All Policies

Health in All Policies (HIAP) presents potential for strong co-benefits, across the council and partners; with health and health equity not only being important goals in their own right, but also pre-requisites for achieving other aims such as educational attainment, community and family cohesion, employment, safety, sustainability and prosperity. HIAP with its strong emphasis on inter-sectoral collaboration also offers a way of increasing efficiency of public sector spending. Actions and achievements in 2016/17 include:

- In autumn 2016 Merton became the first London borough to take part in the LGA health in all policies self assessment programme.
- The work received Cabinet, cross Council and partnership support from both the CCG and the voluntary sector.
- An action plan has been developed and will be reported to the HWBB in June 2017 with priority actions including leadership and advocacy, embedding social value in commissioning,

healthy workplaces, joint work between the Environment Directorate and public health, housing and homelessness, embedding Think Family in council working, tackling childhood obesity and developing a dementia friendly Merton.

Outcome 6: The Wilson

Development of the Wilson as a health and wellbeing campus for east Merton is a key priority of the HWBB. The campus will have clinical and community facilities that are integrated and mutually amplifying, tackling all of the other outcomes mentioned here. Actions and progress in 2016/17 include:

- Through the summer of 2016 [Community Conversations on the Wilson](#) led by the HWBB took place. Over 450 people from many different groups were engaged in the vision and design of the campus.
- A joint community engagement manager for the Wilson was agreed and appointed and the Wilson Programme Office including the programme director established.
- The joint Governing Body and a wider governance structure is also established.
- One Public Estate (OPE) funding was secured to assess the optimization of publicly owned land and property, including around the Wilson campus.
- Currently developing the details of the clinical and community options that are feasible at the site.

Priorities for 2017-18

- Taking forward the 2020 narrative for Merton integration of health and social care across all care groups / ages with a commitment to our model of health and wellbeing, as a vehicle for reducing inequalities. Joining up the pathway out of hospital into intermediate care and reablement.
- Building on the co-location of social care and community health staff, to achieve focussed discussions, involving primary care, about how to manage and support patients on the edge of hospital admission or care home admission.
- Reviewing the mental health arrangements in the light of Service Line Management in the mental health trust.
- Achieving further improvements in DTOC (delayed transfer of care) position.
- The HWBB 2017/18 priority is to be confirmed and will be considered at the June meeting of the Board. A proposal is diabetes as part of a whole systems approach, which would also link to taking forward work on childhood obesity and social prescribing.
- Delivering the Health in All Policies Action Plan
- Taking forward Dementia Friendly Merton
- Producing the 2017/18 Annual Public Health Report on health inequalities.

Additional information

The [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) (JSNA) gives an overview of the health and wellbeing of Merton residents, highlighting trends and changes, as well as key insights that tell us something new about our population and how best to improve health and wellbeing.

2.2 BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNGSTERS:

Children and Young People Thematic Partnership (Children's Trust Board)

The Children's Trust Board continues to be the vehicle through which partner agencies share responsibility for delivering services to improve outcomes for children and young people in Merton, particularly those vulnerable to poorer outcomes than their peers. Along with Merton's Safeguarding Children Board and Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children's Trust Board sets priorities for children's services and drives service improvements.

Outcome 1: Children and Young Peoples Plan: Deliver early help and improve outcomes for those subject to the effects of disadvantage

- Children's Trust Partnership has continued to deliver, commission and broker early help services through a range of providers including the voluntary sector, early year's services, schools, CLCH, Merton CCG, the council and other key partners.
- We have reviewed Merton's Well-Being Model and partnership approach to promoting and managing the well-being and safeguarding of children and young people with recommendations agreed with Children's Trust and MSCB partnership boards. Plans to deliver changes through task and finish groups over next financial year, with a relaunch of the Wellbeing model in autumn 2017.
- Merton's Early Years early help offer includes strong local partnerships between community health and early year's services. Our early years sector include 100% good and outstanding Children's Centres and 97% good and outstanding PVIs. We have delivered a Borough-wide Early Years consultation of services which resulted in, revised referral pathways to ensure ease of access.
- Community health services were recommissioned in 2016/17 strengthening the universal service offer and services for more vulnerable children and young people. Our transformative approach delivered changes in the Children's Centres offer and the co-location of Community Health services staff into children's centres to enable joined up under five's pathways as well as better collaborative working with improved communication, information-sharing and planning
- Continued to deliver Merton's Transforming Families programme to support families with multiple and complex needs, successfully working in partnership with families to effect change with 272 families achieving Significant and Sustained Progress under the expanded programme in 2016-17.
- Achieved positive progress on outcomes for *Theme 1: Best start in life-early years development and strong educational achievement* within Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015/16-2017/18 including increased proportion of FSM children achieving a 'Good Level of Development'.

Outcome 2: Children and Young Peoples Plan: Safeguarding children and young people

- Refreshed the borough's multi-agency Neglect Strategy so that it is widely understood and responded to through joint working arrangements and that thresholds for intervention and support are clear in accordance with Merton's Wellbeing Model. Neglect is a key cross-cutting issue across the MSCB's three priorities of Think Family, Supporting Adolescents and Early Help.
- Launched Merton's 2016-20 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategic plan and produced updated Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) profile giving a detailed, reliable and localised account of DVA in Merton that identified strengths in reporting and enforcement as well as areas of improvement and recommendations to progress.
- Driven forward the CSE improvement agenda informed by case audits, an improved dataset and range of awareness training and development across the Children's Trust. The Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) panel has also strengthened triangulation with children missing from home, care and education.
- Reviewed MASH functioning with improvement plan in place to strengthen leadership, quality assurance and multi-agency engagement. Introduction of Merton's Single Point of Access offering mental health triage and assessment to direct enquirers to the most appropriate service to meet their needs.
- Re-defining Merton's approach to social work practice through roll-out of the Signs of Safety (SoS) model and other tools to engage more effectively with children and families. The CSF Quality Assurance (QA) Framework has been refreshed to support this shift in practice and evaluate the difference made to families.

Outcome 3: Children and Young Peoples Plan: Looked After Children and Care Leavers

- Improved court proceeding timeliness to a 30 week average in 2015-16 (in line with the national benchmark) and reviewed key processes and procedures to ensure compliance with Public Law Outline guidance and a more joined up approach, clearer accountability and effective working across services and teams. Procedures and processes have been strengthened in relation to legal planning meetings, in-house parenting assessments, expert assessments and Family Group Conferences.
- Continued to deliver successful marketing and recruitment campaigns to recruit in-house foster carers – 15 in 2016-17 with 6 for target groups. Timescales have continued to reduce for the assessment of foster carers.
- Significant progress made with regard to the timeliness of adoptive placements as a result of good quality cross service working and increased scrutiny in case monitoring to enable early identification of delays, improving the 3-year rolling average of time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family to 548 days (2013-16) from 685 (2010-13).
- Promote the participation of LAC to influence and develop services through a range of mechanisms including through the Children in Care Council and involvement in foster carer training and social work recruitment processes. This work is underpinned by the LAC and Care

Leavers Pledge and is a part of the wider Children's Trust User Voice Strategy that monitors and reports on this area.

Outcome 4: Children and Young Peoples Plan: Closing the gap in educational outcomes and opportunity

- 91% of all Merton Schools are graded Good or Outstanding by Ofsted, this places 92% of all pupils in Merton in good or better schools.
- At the end of 2016-17, 95% of primary schools and 100% of secondary (including academies) and special were rated 'Good' or better for personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Continued support, challenge and regular monitoring for individual, identified schools to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that strategies to raise attainment and narrow the gap were strong and evidence-based, that Pupil Premium grant funding was impactful and further intensive targeted work undertaken where necessary.
- Effective operation of the multi-agency Children Missing Education (CME) panel to monitor both CME and those vulnerable to CME cohorts with the most recent QA report highlighting, that 96% of all cases heard at a CME panel are back on roll within one term, this is compared to 81% in previous years.
- School Expansion Programme is in progress –e programme for primary schools is complete and expansion of Merton secondary schools has commenced with a proposal for the new academy in consultation.
- Plans are in place to support the provision and sufficiency of local SEN places.

Outcome 5: Children and Young Peoples Plan: Engage and enable young people to achieve better outcomes

- Sustained strong youth justice performance on First-Time Entrants with a reduction from 88 in 2013-14 to 64 in 2016-17 and an improving rate of re-offending (0.55 at the end of 2016-17 compared to 0.88 at the end of 2015-16). The multi-agency nature and structure of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and extensiveness of planned and coordinated interventions for young people to ensure needs are appropriately assessed and addressed has contributed to these positive outcomes.
- Continued delivery of the NEET/RPA action plan and coordinated work across services such as My Futures, Transforming Families and the YOT to increase the economic prospects for vulnerable groups. Proportions of young people who are NEET, or whose status is not known, fell again in 2015-16 and are better than national averages.
- Re-commissioned new services from April 2017 focusing on the priority groups of: children missing from home or care, children at risk of sexual exploitation, advocacy for children on CP Plans/LAC/Care Leavers, young carers and children with disabilities. The Risk and Resilience Service is now established to ensure seamless and discreet transition between diversionary, health positive activities, prevention and early identification of substance misuse alongside provision of treatment for those most in need.
- Refreshed the Prevent guidance to take into account the local and post-Brexit environment and focusing on radicalisation and extremism in all forms. The guidance highlights harmful

behaviours and risk indicators that support professionals to understand and identify factors of vulnerability to extremism and also details referral and intervention processes to safeguard young people.

- Re-commissioned the Safer Schools Partnership with a new three year model agreed by secondary schools, Merton Council and Merton Police MET. Safer Schools officers are now key members of the children's and schools' workforce undertaking various responsibilities such as patrolling the school area, providing advice to young people, and working in conjunction with schools to resolve anti-social behaviour or other crimes, in order to provide a safe and secure learning environment.

Outcome 6: Children and Young Peoples Plan: Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- Reviewed the Short Breaks offer to inform future provision for access. The referral criteria were re-defined and a new allocations process designed so that access is clearer and more transparent for parents and carers.
- A Local Offer Steering Group is in place to ensure that Merton is developing and meeting its statutory requirements in relation to this aspect of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- Focused on achieving greater independence for young people with SEN or disabilities through preparation for adulthood and early transitions planning. A dedicated Preparing for Adulthood Team is in place within SENDIS and links with Adult Social Care to streamline planning for transition including review and identification of support to achieve their aspirations and components of study to best prepare them for adult life.
- Reconfigured roles and streamlined business processes through use of the SEN Implementation Grant to increase capacity and enable improved performance with regard to the delivering EHC Plans within timescales and transfer of existing SEN Statements to EHC Plans.
- Delivered SEN needs analysis and convened multi-agency task and finish group to prepare Self-evaluation against new Ofsted multi-agency inspection.

Priorities for 2017-18

- Undertake development work to implement the plans and actions stemming from the Merton Wellbeing Model review.
- Develop the MSCB's priorities of Think Family, Supporting Adolescents and Early Help, delivering the actions and outcomes contained within its 2017-19 Business Plan.
- Continue to embed Merton's Practice Model using SoS and other collaborative tools to provide holistic and responsive services, effectively assess and manage risk and improve outcomes for children and families.
- Develop Merton's Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASDA) strategy, taking a holistic 'life-course' approach, to encompass all resident children, young people and adults with ASD. It will also take account of families and carers of residents with ASD.
- Monitoring and review of the Children's Trust User Voice Strategy for 2017-19 to continue to promote and embed the views and participation of service users in future developments.

2.3 KEEPING MERTON MOVING:

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

The purpose of the Sustainable Communities and Transport Theme Group is to work in partnership to create a more sustainable borough, one which is less reliant on fossil fuel and which reduces its negative impact on the environment and climate change in particular. The Board promotes investment into the borough to create new jobs as well as looking to improve skills levels and the capacity of residents to benefit from these jobs and those across the region. The Board seeks to improve the condition and supply of housing including affordable housing. The Board works to promote the development of sustainable transport particularly active transport [cycling and walking] as well as public transport in and around Merton.

Outcome 1: % reduction in number of JSA Claimants at Mitcham JCP

The JSA claimant count is 1% as of Dec 2016. (Source - Labour Market Bulletin Dec 2016).
Please also note that the introduction of Universal Credit means that current data is no longer directly comparable to previous data.

Outcome 2: Apprentices: placements in year

The Economic Development Strategy Refresh has been delivered. No funds have been agreed for activities this year and there is no planned skills and employment support for Merton businesses going forward

Merton- the Employer

The Government has set public sector targets based on 2.3% of the workforce. This equates to 38 for Merton Council and a further 61 in our schools - total 99 apprentices. Currently we have 6 apprentices in post.

Outcome 3: Number of people employed through Employability schemes

The employability programmes completed at the end of the financial year. Reported figures are
Target: **29** (for this year only)
Value: **58**

A new ESF Match Funded Employment Project will be commencing shortly. This bid was led by London Councils on behalf of the local authorities who were providing match. It is aimed at all eligible residents across the whole of the borough who meet the criteria within the Priority Axis 1 and 2 shown here:

Priority Axis 1 – Inclusive labour Markets

Priority 1.1 - Improving the employability and skills of the unemployed and economically inactive people

Priority 1.4 - To address the root causes of poverty which creates barriers to work so more people move closer or into employment

Priority Axis 2 – Skills for Growth

Priority 2.1 -Enhancing equal access to lifelong learning. This focuses on upgrading the knowledge, skills and competences of the workforce to meet their goals and the needs of the local economy.

Target: Number of participants in sustained employment / apprenticeship for 26 weeks (6 Months)
= **44**

Value: **0** (The ITT was managed by London Councils and contracts are yet to be awarded).

Outcome 4: No. of clients accessing employment and skills initiatives who have received financial guidance

- 35 referrals – benefits money and debt advice 1-2-1
- 8 intensive support cases 1-2-1
- Reach 250 people at financial capability events

Participants of Clarion's financial capability programme can opt to attend training courses – delivered by Commonsense Trust. This service includes information, guidance and advice regarding financial management good practice and also signposting to organisations that provide financial support.

Loan sharks are targeting local residents who have received eviction notices – Clarion are providing a contact at the Stop Loan Sharks service to provide a workshop in Merton.

Priorities for 2017-18

Apprenticeships:

Merton- the Employer

The Government has set public sector targets based on 2.3% of the workforce. This equates to 38 for Merton Council and a further 61 in our schools - total Target: **99 apprentices**.

ESF Match Funded Employment Project (to commence in July 2017)

Target: Number of participants in sustained employment / apprenticeship for 26 weeks (6 Months)
= **44 (over period of programme which may run for 5 years) this equates to approx. 9 per year.**

2.4 BEING SAFE AND STRONG:

SAFER STRONGER STRATEGY GROUP

The Safer and Stronger Strategy Group performs the role of the community safety partnership for Merton and leads on the community safety and community cohesion agenda on behalf of the Merton Partnership.

Outcome 1: Strategic Priority 1 – To address Violence with Injury (Non Domestic Abuse)

- A dedicated task and finish group has been established
- Problem Solving around the Night Time Economy
- Merton Council worked with Merton Police to be the first London borough to roll out the 'Ask for Angela' scheme.
- Merton was successful in its Home Office bid to become a Local Alcohol Action Area.
- Knife crime – key areas of work for the borough e.g. knife arch operations at colleges, have led to many seizures/finds
- Test Purchase knife and alcohol operations
- An analytical profile of knife crime has been written and will be updated later in the year
- An initial look at the gun crime data has been undertaken and continues to be monitored.

Outcome 2: Strategic Priority 2 – To address Violence with Injury (Domestic Abuse)

- An analytical profile of Domestic Abuse in the borough has been compiled and will be re-visited in the autumn.
- Merton has become one of the first London boroughs to join a national campaign 'No More' against domestic violence and sexual assault.
- The 16 days campaign ran from 25th November to 10th December.
- The target for a 40% SD rate for Violence with Injury (Domestic Abuse) was met – second best in MPS.
- More Domestic Violence Protection Orders are being applied for.
- Police MARAC referrals are up significantly.
- Operation Dauntless approach with higher risk suspects is now routine
- All repeat cases are reviewed regularly by the Police.
- A new (IDVA) came into post during the year.
- A number of MARAC learning days have been carried out, and the most recent MARAC self assessment provided some positive results.
- The VAWG Board continues to work well and this financial year has seen the launch of the VAWG strategy.

Outcome 3: *Strategic Priority 3 – To tackle Domestic Burglary and improve our work around Integrated Offender Management (IOM) on the borough*

- A new IOM co-ordinator is now in post.
- A new IOM profile is currently being completed to ascertain complex needs of the cohort
- A new partnership Offenders Board has been established and is due to meet for the first time in May 2017.
- Met Trace has continued to be distributed in the borough.
- Dedicated Police patrols in burglary hotspot areas.
- An increase in burglary performance at the end of the financial can be noted, so Burglary and IOM will remain as priorities for 2017/18.
- Met Trace 'smartwater' rollout is on target with overall reductions.

Outcome 4: **To tackle Anti-Social Behaviour on the borough**

- The Community MARAC started in July 16 and continues to meet monthly. Each month sees an average six new cases discussed
- Work has taken place to look for suitable venues for the deployable CCTV camera's to be situated. Protocols and request forms have also been produced with deployments now being made/approved/requested at each locations board meeting
- Successful partnership activity at the Brickfields site and at Morden Court.
- Several 'Personal Independence' Boot camps supported by Police.
- Re-formatted "Locations" problem solving meetings
- Cases taken for 2016-17 totalled 781 (an increase of 178 from the previous year).

Outcome 5: **To promote a safe, healthy and cohesive borough where communities get on well together**

- The Equality Strategy 2017-21 was refreshed and includes community cohesion commitments. The strategy was adopted by the council in April 2017.
- The council held an annual civic event for Holocaust Memorial Day and promoted LGBT History Month and Black History Month events.
- The LGBT Forum successfully received external funding to set up Over 50's Coffee Morning sessions. More recently the forum received further funding and has established a youth group at the Endeavour Club.
- The council unveiled a memorial paving stone at Wimbledon War Memorial in honour of Merton born George Cates who was awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery shown in World War One.
- A new draft Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy was developed in partnership with the voluntary and community sector.
- Interfaith week – the Faith and Belief Forum held a quiz afternoon that was well attended and was an opportunity for local residents from diverse backgrounds to socialise and get a

better understanding of other communities.

- BAME Voice held its first Summer Fair on 10 September 2016 at Morden Park – the event included multicultural activities and was well attended.

Priorities for 2017-18

Locally

- Domestic Burglary and IOM – Burglary remains one of the single biggest concerns for our residents and as such will remain as a strategic priority.
- Local Alcohol Action Areas (LAAA's) and Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's). PSPO's will replace the current controlled drinking zone in October. The LAAA is a two year Home Office pilot scheme to look at partnership work to tackle alcohol related crime.
- Theft of Powered Two Wheelers.
- Priority Areas – Work to address geographically based challenges via formal problem solving approaches.

MOPAC (Mayors Office for Policing and Crime) priorities that we will need to address in partnership at a borough level

- Neighbourhood Policing
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Improving criminal justice system for victims
- Violence against women and girls
- Tackling hate crime and extremism in all its forms

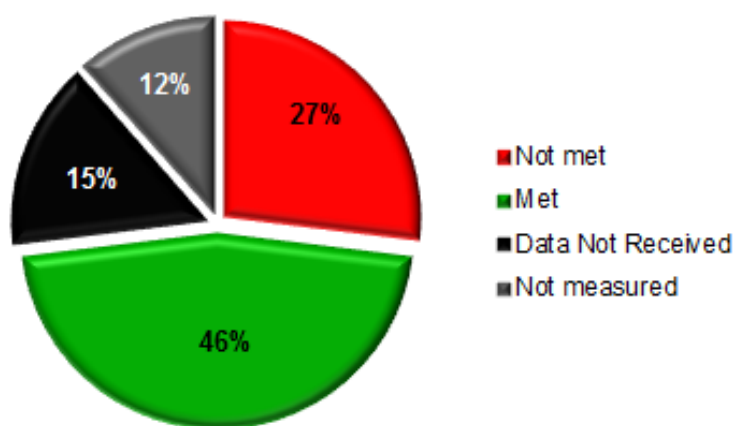
Additional information

- Borough partners need to note the approaching larger BOCU model within the police. Two pathfinder sites, one in East London, the other North, have started to work in this manner seeing localised policing merged into cluster areas. Whilst no timelines are confirmed for when Merton will see the mergers take place this may well occur during financial year 2017-18.

3 PERFORMANCE 2016-17

Overall Year End Performance 2016-17

- 3.1 Performance for 2016-17 has been reviewed against the Merton Partnership’s agreed suite of 26 performance indicators.
- 3.2 Of the 26 indicators, 12 (46%) met their target, and seven (27%) did not meet their target, three (12%) are Not Measured This Period, and four (15%) have not provided Year End data.



Due to rounding issues, the totals will not always equal 100%

Comparative year on year performance

- 3.3 Measures achieving or exceeding target for 2016-17 increased by 3% overall compared to 2015-16, while measures not achieving their targets increased by 9% overall. There was an decrease in the number of indicators which were recorded as Not Measured This Period (from 21% to 12%) but an increase in the number of Data Not Received indicators (from 0% to 15%).

Result	2015-16	%	2016-17	%	Trend
Target achieved	12	43%	12	46%	↑
Target not achieved	5	18%	7	27%	↓
Not Measured This Period	6	21%	3	12%	↑
Data Not Received	0	0%	4	15%	↓
No target for this measure	5	18%	0	0%	↑

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

6 July 2017

Agenda item: Shared Services and Outsourced Services in Merton Task Group – action plan update

Wards: All

Subject:

Lead officer: Ged Curran, Chief Executive

Lead member: Cllr Allison, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Contact officer: Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement

Recommendations:

- A. That the Commission discuss and comment on the executive response and action plan and note progress in the implementation of the agreed recommendations.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to set out the Executive Response and Action Plan to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to demonstrate progress against the agreed recommendations of the Shared and Outsourced Services in Merton Task Group.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. At their meeting on 14 November 2016 Cabinet considered the final report and accepted the recommendations resulting from the task group review of shared and outsourced services in Merton.
- 2.2. At the Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting on 7 March the corresponding executive response and action plan was presented.

3 EXECUTIVE RESPONSE

- 3.1. The table below provides an update on each of the actions within the agreed plan.

Recommendation	Action Agreed	Timeline	Update
<p>Recommendation 1 That the Corporate Management Team (CMT) should have a more clearly defined mandate and process to embed challenge on models of service delivery at a senior level within the organisation. This will ensure that there is more specific challenge to service managers as well as internal peer review.</p>	<p>As part of a planned review the TOM process is to be strengthened so that more direct, dedicated support – with facilitated sessions where required – to be made available to service managers as part of the TOM review/development process.</p> <p>DMTs will continue to routinely review (as part of their TOM action plan review) actions set out against the ‘organisation’ layer to review whether planned changes to delivery models need to be amended/updated.</p> <p>As part of the biannual reports already presented to Merton Improvement Board, DMTs will be asked to expressly report on progress against the ‘organisation’ layer and how it is being kept under review and MIB provide constructive challenge.</p>	<p>Late 2017</p>	<p>The biennial Target Operating Model refresh process begins in the autumn of 2017. With the oversight of CMT the process is being strengthened to ensure a consistently robust approach to the review of service delivery vehicles under the direction of each DMT.</p> <p>A Statement of Direction has been issued by CMT that directs TOM authors (service leads) clearly grounding the work with the need to challenge existing delivery models.</p> <p>The TOM Guidance has been refreshed and within the organisational layer there is an explicit requirement for service leads to expand on how reviews of delivery models have been undertaken and will continue to be undertaken. A dedicated point of contact (Head of Commercial Services) will support the process and a number of facilitated sessions to generate ideas and innovation around delivery models will be run during the development phase of the TOMs. A process for ‘make or buy’ reviews will be made available and promoted through the TOM refresh.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 That decision making on the establishment of proposed shared and outsourced services is strengthened through the production of a standardised business case that is presented to the Corporate Management Team and to Cabinet (or the relevant individual Cabinet Member for smaller services) for approval. This business case should be clearly evidenced and should include financial modelling to set out options and alternatives as well as details of other expected benefits so that vigorous challenge can be provided prior to a formal decision being made.</p>	<p>A set of guiding principles will be created to inform and support the development of bespoke business cases, along with clear questions that must be answered within each business case.</p>	<p>June 2017</p>	<p>A draft set of guiding principles has been developed based on our own learning – through discussions with officers within the organisation who have established shared/outsourced services – as a council and guidance from CIPFA. This has been designed to supplement the existing business case template that forms part of the Merton Approach to Projects (MAP) internal project management methodology. This will assist in the development of a business case for shared services.</p> <p>A toolkit for use by services considering a shared service arrangement has also been drafted that signposts users to existing resources and suggests early conversations with specific points of contact across the business.</p> <p>Officers will refine and finalise these with the outputs of the activities associated with Recommendation 6 below and present to CMT a complete pack for sign off later in the summer before presenting them to OSC for discussion.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 That a draft of the business case template is brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for discussion prior to finalising it.</p>	<p>The guiding principles and questions will be presented to OSC for discussion.</p>	<p>TBC with Head of Democratic Services</p>	<p>The Assistant Director of Business Improvement will liaise with the Head of Democratic Services to establish a suitable date for these to be presented to OSC.</p>

Recommendation	Action Agreed	Timeline	Update
<p>Recommendation 4 That Cabinet should ensure there is support provided to service managers who are exploring the feasibility of establishing a new shared or outsourced service so that these managers can draw on learning and expertise that already exists within the council. This should take the form of an on-line resource such as a checklist of issues to consider and contact details of officers who can provide advice and support. The resource should also include guidance on developing and complying with the standardised business case for the service as set out in recommendation 2 above.</p>	<p>A checklist will be developed drawing on the experience of services that have already transitioned to alternative delivery models.</p>	<p>August 2017</p>	<p>This is built into the activity set out against Recommendation 2 above.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 That the Corporate Management Team should ensure that service managers have a mandatory appraisal objective to familiarise themselves with best practice elsewhere and consider how best to incorporate this in their service delivery.</p>	<p>CMT will continue to deliver the agreed programme of leadership development over the coming 18 months.</p> <p>The TOM development/refresh process will be refined for its next iteration to include more direct, dedicated support and challenge as per response to Recommendation 1 above.</p>	<p>Ongoing to mid 2018</p> <p>June 2017</p>	<p>The programme of leadership development continues to be delivered to managers across the organisation.</p> <p>The TOM refresh guidance has been refined to include more direct, dedicated support and challenge as per response to Recommendation 1 above.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6 That the Corporate Management Team should ensure that a training or briefing resource is developed for officers in those corporate teams (such as HR, IT, finance and facilities) so that they understand the delivery model and likely support requirements of the council's shared services.</p>	<p>Work will be undertaken with representatives from services currently working in shared arrangements to develop a briefing resource for officers in corporate teams.</p>	<p>July</p>	<p>Interviews are being carried out with managers already in shared services to capture their requirements from support services (HR, Finance, IT, Facilities) and to determine where this support could be enhanced.</p> <p>This information will be used in a workshop with representatives from support services to help them understand how best to support alternative delivery arrangements. It is anticipated that the workshop will be used to co-create a briefing resource.</p>

Recommendation	Action Agreed	Timeline	Update
<p>Recommendation 7 That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission should invite the Chief Executive to present a report annually to set out how challenge has been embedded, what choices have been made by service managers on models of service delivery, what changes resulted from the challenge process and what options were rejected and why.</p>	<p>The Chief Executive, working with CMT, will respond to the invitation with a report drawing on the mechanisms set out within this report to provide an overview of how alternative delivery models are being considered and changes resulting from this process.</p>	<p>July</p>	<p>This update responds to this recommendation.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8 That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (or relevant Panel) should receive a report on the proposed establishment of large or strategically important shared or outsourced services at a point in time when there is an opportunity to have some influence on its development. There should be further reports to review the operation, performance and budget of the service 15 months after the start date and when the agreement is due for review.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CMT continues to discharge this recommendation through the forward plan mechanisms which highlights to the Commission any significant decisions on service reconfiguration.</p>

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. The work to develop guiding principles and supporting materials has involves officers across the organisation with experience of selecting and implementing alternative delivery models and a number of managers providing key corporate services.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The table within this report sets out the timescales for delivery.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The council faces considerable financial pressure in current and future years. The delivery of the activities set out in this executive response will ensure the organisation continues to deliver services in the most efficient and effective way.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Changes to service delivery models will have legal and statutory implications. Consideration of this will be incorporated within the proposed guidance/supporting information to be developed to ensure this is adequately accounted for and managed on a case by case basis.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. Changes to service delivery models will require careful assessment and management of risk. Consideration of this will be incorporated within the proposed guidance/supporting information to be developed to ensure this is adequately accounted for and managed on a case by case basis.

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

11.1. None.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. Report and recommendations arising from the scrutiny task group reviews of shared and outsourced services in Merton.

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 06 July 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Safer Merton – the challenges, successes and future work streams

Lead officer: Neil Thurlow - Community Safety Manager, Amanda Woodhall and Jeanette Chacksfield – ASB officers, Zoe Gallen – DV co-ordinator

Guest attendees: Judith Banjoko – Manager of Merton Refuge

Lead member: Cllr Edith Macauley, Cabinet member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities, Cllr Katy Need, Cabinet member for CSF and VAWG lead

Contact officer: Neil Thurlow, 0208 545 3240

Recommendations:

- A. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the contents of the report in regard to anti social behaviour (ASB) the increased demand on service and changing legislation in autumn 2017 (Heading 2.0)
 - B. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the contents of the report and increased delivery in work on the violence against women and girls (VAWG) agenda and the broadening pressures the partnership is facing in regard to this agenda (Heading 2.27)
 - C. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the challenges posed to addressing ASB and VAWG in the longer term by additional influencing factors such as the toxic trio and lack of available housing (heading 2.36)
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report and presentation will serve three functions:
 - 1.1.1 To provide a service update, and raise awareness of changing legislation, affecting Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) work within the borough
 - 1.1.2 To provide an update and offer reassurance over how Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) services are delivered within the London Borough of Merton
 - 1.1.3 To provide members the opportunity to hear from the manager of Merton's refuge to better understand what services clients in the refuge access and how they, and their children (where applicable), are supported throughout their stay
- 1.2. **ASB headlines**
 - 1.2.1 2016-17 has been a busy year within the field of ASB. Two officers have dealt with 781 cases, have worked with Police to roll out the use of Community Protection Notices, implement ASB closure orders and are commencing work to prepare for the transition away from the current Controlled Drinking Zone legislation and into the new Public Space Protection Orders.

- 1.2.2 ASB remains a key priority for our residents and is also a priority for the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, who has included this challenge within the MOPAC Police and Crime Plan 2017-21
- 1.2.3 We know that ASB remains a priority for members and that our community expects action to be taken against perpetrators wherever the evidence allows
- 1.3. **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) headlines**
- 1.3.1 Over the last 12 months Merton has further established itself as a borough committed to tackling VAWG and being innovative in how we approach this work.
- 1.3.2 Merton benefits from having established and existing quality services in three major areas of work within the VAWG field and we are about to embark upon further work to develop delivery in an additional six.
- 1.3.3 In September 2016 Merton became only the second London borough to roll out the UK Says NO MORE campaign and in November was the first to adopt the Ask Angela programme too. Both of these campaigns were designed to raise awareness and condemnation around both domestic and sexual violence alongside raising awareness of the support services available to victims of these crimes
- 1.3.4 The adoption of both schemes is something which elected members have supported and are of importance to all parties. Merton's position as a lead authority in adopting and leading on these campaigns has benefited local residents and will continue to do so as we move forwards
- 1.4. **Refuge provision**
- 1.4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission will be presented with a detailed, verbal presentation of Merton's commissioned refuge provision.
- 1.4.2 The refuge provides beds for 17 women and up to 25 children who are fleeing domestic violence and abuse
- 1.4.3 This provision serves victims of DV from across the county and this presentation will advise members on how refuge places are allocated, what support packages are offered to victims as they reside within the refuge, how clients move on to secondary housing stages and also how children are supported when living within the property
- 1.4.4 Judith Banjoko, DVA Services Manager at Housing for Women will be leading on the discussion for the refuge.
- 2 **DETAIL OF ASB DELIVERY:**
- 2.1. ASB is a key priority for residents within Merton. This is evidenced from previous year's residents' surveys, reports from elected members and through Safer Merton's, and the wider partnerships, community engagement work.
- 2.2. In advance of Safer Merton drafting the Community Safety Partnerships strategic assessment for 2017-19 we undertook a residents survey and, again, ASB was a key feature of concerns raised

- 2.3. During 2016 the ASB service undertook a business improvement review with the councils Business Improvement Team. This review was undertaken to ensure that Safer Merton could deliver the best outcomes for residents with the limited resources available and to identify where service improvement could be made
- 2.4. Undertaking this review the business improvement team reviewed case details, observed how officers utilise their time, observed where time pressures were placed on officers and by whom, investigated where and how demand was managed and driven as well as looking at the ASB case management system to ascertain where service efficiencies could be made.
- 2.5. The team reviewed three years' worth of ASB data (calendar years 2014-2016) to ensure that the recommendations made were evidenced based and to ensure that service demand management was understood.
- 2.6. The review presented some interesting facts and figures in regard to how our ASB service was accessed, what service outcomes were being requested and what residents perceived to constitute ASB. These headlines (drawn from three years data) stated that:
- 2.6.1 80% of all work demand for the ASB service comes via two categories
- (i) Neighbourhood Disputes
 - (ii) Environmental crime (including dog fouling)
- 2.6.2 Within neighbourhood dispute the biggest reason for referral was noise.
- (i) The nature of noise is such that, legally, they would be classified as living noise as opposed to statutory noise nuisance which would enable the environmental health team to take action.
 - (ii) The facts of this present Safer Merton and/or Environmental Health with little to no opportunity to enforce.
- 2.6.3 As a result of this finding, in regard to these two volume areas, the most tangible outcome for these clients is an offer to refer both parties for independent mediation services
- 2.6.4 Mediation, as a service, was decommissioned at the end of 2015-16 and is now spoc purchased based on need. The cost of spoc purchasing mediation is a significant financial pressure on the Safer Merton budget due to the difficulty in correctly forecasting demand each year. The average cost for a mediation case, from start to finish, is £400
- 2.6.5 For financial year 2016-17 the service invested £2,750 in mediation referral
- 2.6.6 The work and review of demand management identified that the main route(s) to contact the ASB team are primarily via email, followed by telephone. With the introduction and rollout of e5, we envisage that, over the coming months, email management will become easier.
- 2.6.7 However, the latter option, of direct telephone contact can be very resource intensive and with no current routes to "screen out" calls the ASB team can spend long time periods discussing matters which have no tangible outcome option

- 2.6.8 The nature of phone calls presents the service with challenges in ascertaining, at a swift pace, details of the ASB especially in regard to what is occurring, when and by whom.
- 2.6.9 Over a third of all initial telephone calls to Safer Merton’s ASB service result in LBM referring the complainant out of our service to either their social landlord or to another service area.
- 2.6.10 These referrals impact on service delivery due of “lost officer time”. These outcome light phone calls prevent officers from supporting other victims of ASB.
- 2.6.11 Last year’s O&S committee requested information around mental health as a primary demand driver for the ASB service. Looking at the three years data we know that less than one percent of all initial contact/referral can be identified as being in relation to mental health concerns
- 2.6.12 Two other key facts which O&S committee may be interested in noting is that reports of street drinking and/or drug use or dealing account for just 5% of call demand throughout 2016. This equates to 33 and 30 contacts respectively. Detailed figures were previously provided in a report to the Commission in 2016.
- 2.6.13 Work on mental health, alongside substance misuse and alcohol misuse is picked up and managed via another forum, which is discussed in section 2.19
- 2.6.14 Demand for the service shows an established pattern. Reviewing three years’ worth of data the service is placed under more stress between the spring and summer months of April to September with July and August being the absolute peak demand period.
- 2.6.15 Over 36 months January is consistently the month with least demand

2.7. How are we going to address these headlines?

2.7.1 There is a work programme being developed to look at how we better manage demand being placed on services. This includes looking at how we maximise efficiencies through CRM and exploring whether we can introduce a revised phone process to, sign post residents to the correct service at the point of entry and to, hopefully, reduce wasted officer time in fielding queries which Safer Merton have no control in solving

2.7.2 This pattern of increased demand goes back to 2013/14

Financial year	Number of cases (previous year variation)	Number of cases requiring referral outside of ASB (% of case volume)	Numbers of ASB officers
2013/14	547	293 (54%)	3
2014/15	609 (+62)	372 (61%)	3
2015/16	603 (-6)	308 (51%)	2.5 (half the year with 3, half with 2)
2016/17	781 (+178)	300 (38%)	2

- 2.7.3 The table above clearly shows the annual increase in service calls year on year and, in the case of financial year 2016/17 the significant drop in cases not being taken on by the ASB team
- 2.7.4 The facts of increased demand, reduced referral to third parties and, alongside areas of improvement identified in the review means that it is essential we develop processes to maximise outcomes within our very limited resource
- 2.7.5 It should be noted by the O&S committees that since the midpoint of 2015/16 the ASB service has been operating with a third less resource as three caseworkers were reduced and we now deliver our work with two ASB caseworkers.
- 2.7.6 The need to better manage demand at the “front end” is vital if we are to continue delivering a good service on the backdrop of increased demand and limited staffing.
- 2.8. The future of ASB nationally, as within Merton, is one of change.
- 2.9. As a service we need to undertake more process specific work, as previously mentioned, to better address demand management which will allow our residents and businesses to be clear around what matters the London Borough of Merton’s ASB service can, and cannot, address.
- 2.10. Work will also be undertaken to look at how best to engage residents with a move to promote more initial engagement via online referral pathways rather than direct entry.
- 2.11. New legislation comes into force from 21 October 2017 where the current Controlled Drinking Zone legislation will be replaced by Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).
- 2.12. The legislation which underpins the PSPO means that we can directly transfer the borough wide controlled drinking zone into a PSPO for a three year period taking us to October 2020 at which formal reviews must be undertaken to ascertain its future use.
- 2.13. It would be expected that consultation for future PSPOs will commence in the spring 2020 to allow us to evidence where a future PSPO may be required
- 2.14. The new PSPO legislation also absorbs dog control orders and ASB gating closure powers, both of which can be used to address key local concerns.
- 2.15. Work is underway to look at how these will be consulted on and embedded within the partnerships enforcement toolkit.
- 2.16. In the coming months the ASB team will work with the South London Legal Partnership to develop and embed ASB policy and practice enabling LBM, and/or its delegated partners, to issue enforcement notices.
- 2.17. These notices will come via Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and/or Notices (CPNs) as well as FPNs for offences under the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014. Breaches of the CPNs or non-payment of fines can result in custodial sentencing

- 2.18. In order to expand the remit and offer of the ASB service, alongside exploring the possibilities of commercial income generation, Safer Merton's ASB team have purchased three mobile CCTV cameras.
- 2.18.1 Running off the 4G network these cameras are deployed to areas where ASB and/or low level crime is occurring to allow us to provide reassurance to those affected, identify and capture the issues which are occurring as well as to maximise possibilities to take action against those perpetrating crimes.
- 2.18.2 The tasking of these cameras is held via the locations board which meets monthly and is via an associated request form. **The form is attached in the appendices of this report**
- 2.19. In order to better manage the vulnerable, exploited and lower level, consistent offenders, (which include those with drug, alcohol and/or mental health illnesses), the Community Safety Partnership have introduced a new risk management board- the Community Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (CMARAC).
- 2.20. CMARAC was introduced in July 2016 as a new board with a specific function, to manage risk of victims and offenders, whom are over 18 and who have complex needs but do not meet threshold for statutory intervention
- 2.20.1 The CMARAC meets monthly under a co-chairing agreement between the Head of Community Safety and Metropolitan Police Detective Chief Inspector.
- 2.20.2 The meeting has a breadth of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sector representatives whom discuss cases, allocate actions and/or make referrals to more specialised intervention services to minimise future risks improving the quality of life for that person or the wider community affected by that individuals behaviour
- 2.20.3 In the nine months to financial year end, CMARAC heard 42 cases of varying levels of severity.
- 2.20.4 The meeting, and the CMARAC risk assessment process, has started to generate positive outcomes for many people through providing additional support, enforcing against those exploiting the vulnerable as well as accessing more acute services such as detox and rehabilitation services for personal with multiple and/or complex needs.
- 2.20.5 The meeting does face challenges with a core group of six whose behaviours and needs are so complex they are discussed constantly with their risk management plans reviewed
- 2.20.6 Our CMARAC has been recognised as one of best practice due to its breadth of membership, focus of discussion and clarity of action allocation of actions.
- 2.20.7 In April 2017 the Home Office attended the meeting to observe and capture key learning points in order to develop practice for the county. The outcomes of the observation will be shared following the conclusion of their work to review national practices
- 2.20.8 The CMARAC risk manages complex adult cases whose behaviour puts significant pressure on resources from across the partnership. By managing

these people in a more co-ordinated and holistic manner leads to real time and financial savings for all of those involved

2.21. **DETAIL OF VAWG DELIVERY**

2.22. The Home Office define VAWG as:

‘Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm of suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life’.

2.23. VAWG covers nine strands of work:

- Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Sexual violence
- Abuse and exploitation
- Stalking (and Harassment)
- Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Crime committed in the name of ‘honour’
- Faith Based Abuse

2.24. It is worth noting at this juncture that, despite the title, Merton’s work on VAWG also acknowledges, and includes men and boys as victims as well as perpetrators.

2.25. The rationale for this is that, whilst VAWG crimes disproportionately affect females, we know that men and boys, especially those with vulnerabilities, can also be victims to some of these crimes.

2.26. The partnership has an established, and resilient, offer in Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Female Genital Mutilation

2.27. At this time, we, as a partnership, do not have such detailed and embedded practices in the remaining six strands of VAWG business. However, these strands will receive significant development over the next 12 months

2.28. During 2016-17 the VAWG board worked to develop and deliver a four year strategic work plan.

2.29. This plan, running from 2016-2020, and in line with the Home Office VAWG strategy and MOPAC VAWG strategy is based on four principles:

2.29.1 **1. Coordination**

Aim: Develop a coordination multi-agency approach

How: Ensuring that the response to VAWG is shared by all stakeholders, embedded into service plans and coordinated effectively.

2.22.2 **2. Prevention**

Aim: Changing attitudes and preventing violence.

How: Raising awareness through campaigns; safeguarding and educating children and young people; early identification, intervention and training

2.22.3 **3. Provision**

Aim: Improve provision and specialist support services which are essential in enabling people to end violence in their lives and recover from the damaging effects of abuse.

How: Provide a range of services to meet the needs of victims and survivors; practical and emotional support, emergency and acute services; access to legal advice and support, refuge and safe accommodation

2.22.4 **4. Protection**

Aim: To provide effective response to perpetrators outside of and within the criminal justice system.

How: Effective investigation; prosecution; victim support and protection; perpetrator interventions.

2.30. The plan breaks down outcomes to be achieved during each financial year. The headlines for year one (2016-17) with an update on their completion rate are as follows:

2.30.1 Year 1 (2016-17):

(i) The London Borough of Merton to be a fully accredited partner in a national campaign to tackle Domestic and Sexual Violence.

Work completed with Merton becoming the second London borough to adopt the UK Says NO MORE campaign. Merton is the biggest supporter of this work and now has an employee as one of their faces for their national 2017-18 campaign

Merton was also the first London Borough to adopt the "Ask Angela" campaign which works to address sexual violence within the night time economy. Based on our work this campaign has now been adopted by the Metropolitan Police who are now rolling this out across the city

(ii) The Safer Merton Partnership to launch our revised VAWG mission statement

Work completed with the introduction of a four year strategy developed and signed off in conjunction with partners

(iii) The Safer Merton Partnership to work with victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and encourage reporting of incidents to achieve our ambition of increasing victims' access to services year on year

Work undertaken through the campaigns resulted in some increases in reports for quarters 1-3 however reporting in quarter 4 reduced. The reduction may coincide with there being no sustained promotion during these months

(iv) To undertake a full DVA profile for the borough

Completed. The headlines of this report are attached as an appendix to this report

(v) Maintain and build upon our successful work in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Completed. The work around CSE continues at pace with widening of linkages between CSE and other areas of exploitation being developed.

2.23.2 The strategy sets out the aspirations for year two (2017-18) as:

- (i) Conduct a review of our VAWG offer to ensure that our offer(s) are fit for purpose and meet current and predicted needs
- (ii) Develop and enhance stronger links with our third sector providers to improve the offer for our victims
- (iii) Develop and implement action plans to improve our understanding of success, challenge and areas of growth across the VAWG spectrum ensuring that we respond to these needs appropriately
- (iv) To review our outcomes achieved during 2016/17 undertaking relevant reviews as well as setting new targets for the coming year

2.23.3 The VAWG strategy is attached as an appendix to this report

2.24 How do we deliver VAWG in Merton?

2.24.1 Violence against Women and Girls related services are commissioned through our VAWG Partnership including our Domestic Violence One Stop Shop, Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) and our Domestic Violence Refuge. We also utilise MOPAC funding to support gangs work including girls and gangs and the Redthread service amongst other

2.24.2 Alongside our voluntary sector commissioned services, and those not commissioned but accessed locally, we have enhanced our partnership offer through, for example, the Transforming (Troubled) Families service, 'Turning around' 100% (370) of high need 'troubled families' between 2011 and 2015, achieving some of the highest levels of success in London and as an early adopter/pilot for phase two already achieving 26% of our target which demonstrates excellent progress compared to other London Boroughs.

2.24.3 Aside from the strategy and the work which sites under that the borough maintains a strong delivery arm. To highlight each strand is not appropriate for such a report but members are asked to note some key pieces of information

2.25 Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and MARAC

2.25.1 DVA within Merton underwent a significant analytical review in 2016.

2.25.2 Safer Merton analysed five years' worth of DVA data to ascertain seasonal patterns and trends and also undertook a "deep dive" of 12 months reported crime to capture a fuller, data rich picture of the challenges we face.

2.25.3 The headlines of this review are captured below. Please note these figures come from reported DVA and as such we know that, in reality, the figures will be higher as most victims are victimised numerous times before making that call for help:

2.25.3.1 1 in 20 people in Merton are directly affected by DVA

2.25.3.2 The majority of DVA occurs in the family home

- 2.25.3.3 Five wards within the borough account for 40% of all reported DVA
- 2.25.3.4 The peaks for DVA reporting come on Saturday. The peak time range is 13:00-20:00 and the peak months for reporting are August and December
- 2.25.3.5 There is no evidenced link within Merton that large sporting events have a direct impact on DVA
- 2.25.3.6 The estimated cost of DVA, to Merton's economy is £13.2m per year
- 2.25.4 A info graphic is contained within the appendices for future reference (this has been shared with members previously alongside the full DVA report)
- 2.25.5 As with all crimes there are differing "severities" of incident. Each DVA crime is assessed as a low, medium or high risk case based on an established assessment framework.
- 2.25.6 For those victims whom are assessed as being at "high risk" the borough reviews these cases in a multi-agency format.
- 2.25.7 It is important to note that, all victims, regardless of assessed level of risk, are offered support. This support is of varying levels of intervention but no one is left without an option to access help
- 2.25.8 For those victims whom are high risk, Merton continues to hold DVA Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (DVA MARAC) on three weekly cycles.
- 2.25.9 Chaired by the Community Safety Units Police Inspector, and with a regular, core membership, upwards of 15 partner agencies, present at all times we are able to run an effective meeting which allows us to consider how we manage risk to these victims and what actions should be allocated within their tailored safety plan
- 2.25.10 To ensure that our DV MARAC operates in the most efficient and effective manner we have now undertaken a DV MARAC review, via a self-assessment and subsequently established a MARAC steering group.
- 2.25.11 These additional layers of governance will enable us to ensure that as a partnership and as a commissioner of service, we are able to continually develop and improve our offer of support to victims.
- 2.25.12 These reviews also ensure that the partnership is able to offer the best safeguarding options to our high risk victims as we are able to and that Merton can "meet" its projected repeat MARAC representation rate (Safer Lives advise that every borough should expect to see a repeat victimisation rate of 30-40% annually).
- 2.25.13 Over the financial year 2016-17 the MARAC heard 299 cases of which 94 repeats. These figures represent a repeat rate of 31% which is within Safer Lives guidance.

2.26 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

- 2.26.1 For Merton, on average, 60 to 70 children/young people, with an identified CSE risk are presented at the CSE MASE panel. The majority of the children discussed at the MASE are aged 13 -16 years old.
- 2.26.2 During 2016/17 this group broke down to 96% female and 4% male. Of the female group 62% came from BAME communities

- 2.26.3 39% of those who had a MASE referral also had a Missing episode, however this is only a small proportion of all those who go missing from home or care. The majority of children known to the MASE live in our most deprived wards Pollards Hill, Figges March, Ravensbury and St Helier. As at 31st March 40 children were open to the MASE of these 25% were LAC (10YP) 20% were care leavers (8CYP) and 10% were CP (4CYP). The majority of CSE cases are open to the MASE panel for a year.
- 2.26.4 Merton's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) strategy was re-launched in 2013 and refreshed in 2015 supported by intelligence from our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and peer review on CSE. Our Strategy provides clear and practical guidance for social workers and other practitioners dealing with cases where there is suspected and confirmed child/young person sexual exploitation.
- 2.26.5 Merton's management oversight of children who are at risk/subject of sexual exploitation, children missing from home or care and children missing education is maintained at three multi agency panels where information is shared and triangulated. Officers join up the 'risk dots' between these panels.
- Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Panel (MASE)
 - Missing from Home or Care Panel (Multi agency representation)
 - Children Missing Education Panel (Multi agency representation)
- 2.26.6 Strategic thematic issues are identified by officers and during audits. These are discussed and challenged at a senior management level and at the Promote and Protect Young People (PYPP), a thematic subgroup of the MSCB and at the Executive group of the MSCB in Merton referred to as the Business Implementation Group (BIG).

2.27 **VAWG – wider context and emerging pressures**

- 2.27.1 As a partnership we are working collectively to improve our work to address VAWG and to ensure that all agencies embed best practice within their organisation.
- 2.27.2 VAWG is a key priority for us all and is a stated priority for the Mayor of London within his Police and Crime Plan 2017-21.
- 2.27.3 As we develop and continue to seek innovation in our work it is important that the O&S committee are aware of, and acknowledge the need for Merton to respond to new and emerging risks.
- 2.27.4 Since late 2016 the borough has seen an increase in suspected brothels opening within each town centre area. Prior to this Merton did not have a prostitution issue whether that be on street or of street.
- 2.27.5 Currently the borough is witness to approximately three new premises opening each month. Processes are in place to assess the nature and accuracy of such claims, ascertain quickly who is involved within the premise and we look to understand who is using these services
- 2.27.6 What remains unclear, at this time, is the question "why Merton?" We will do all we can to answer this question, safeguard the women who are being exploited

- and forced to work within these properties and will tackle the pimps/madams who are run such businesses
- 2.27.7 We will also work with landlords to support them in tackling this issue and, where appropriate, seek to take action against those whom contribute to this criminal behaviour
- 2.27.8 It is worth noting that there remains no reported on street prostitution within the boroughs boundaries.
- 2.28 Entwined within brothels and the sex trade comes another risk –Human Trafficking.
- 2.29 The Human Trafficking Act 2015 places statutory duty on local authorities to notify the Home Office when it is considered that a trafficked person is “identified”.
- 2.30 Current Home Office figures show there is an approximate 50:50 split of male and females whom are trafficked, that forced labour and domestic servitude are becoming more recognised and that child trafficking is becoming more prevalent due to challenges such as county lines, gang activity and child sexual exploitation.
- 2.31 Following the launch of a cross party initiative, led by The Human Trafficking Foundation, we are now scoping our response to this issue. The partnership will soon have upwards of seven leads who will receive train the trainer training. We will be reviewing our working practices around responding to the safeguarding needs of these vulnerable people as well as participating in London wide mapping of resource and demand. A scoping document is attached for members in the appendices which sets out the needs analysis
- 2.31.1 The pathways for Merton’s response to trafficking are being developed. Any response which Merton does commit to will need to come via existing funding however as no additional funding for trafficked victims is provided by the government.
- 2.32 **VAWG next steps and plans for the coming 12 months**
- 2.32.1 Recruitment of a VAWG co-ordinator
- 2.32.2 The partnership to develop at speed, and with confidence that VAWG practice would be embedded across the partnership, the VAWG board identified the need to have a lead officer to develop the wider VAWG work offer.
- 2.32.3 Following a successful bidding process undertaken with the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) we have secured funding to recruit an officer to do this work. MOPAC will fund this role for 12 months during which time we will work to embed under developed strands of VAWG across the partnership.
- 2.31 Commissioning 2018-21
- 2.31.1 Merton currently commissions a variety of services for victims and, to a lesser extent, perpetrators of DVA. The contracts for our Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) and Refuge provision come to an end on 31-03-2018 and as such work is underway to commission for a new service to start in April 2018
- 2.31.2 Our current IDVA provision is contracted to Victim Support. IDVAs work with our medium and high risk victims of DVA to support them and work with these victims to develop safety planning, coping mechanisms and explore

wider education, training or employment needs to help prepare and support victims in their choices around their life including for aspects such as whether to maintain residing with, maintain contact with and/or move away from the perpetrator

- 2.31.3 The second largest contract for victims of DVA comes via the Merton refuge provision Commissioned by adult social care our refuge is ran by Housing4Women who will be presenting at the meeting
- 2.31.6 The refuge houses up to 21 women as part of immediate care. The women staying in the refuge will, most likely, not come from Merton due to the need for victims to be safe from the perpetrator whom they are escaping from
- 2.31.7 The refuge offers support for children and young people too with many women living within the refuge whilst maintaining parental responsibility for their children
- 2.31.8 As both contracts expire simultaneously the council are taking this opportunity to look at how to best achieve value for money and are undertaking a joint commissioning process.
- 2.31.9 It is envisage that this will be a contract for three years with the option to extend for a further 12 or 24 months depending on the success of the first three years, future finance pressures, external implications on localised agendas and/or opportunities to undergo a further commissioning process alongside other boroughs and/or partner agencies
- 2.31.10 it is envisaged that Merton will award contract by the end of 2017 to allow for a period of three months to mobilise the new contract and to ensure the new service is fully operational from 01 April 2018. Members will be advised of the outcomes of this process in accordance with permitted schedules
- 2.32 Home Office innovation bids
 - 2.32.1 The partnership recognises the need to invest and develop wider pieces of work to positively impact on reducing VAWG crimes. Working with the surrounding boroughs of Kingston, Richmond and Wandsworth we await Home Office announcement on three funding bids to allow us to invest in new approaches to work.
 - 2.32.2 One of the bids, which we await announcement from, is the creation of a new DVA court. Working with Wimbledon magistrates we aim to bring in a formalised DVA court process where a minimum one magistrate is fully trained around DVA and the impact this has on the victims and communities. The bid, if successful, will allow us to bring in additional support for victims throughout the criminal justice pathway but, should we not receive the funds, we will work with the courts to look at where we may make system improvements for victims affected by this crime.
 - 2.32.3 We are also working with our third sector partners to develop further bids to bring funding into the borough as we know there are marginalised sections of the community whom are victims of VAWG but whom are reluctant to engage
- 2.33 MOPAC Police and Crime Plan (PCP)

2.33.1 The PCP, 2017-21, sets out the Mayors of London vision on crime reduction and community safety. The strategy has five key work streams which MOPAC expect local authorities to work to with the Police.

The PCPs five themes are:

- Neighbourhood policing
- Safeguarding children – including knife crime and gangs
- VAWG
- Developing the criminal justice system
- Working to address hate crime and extremism in all its forms

2.34 Cross boarder working re county lines and links to gangs

2.34.1 Linking to the safeguarding agenda from the MOPAC PCP we are developing our cross board work around county lines and gangs. These two elements also straddle challenges such as human trafficking and criminal justice work.

2.35 Embedding Think Family

2.35.1 The MSCB's number one priority for 2017-2019 is Think Family that is, to ensure that all partners support children and adults in our most vulnerable families to reduce risk and ensure improved outcomes. Signs of vulnerability include

- Experience poor mental health,
- Struggle with substance misuse,
- Are affected by domestic abuse,
- Parents with learning difficulties that may affect their ability to respond to the changing needs of their children

2.35.2 The evidence nationally and locally also shows that vulnerable families are best supported when there is effective joint working between adult and children facing services. When professionals understand the underlying causes of issues like neglect and other form of abuse and offer effective support early before these problems get worse.

2.35.3 The Social Care Institute for Excellence notes that an effective Think child, think parent, think family approach was based on the following principles

- No wrong door – contact with any service offers an open door into a system of joined-up support; based on more coordination between adult and children's services.
- Looking at the whole family – services working with both adults and children take into account family circumstances and responsibilities.
- Providing support tailored to need – working with families to agree a package of support best suited to their particular situation

2.35.4 Building on family strengths – practitioners work in partnerships with families recognising and promoting resilience and helping them to build their capabilities. Think Family is the Board's first priority and the focus is on children's and adult facing service working together to ensure that there is a seamless offer of help

and support to both parents and children; this includes joint assessments and joint interventions. A Think Family Coordinator has been appointed to help embed 'Think Family' across adults and children's services.

2.36 Thematic need for the Community Safety Partnership agenda

- 2.37 ASB, VAWG and those involved in crime generally, rarely commit crimes without experiencing additional needs or challenges
- 2.38 Work on the 2016 DV profile and data analysis of MASH referrals shows significant numbers of cases where one, or more, of the toxic trio were present in that clients life
- 2.39 The trigger trio is made up of Alcohol, Drugs and Mental Health. All of these areas, if not managed at the onset, can have detrimental impacts on a person's life and for many of our clients they experience two or even all three of these factors.
- 2.40 To better manage these clients in the community we work with agencies such as Catch-22 and Engage Merton to help manage need
- 2.41 Alongside the toxic trio another key issue facing our victims and perpetrators (when motivated to leave a life of crime), if lack of accessible and affordable housing. Having properties available where we can safely move victims of DVA, human trafficking etc. quickly and effectively is essential to any long term housing strategy.
- 2.41.4 To aid this work we will explore the viability and benefits to Merton joining the Pan London Housing Reciprocal Service. Organised, ran and managed by Safer London, the reciprocal programme is designed to provide local authorities and social landlords with more options in regard to relocating victims of DVA within the city. We will work with the councils housing service and borough social landlords to ensure that we maximise opportunities to sign up to this programme.
- 2.42 The work on ASB and VAWG is moving at a fast pace. Merton remains in the bottom three in regard to crime figures but this does not negate the need to do more
- 2.43 As our partnership continues to develop and strengthen and as the work of the Community Safety Partnership becomes ever more entwined to that of MOPACs Police and Crime Plan we will seek to develop a more refined, focused service for the community.
- 2.44 Safer Merton remains a small team, carrying a large portfolio of need which presents challenge but also opportunity as innovation in how we deliver such portfolios is core to our future

2.45 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.45.4 There are no alternative options for this work
- 2.45.5 The ASB work needs to be undertaken due to legislative changes and due to service plans, the Safer Merton TOM and Community Safety Partnerships

strategic assessment, along with MOPACs Police and Crime Plan, making this agenda a priority

2.45.6 The VAWG work is also subject to service planning, Safer Merton TOM, VAWG four year strategy and the MOPAC Police and Crime plan. MOPAC are also funding the years VAWG co-ordinator post and expect that the London Borough of Merton achieves set outcomes based on the funding agreements

2.46 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

2.46.4 There are two areas of work where consultation will be required

2.46.5 In regard to the DVA commissioning, a market warming will be held in July to capture provider feedback on our proposals of need and to confirm whether our requests are feasible within the financial parameters stated

2.46.6 There will be some consultation taking place around the dog control orders within the Public Space Protection Order transition. This will be lead on by Parks and Greenspace management

2.46.7 There is no consultation planned for changing the ASB practice and for driving down frontend demand via instantaneous access to service

2.47 TIMETABLE

2.47.4 Commissioning timetable for our Domestic Violence and Abuse contract (indicative of desired timeframes and for information only)

Month	Area of work
June	Deliver specification
July	Complete specification Host market warming event etc.
August	Tender process opens
Late October	Tender process closes
Late November	Scoring and evaluation completed
Late December	Contract award announced
January – March	Mobilisation of new contract
April	New service provision goes live

2.47.5 Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) timeframe

2.47.6 As mentioned within the document the new PSPOs come into force from 21 October 2017

2.47.7 It is envisaged that consultation with dog walkers will be undertaken during the months of July and August ready for implementation in October

2.47.8 Work on gating closure orders will be subject to local consultation at the time and will operate via an agreed procedure and process

2.48 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

2.48.4 DVA within Merton costs the community an estimated £13.2m per year.

2.48.5 As a partnership we invest in aftercare provision via the IDVAs and refuge. The funding for these resources are pooled from a range of areas and funding streams

2.48.6 Current and projected investment is below

	2017-18 pa	2018-2021 pa	Funding source
IDVAs	£129,500	£164,500	Combined funding from MOPAC, Safer Merton and, from 2018 CSF
Refuge inc detached work	£138,075	£138,075	Supported Housing via adult social care

2.48.7 Please note that the investment for 2018-21 may fluctuate prior to tender processes being implemented due to funding demands

2.49 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

2.49.4 N/A

2.50 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

2.50.4 Domestic Violence and Abuse can have major implications on community cohesion. With 1 in 20 residents affected by this crime the partnerships work in supporting victims, taking action against perpetrators and ensuring that our communities understand the work we are doing on this subject is vital in achieving our ambitions for more victims to report and for more friends, family and/or neighbours to report matters of concern

2.51 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

2.51.4 As Safer Merton oversee the work, as lead service, the team ensure that all crime and disorder concerns are considered within this work

2.52 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

2.52.4 N/A

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

11.2 Appendix 1 - CCTV tasking form

11.3 Appendix 2 - VAWG Strategy 2016-2020

11.4 Appendix 3 - DVA infographic

2.54 BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.54.4 None

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Overt CCTV Request

“In October 2016 the Safer Merton team invested in three deployable, overt, CCTV cameras for use to address partnership related issues.

These cameras offer full 360 rotation and full pan, tilt and zoom capability. Images can be viewed anywhere in the world due to the cameras running over the 4G network.

Deployment of these cameras will be managed by Locations Board to ensure there is an accountability process in place for tasking's and monitoring.

The cameras need to be used to address partnership related issues which cannot be solved easily and do not replace the need for physical presence and problem solving.

To request a camera please submit your completed form to the Safer Merton team, a minimum of eight days before the next Locations Board meeting, to – safermerton@merton.gov.uk.

Following receipt of the request Safer Merton will assess and evaluate the application prior to wider discussion/agreement of tasking. Please note you may have your form returned for more information and/or rejected if the problem isn't shared beyond one service.

Overt CCTV Request

Shaded boxes completed by Safer Merton
 Expand boxes as required to address the ??

Date of request		Request Ref:
Requesting Department		
Requesting officer		Contact phone
E-Mail		

Describe the problem (who what where when) crime/asb/other	
Where do you want the camera located (As precisely as practicable)	
What departments and agencies are actively engaged in addressing this problem	
How will the camera deployment contribute to solve the problem	

What other tactics have been tried to date (necessary)	
How long do you want the camera deployed	
What are the key times/days monitoring will take place	
Who will/Where will the monitoring be done	
What intrusion will this have on others not connected to the problem(proportionate)	
What is the tactical plan to respond to the real time viewing of an incident	
Out of hours contact	Name number
	Name number
Do you require the footage as intelligence and/or as evidence	

Approved/rejected	Name and date	
Rationale for decision Balance of intrusion and prevention of crime and disorder		
Deployed date	Deployment completed	Duration Days Hours
Outcomes		
Budget Code if		

charged	
---------	--

Charge made for deployment	YES/NO
Charge Amount	£ .

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
Safer Merton Strategic Work Plan 2016 – 2020

What is VAWG?

Violence Against Women and Girls is a major social problem that has wide reaching consequences; impact on physical and mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse, homelessness, anti-social behavior, social exclusion and poverty. Not only are victims seriously affected but children, family, friends and the wider community is also affected; it touches individuals of all ages, cultures, genders, economic status and religious background.

In 2010 the Government published “Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls” (VAWG hereafter) strategy which provided the framework for a greater emphasis on tackling all forms of violence against women and girls. That document has been superseded by the Home Office Ending Violence Against Women and Girls 2016-2020 strategy. Both of these strategies form the basis of this action plan.



VAWG_Strategy_2016-2020.pdf

This action plan acknowledges that VAWG is an equality and human rights issue which forms the golden thread to delivering this action plan. The majority of victims are women and girls, however, the “Safeguarding our Future” Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, Strategic Plan 2014-17 recognises that men and boys can also be victims of the crimes listed under VAWG.

The Safer Merton Partnership has adopted the Home Office definition of Violence Against Women and Girls:

‘Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm of suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life’.

VAWG includes the following crime types:

- Domestic abuse
- Sexual violence
- Abuse and exploitation
- Stalking (and Harassment)
- Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Crime committed in the name of ‘honour’
- Faith Based Abuse

Merton's VAWG strategic aims are to engender an integrated, evidence-based and outcomes-focused approach to tackling all forms of VAWG across the borough. Over the next four years the partnership will foster and develop an approach which coordinates strategic and operational planning alongside activity from a wide range of partners involved in addressing VAWG issues.

The strategic aims promote closer coordination in the areas of identification and reporting of VAWG, strategic planning, commissioning, delivery of interventions and services alongside monitoring of outputs and outcomes. In so doing, they strive to create effective and efficient responses to VAWG. We aim to meet the needs of all those who are victims/survivors and/or perpetrators of VAWG, as well as those who are at risk of the same.

The strategic aims outline four priority areas in tackling VAWG and domestic abuse, which are:

- **Preventing VAWG**

Prevention work should operate at a community, family and individual level. It should focus on awareness raising and attitudinal change to reduce acceptance of VAWG. Early intervention work should provide opportunities to prevent VAWG and to tackle its negative consequences. Work should focus on raising awareness of the risk factors and indicators of VAWG as well as how and where victims/survivors and those at risk can be supported. A key purpose of prevention and early intervention work is to break the cycle of violence in which patterns of victimisation and perpetration are repeated by generations of the same family and/or community. Universal services, such as healthcare, schools and children's centres, can play a significant role in delivering prevention and early intervention work.

- **Providing accessible, evidence-based, holistic support to people who have experienced or are at risk of VAWG**

This work support should deliver improved outcomes for individuals, families and communities by enabling people to access support addressing the risk factors and explaining the consequences of perpetrating VAWG.

- **Implementing effective systems and interventions for working with perpetrators.**

Our interventions should seek to identify perpetrators holding them accountable for their actions. We will also look to support them to understand the consequences of their behaviour and look to achieve behavioural change. Working with perpetrators and educating communities should, over time, lead to reduced numbers of victims, increased safety for pre-existing victims/survivors and a reduction in perpetration.

- **Fostering an integrated and coordinated approach to tackling VAWG.**

Undertaking work in this area will result in shared practice, shared policy decision making and writing and a more holistic, partnership lead approach to preventing and tackling VAWG within the London Borough of Merton.

The Strategic Plan

In order to deliver the four strategic aims this action plan is split into to four priority themes;

1. Coordination

Aim: Develop a coordination multi-agency approach

How: Ensuring that the response to VAWG is shared by all stakeholders, embedded into service plans and coordinated effectively.

2. Prevention

Aim: Changing attitudes and preventing violence.

How: Raising awareness through campaigns; safeguarding and educating children and young people; early identification, intervention and training

3. Provision

Aim: Improve provision and specialist support services which are essential in enabling people to end violence in their lives and recover from the damaging effects of abuse.

How: Provide a range of services to meet the needs of victims and survivors; practical and emotional support, emergency and acute services; access to legal advice and support, refuge and safe accommodation

4. Protection

Aim: To provide effective response to perpetrators outside of and within the criminal justice system.

How: Effective investigation; prosecution; victim support and protection; perpetrator interventions.

Our vision

The VAWG strategic plan 2016-2020 is overseen and delivered by the Safer Merton VAWG board. Our aims are to reduce all forms of VAWG whilst increasing the public confidence to raise concerns, report and challenge of attitudes within the borough. To do this we will look to achieve:

- Year 1 –
 - The London Borough of Merton to be a fully accredited partner in a national campaign to tackle Domestic and Sexual Violence
 - The Safer Merton Partnership to launch our revised VAWG mission statement
 - The Safer Merton Partnership to work with victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and encourage reporting of incidents to achieve our ambition of increasing victims' access to services year on year
 - To undertake a full DVA profile for the borough
 - Maintain and build upon our successful work in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
 - To review our VAWG outcomes and set targets for the coming year

- Year 2 –
 - Conduct a review of our VAWG offer to ensure that our offer(s) are fit for purpose and meet current and predicted needs
 - Develop and enhance stronger links with our third sector providers to improve the offer for our victims
 - Develop and implement action plans to improve our understanding of success, challenge and areas of growth across the VAWG spectrum ensuring that we respond to these needs appropriately
 - To review our outcomes achieved during 2016/17 undertaking relevant reviews as well as setting new targets for the coming year

- Year 3 –
 - Build upon the work achieved during years one and two and develop new action plans designed to achieve greater outcomes for survivors and greater sanctions against our offenders
 - Develop a revised communications strategy for all strands of VAWG
 - Undertake our annual review of outcomes and set targets for the coming year

- Year 4 –
 - The Safer Merton Partnership will conduct a full review of progress made across all strands of VAWG over the last four years
 - To develop a new VAWG work plan based on current needs analysis
 - To ensure that the new Wilson Centre, due to open in 2020, supports our work on VAWG

Theme 1 Co-ordination: Ensure that the response to VAWG is shared by all stakeholders, embedded into service plans and coordinated effectively

1.3	To undertake research and analysis to understand the evidenced levels of VAWG across all nine strands and to explore data to predict levels of prevalence based on LBM census data	Improved knowledge and awareness of communities affected (prevalence within the borough)	Detailed profile which breaks down potential victims and those potentially at risk	Safer Merton, CSF and specialist Police Units	Known data to be collated and shared – end of June 2017	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
		Baseline of data is created to identify communities at risk of VAWG	Baseline data is agreed and targets set for improvement	Safer Merton	September 2017 VAWG board report to sign off	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
		Improved understanding of need to facilitate targeted service commissioning in the future	Utilise at risk and evidenced reports to shape commissioning frameworks as required	To be completed by summer 2017	Ongoing	On track to meet commission timescales
1.4	To prioritise our response to VAWG based on resource and need	The partnership understand which strands of VAWG are to be addressed, by when and by whom	SSE to give direction as to which strands of VAWG are to be addressed as priority	SSE board chair with VAWG board input	Sign off by end of June	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
Page 62	LBM to achieve White Ribbon accreditation status – taking a stand against DV (www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk)	Merton becomes a recognised borough for its work to tackle DV and the wider VAWG agenda through a male lead approach	Completion of evidence document	VAWG board	All evidence submitted to White Ribbon by 31 August 2016 to achieve accreditation for November's days of activism	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
			Identification of gaps and ways to address them	VAWG board		Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
			Partner agencies are identified and commit to support	VAWG board		Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
			Members and senior leads (male) sign up and lead their units to commit to the programme	VAWG board		Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July

Theme 2 Prevention - Preventing VAWG and domestic abuse, and intervening early when people have experienced or are at risk of VAWG and domestic abuse

Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date	
2.2 Page 63	Ensure that our children who are witness to, or are at risk of being victim to VAWG related crimes, are protected	Our schools police officers deliver sessions on personal safety and work alongside PSHE leads on health relationships	Safer schools officers to "map" offers in schools currently to prevent duplication or develop "add ons" to existing lessons	Police	Plan to be confirmed by August 2016	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
		Greater co-ordinated response and offer to those high risk DV victims	Increased referrals to MARAC	All	Immediately	MARAC steering group in place and tracking of referrals constantly scrutinised
		Our schools police officers deliver sessions on personal safety and work alongside PSHE leads on health relationships	Increased range of options contained within related safety plans	MARAC chair	Immediately	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
2.3	Ensure that our vulnerable adults who are witness to, are victims of, or are at risk of being victim to VAWG related crimes are protected as per SAB protocols	Greater co-ordinated response and offer to those high risk DV victims	Improved offers for victims and their families where appropriate	All	Immediately	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
		Greater co-ordinated support to those vulnerable adults targeted by criminals	Reduced numbers of trap houses on borough	Safer Merton	Analysis to understand the scale- July 2017	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
			Reduced ASB related to trap houses	Safer Merton	Analysis to understand the scale- July 2017	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July

Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date	
Page 64	Greater co-ordinated support to those vulnerable adults targeted by criminals Greater understanding across the partnership of vulnerable adults with earlier sign posting to care for those who may be at risk	Improved safety for our most vulnerable residents	SAB	Awareness raising of risk and referral pathways	Year 2 for progress – timescales to be agreed at VAWG board	
		Increased referrals to adult social care	SAB	Awareness raising and training to be delivered	Training offer for 2017/18 to be confirmed by end of 2016/17	
		Increased understanding of elder abuse	SAB	Awareness raising and training to be delivered	Training offer for 2017/18 to be confirmed by end of 2016/17	
	Our adult survivors (18+ and non LAC) can access the best service possible – one that is tailored to their needs and delivered in the quickest time possible	Promotion of service and self-referral pathways	Safer Merton, Comms and Police CSU	Literature to be developed and distributed	Year 2 for progress – timescales to be agreed at VAWG board	
		Partners understand the “offer” and ensure referrals are made	MSCB training programme	Literature to be developed and distributed	Year 2 for progress – timescales to be agreed at VAWG board	
2.4	Ensure our survivors of DV are supported and can access service as easily and efficiently as possible	Our adult survivors (18+ and non LAC) can access the best service possible – one that is tailored to their needs and delivered in the quickest time possible Our child survivors (up to 18 or 21 where LAC) can access tailored support for their own, their relationships and/or their	Survivors feel supported, empowered and confident in their decisions – data collection	IDVAs	Literature to be developed and distributed	Ongoing work with IDVAs working at capacity

Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date
Page 65	family's needs whilst adhering to any relevant safeguarding legislation	The Safer Merton Partnership hears "the voice" of the survivors ensuring best outcomes are achieved and quality assured	Safer Merton	Utilising IDVA data undertake deep dives into casework – align with MSCB learning programme	Complete. Sam Spencer's work refers
		Young people can work with specialists who understand their needs	CSF and Safer Merton		Barnardo's to deliver training during 2017
		Young people's attitudes towards DV is challenged and improved	CSF, Safer Schools and Safer Merton	Schools awareness and training offer to be developed for next academic year	This is still in development. Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
	Our child survivors (up to 18 or 21 where LAC) can access tailored support for their own, their relationships and/or their family's needs whilst adhering to any relevant safeguarding legislation	Young people have a safe space to report DV where confidentiality is observed	Linked to the pan London NHS England work CSF to lead	TBC	Year 2 for progress

Theme 3 Provision - Improve provision and specialist support services which are essential in enabling people to end violence in their lives and recover from the damaging effects of abuse.

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments	
3.1 Page 66	Ensure that our front line offers to victims are of the highest quality and achieve the best outcomes possible to reduce risk to themselves and their families	VAWG board to oversee and scrutinise reports on in-house and locally commissioned services to review and challenge on outcomes and to assist in future commissioning.	VAWG board to request and forward plan reports which should be discussed	Dependent on report required	Subject to VAWG board forward plan	Ongoing with VAWG board consultation of DVA commissioning 2018-21(23)
	We maintain our One Stop Shop (OSS) service ensuring that it is one of the best in London	Consistency of offer is maintained beyond the current 6 year service	Safer Merton	In line with formal review	Service secured until 31 March 2018	
		We undertake a review of the OSS to ensure it remains fit for purpose and operating at the optimum level	All partners involved in OSS with an independent chair	Full review and recommendations for future work – Sept 2016	Complete. Sam Spencer's work refers	
	Our partnership has a range of highly skilled, highly knowledgeable, active DV champions	Partnership response to DV is strong with strategic SPOCs throughout	Safer Merton and MSCB training program	Training programme reviewed	Year 2 for progress	

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?	Comments	
4.2	To identify perpetrators of VAWG and take swift action to prevent continued violence and/or prevent further victims	Known/evidence lead perpetrators identified, their associates identified and networks discovered allowing the partnership to design suitable responses for all of those on the risk scale	VAWG board to decide on priority for VAWG themes and further work to follow	Safer Merton analysts to shape boards direction	First profile to be completed for quarter one of 2017/18	This is still in development. Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
4.3	Provide professionals with the tools to work and challenge behaviours for those perpetrators of VAWG whilst being conscious of support needs	Increased numbers of professionals aware of VAWG and the implications of undertaking prohibited behavior	More DV perpetrator awareness training to be rolled out to staff	MSCB	Draft training programme developed	Year 2 for progress
		Professionals educated around all strands of VAWG increasing understanding of cultural Vs. religious contexts for these crimes and develop understanding of perpetrators and victim challenges	Develop a VAWG briefing offer with MSCB and VAWG board partners	VAWG board	Draft training programme developed	Year 2 for progress. Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
			VAWG is always considered in professionals case work	TFG to be developed to look at what's needed	Draft training programme developed	Year 2 for progress. Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
			Schools offer developed to raise awareness and prevention messages	TFG to be developed to look at what's needed	In time for new academic year 2017-18	Awaits the VAWG co-ordinator. Work to commence from mid-July
			Learning is shared at SCR/DHR learning events to raise awareness	Publish DHR and ensure learning is delivered	SAB	Autumn 2017

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Who? (Work plans etc.)	When?	Comments	
4.4	Offer a bespoke DV service to perpetrators who wish to voluntarily look at their behaviours	To be developed	To be developed	To be developed	To be developed	Out of scope of DVA commission due to funding
4.5	Ensure that current commissioned provision is sufficient to meet the need and identify gaps for the future	The partnership fully understand areas of success and risk for perpetrators and gaps in service provision	Carry out a formal review with SWOT and gap analysis for services supporting perpetrators	VAWG board via TFG. Decisions made in Autumn	End of December	Work superseded and review completed to shape commissioning

Yea 1 completed areas of work

Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date	
1.1 Page 70	Develop a new strategic approach to VAWG ensuring consistent coordination involving multiagency partners, with infrastructure to support the delivery of the VAWG strategy and action plan.	Borough wide understanding and support of VAWG is achieved	A fully, partnership lead action plan is created and approved	Safer Merton	June 2016 for first draft.	VAWG action plan being developed with clear aspirations being established (May 16)
					September for final sign off and publishing	Work on track for publishing (July 16)
	All partners review and adopt new legislation and guidance to support, protect and enforce against VAWG	All partners agree to lead and oversee delivery of aspects of the VAWG plan relevant to their area of business	All	October 16 for update on work progress	VAWG board consulted on and all agreed to support VAWG plan (June 16)	
1.2	Production, monitoring and delivery by the VAWG Board of an annual performance plan with SMART targets (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) to deliver the VAWG strategic aims.	PIs all agreed with partners	VAWG board to consider PIs and ensure that their data is available	VAWG board	June 2016 for first draft (year 1)	PIs signed off, VAWG board to oversee from August onwards (July 16)
		Partners to share data they contain, collate, retain in formats requested by Safer Merton				
1.3	Commissioners lead review of the refuges on borough	Coordinated commissioning of the refuges	Retender process	PH lead reporting to VAWG	September 2016 for work to commence	Work underway

Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date	
1.5	LBM to become a partner for the "No More" campaign (http://www.hestia.org/uk-says-nomore/)	Merton becomes a recognised borough leading the way in supporting the new campaign	Increased reports of DV through to Merton based support	Hestia	Board to sign off commitment in Summer	Partner status granted in September 2016

Theme 2 Prevention - Preventing VAWG and domestic abuse, and intervening early when people have experienced or are at risk of VAWG and domestic abuse

Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date	
2.1	To empower our communities and professionals to champion our VAWG work and to challenge negative behaviours associated with all strands of VAWG.	Merton sees an increase in reports of ALL strands of VAWG in the short-medium term as communities and professionals become more aware and confident in raising risk and/or reporting incidents	FGM and CSE strategies to be delivered by CSF alongside partners	MSCB Policy Sub Group Reports to MSCB & VAWG	March 2016	Strategies written and agreed by MSCB
		Safer Merton to identify leads and/or lead on work for all other strands	VAWG Board	September 2016	VAWG board to confirm and publish leads	

Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date	
Page 72		A minimum three campaigns to be ran per year of this strategy. Campaigns to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IWD • CSE awareness day • 16 days of activism • IDAHO • Trafficking awareness day 	VAWG board and Comms	Comms plan required by September 2016	Work plan to be presented in August VAWG board	
	Ensure that our children who are witness to, or are at risk of being victim to VAWG related crimes, are protected	Improved safety and awareness of our children in regard to VAWG	Increased VAWG training for those working with children	All and MSCB	Plan to be confirmed by August 2016	Barnardo's Training has been commissioned for CSC &YI around DV. MSCB committed to training for Children's Workforce.
		Children are protected by professionals who are more confident in challenging more difficult VAWG agendas	Direction is revisited for all LBM and statutory partners around safeguarding duties	All and MSCB	Plan to be confirmed by August 2016	Training offer is currently in place around VAWG issues for practitioners to heighten awareness

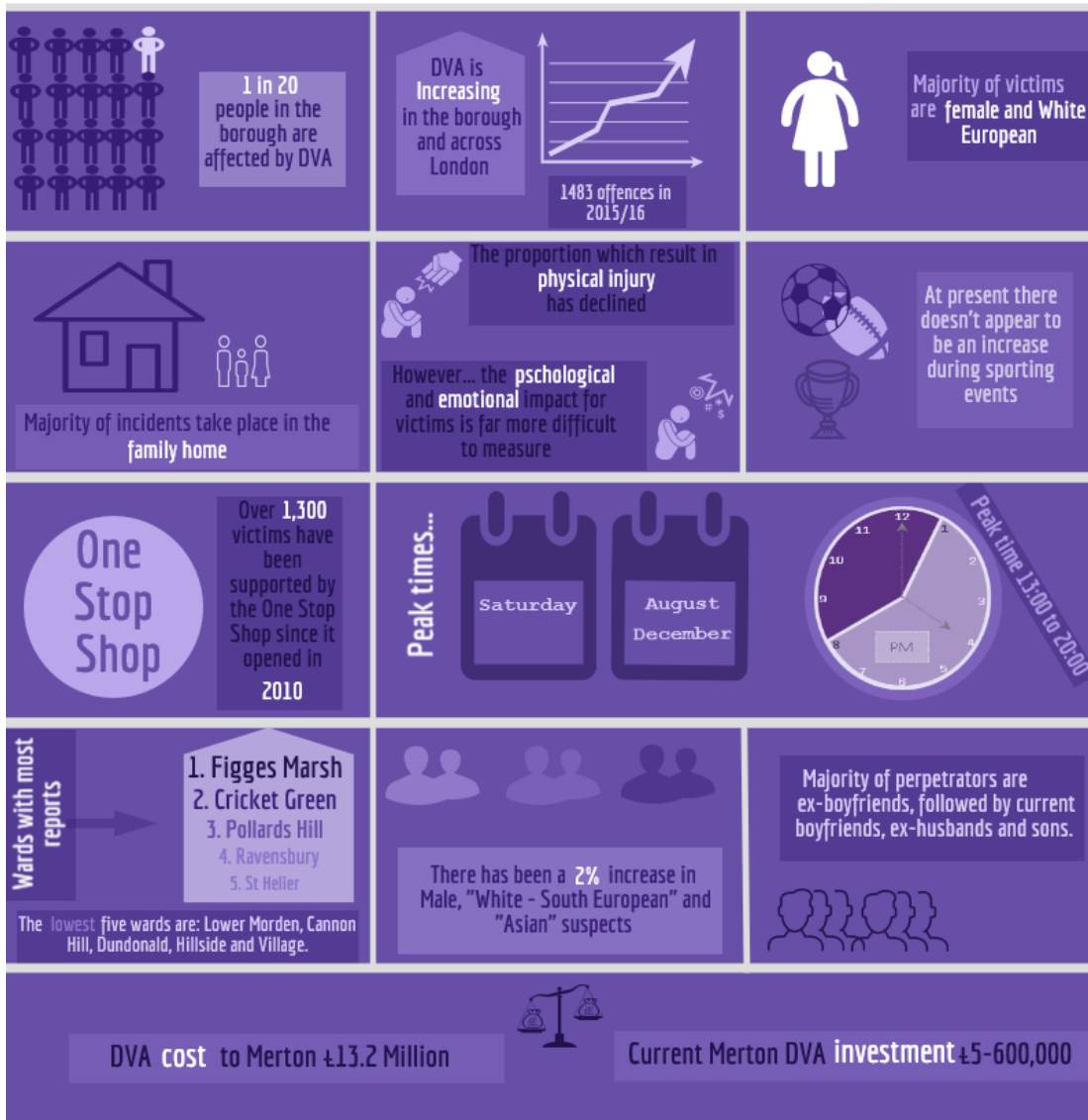
Objective	Outcome	Output/Actions	Resources		Progress Green/Amber/Red	
			Lead officer/agency	What's required and by when?	Comments and update date	
3.1 Page 73	Ensure that our front line offers to victims are of the highest quality and achieve the best outcomes possible to reduce risk to themselves and their families	VAWG board to oversee and scrutinise reports on in-house and locally commissioned services to review and challenge on outcomes and to assist in future commissioning.	VAWG board to request and forward plan reports which should be discussed	Dependent on report required	Subject to VAWG board forward plan	Year 2 for progress
		Review the performance of the MARAC	Regular reports on the MARAC's performance to be reviewed at the VAWG strategic board	Safer Merton and VAWG board chair	Oversee delivery of MARAC improvement plan	MARAC performance captured in Safer Merton governance
			Increased referrals to MASH and/or MARAC come from a range of services	MARAC chair	Twice yearly data breakdown noting training dates	Ongoing reviews. Full DV profile being developed and will incorporate this – June 16
			A range of DV events held – all well attended with champions committing to assist in hosting, facilitating etc.	VAWG board	Full range of events planned for days of activism '16	On track
			Increased DV reports pan borough	Met Police CSU	CSU to provide DV figures monthly	Will be incorporated into DV profile

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Domestic Violence and Abuse in Merton



Facts and Figures about DVA in Merton



To report DV call 999 or for support call Victim Support on 020 7801 1777

Data Sources: Metropolitan Police Service, Safer Merton - London Borough of Merton (April 2015 - March 2016)



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Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 6 July 2017

Subject: Analysis of the Annual Member Scrutiny Survey 2017

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Southgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Contact officer: Alisha Muhmood; alisha.muhmood@merton.gov.uk; 020 8545 4451
Annette Wiles; annette.wiles@merton.gov.uk; 020 8545 4035

Recommendations:

- A. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers the findings arising from the 2017 Member Survey.
 - B. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission agrees the proposed actions to be taken forward to improve the effectiveness of scrutiny (actions run throughout the report and are listed in Appendix 3).
-

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. For the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to consider the findings from the 2017 Member Survey and the proposed actions to be taken forward to improve the scrutiny function.

2. DETAILS

Background

- 2.1. Each year the scrutiny team carries out a survey to collect the views of Merton councillors and co-opted scrutiny members about how scrutiny is working - where things work well, where things don't work quite so well, and how they can be improved. The survey also evaluates the effectiveness of the scrutiny function as a whole and with the different workstreams that make up overview and scrutiny.

Key findings

- 2.2. Overall, the results from this year's survey are very positive for scrutiny at Merton:
- 2.3. Overall effectiveness: The target set for member satisfaction with the overall effectiveness of the scrutiny function was almost met, with a rating of 74% against a target of 75%. This is a significant improvement from 65% in the previous year and if the 7% of 'don't know' responses are excluded, the result of 80% would have exceeded the target.
- 2.4. The number of respondents that regard scrutiny as neither effective nor ineffective has been more than halved to 14% for 2016/17. Reducing the 30% of respondents that last year regarded scrutiny as neither effective nor ineffective was an important aspiration which has been met.
- 2.5. Task groups: Task group work was once again rated as the most effective aspect of scrutiny with a rise from 57% to 82% in the effectiveness rating received. This is also illustrated in positive verbatim comments and constructive feedback.

- 2.6. Scrutiny team: The level of satisfaction with the support provided by the scrutiny team constituted the highest level of satisfaction since 2011. This year 98% of respondents are satisfied (up from 95% in the previous year), with 65% describing the support provided as excellent.
- 2.7. Satisfaction with scrutiny: Members were also invited to rate different aspects of the scrutiny team's work. These results were positive and improved in all aspects from 2015/16 with no respondents selecting 'completely dissatisfied' with any aspect of the scrutiny team's work.
- 2.8. Methodology: Questions this year gave respondents a 'don't know' response option. This was a recommendation of last year's survey in order to give a wider range of responses and ensure that all questions are answered rather than skipped. This has resulted in a higher number of surveys completed in their entirety.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to undertake an annual member survey, the findings enable members' satisfaction with the scrutiny process at Merton to be measured against agreed annual targets and actions to be taken to improve the scrutiny process year on year.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. The member survey is conducted for a minimum of three weeks each year. In the last two years it has been conducted during March and April so that views could be taken following completion of the budget scrutiny process. Prior to that it was carried out during February/March.

5. TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The member survey was undertaken in March and April 2017 and is being reported to the Commission in July so that identified actions can be incorporated into its 2017/18 work programme.

6. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None directly relating to the member survey itself. However, some actions arising from the findings of the survey year on year may have resource implications which need to be taken into consideration. The cost of this would be met from existing budgets.

7. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. None relating to this report.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. 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 findings of the member survey are reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission which is open to the public.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None relating to this report.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None relating to this report.

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

- 11.1. Appendix 1: Member Survey 2017 – methodology, analysis and detailed findings
- 11.2. Appendix 2: Verbatim comments from Members
- 11.3. Appendix 3: List of proposed action points

Member Survey 2017

1. Methodology

- 1.1. The survey was initially conducted online using a bespoke (and free) online survey tool. Towards the deadline for completion it was distributed in paper format in order to capture additional responses.
- 1.2. Over half of respondents completed the survey in the online format, this enabled well thought-out and lengthier feedback to the questions asked. However, there is the possibility that a small number of members might have completed the survey twice, both online and in paper format, resulting in some duplicate responses. It is not possible to be precise about this number given the survey is anonymous.
- 1.3. This risk of duplication will be given consideration for next year's annual survey, and we will look at support to get more surveys completed online and better messaging to prevent duplication. Offline responses have been entered onto the online system in order to make analysis easier and more robust. However, as with any data entry, there is a risk of error and next year we will seek to increase online completion to minimise this.
- 1.4. Action points:
 - The scrutiny team will continue to improve both the content and delivery of the survey to maximise completion online and reduce the potential for inputting errors and duplicate responses.
 - Alongside the use of quantitative methods, the scrutiny team will use qualitative methods to explore the findings more fully. A number of in-depth interviews will be conducted immediately after the survey period.

2. Five point scale

- 2.1. In 2015/16 the opportunity was taken to test use of a five point response scale which is the market research industry standard. This gave respondents the opportunity to indicate that they neither agree nor disagree with the statements made in the survey in order to adequately capture their views. This was rolled out to all questions in this year's survey.
- 2.2. The addition of a neutral midpoint option has resulted in an increased number of fully completed questionnaires.
- 2.3. Last year, the change to a five point response scale made it difficult to achieve a direct comparison with previous results. This year, having continued with this approach, we have begun to again build trend data and can start to make direct comparisons between this year's and last year's results.

3. Analysis

- 3.1. Unlike the previous year, the responses of councillors and co-opted members were not split out and reported separately. This was considered necessary in 2015/16 to allow us to specifically focus on responses from co-opted members and to separately address the points that they had made.

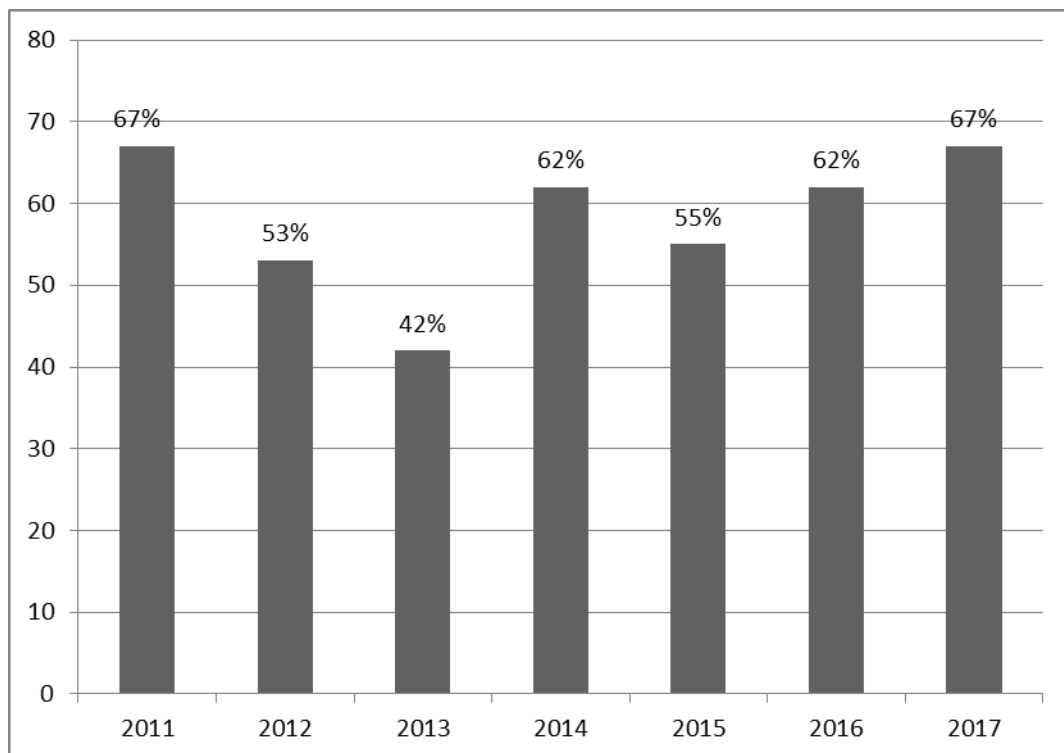
4. Survey respondents

4.1. The 2017 member survey was sent out to sixty councillors and four co-opted members. A fifth co-opted member, newly in post, was excluded.

5. Response rate

5.1. The survey was completed by forty one councillors and two co-opted members, giving an overall response rate of 67%. This is an improvement of 5% on last year (62%) and is the joint highest response rate achieved since 2011.

Diagram 1: Member survey response rate



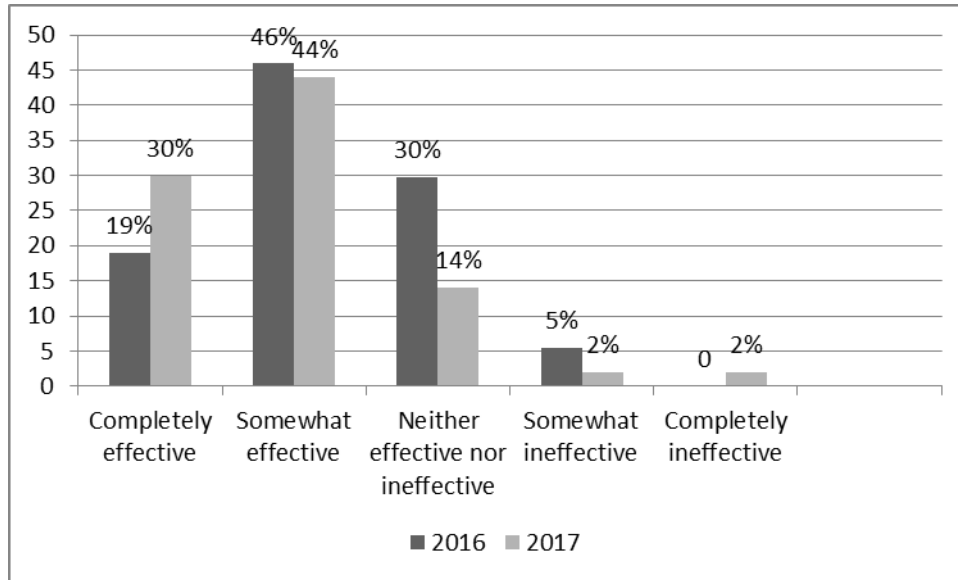
5.2. The majority of respondents have been actively involved in the scrutiny process over the past year:

- 25 are members of the Overview Scrutiny Commission or a scrutiny panel
- 9 are “other non-executive members”
- 7 are Cabinet Members
- 2 are co-opted members
- 47% respondents have sat on a Task Group
- 40% have attended a scrutiny meeting as a visiting member to observe/make a contribution
- 7 respondents have had no involvement with scrutiny this year (nonetheless, their contribution is welcome).

6. Effectiveness of the scrutiny function

6.1. The survey asked respondents to consider the overall effectiveness of scrutiny. A comparison with last year's results is illustrated below:

Diagram 2: The overall effectiveness of scrutiny in 2015/16 and 2016/2017

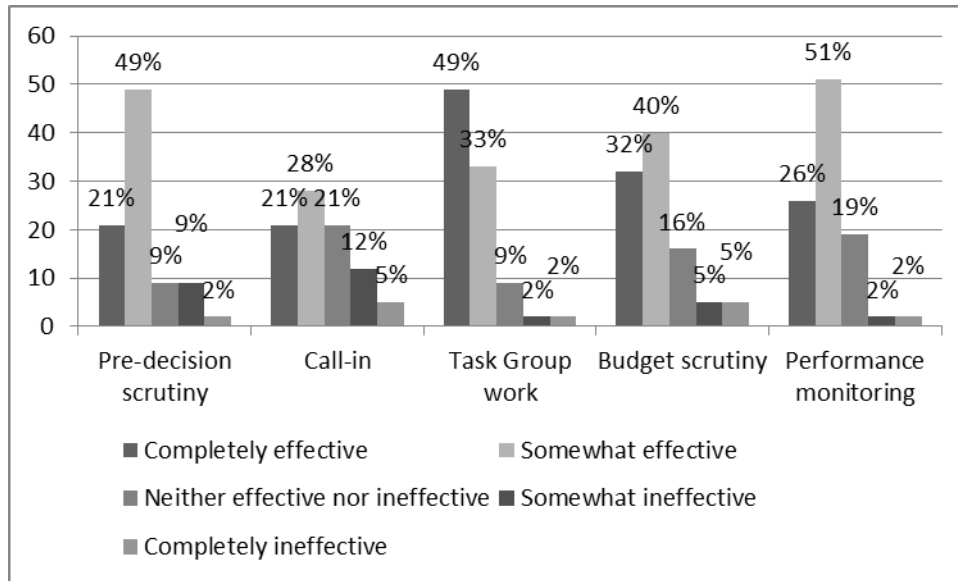


- 6.2. Respondents' positive perception of the overall effectiveness of overview and scrutiny has increased from last year; up from 65% to 74% (so the third of respondents who said scrutiny was neither effective nor ineffective last year, has reduced by half). A very small percentage (4%) view scrutiny's effectiveness negatively (somewhat ineffective or completely ineffective).
- 6.3. Additionally, some verbatim comments express concerns about the influence of party politics on scrutiny:

Still need to try and take politics out of the scrutiny process - could be a really usefully tool to hold the administration to account but so often fails.

The usefulness of scrutiny would improve if members felt more able to engage in a proper debate. Even if, sadly, voting seems to go along strict party lines (data on this point would be interesting) at least there could be more engagement with some of the topics.

Diagram 3: The effectiveness of the different aspects of scrutiny in 2016/2017



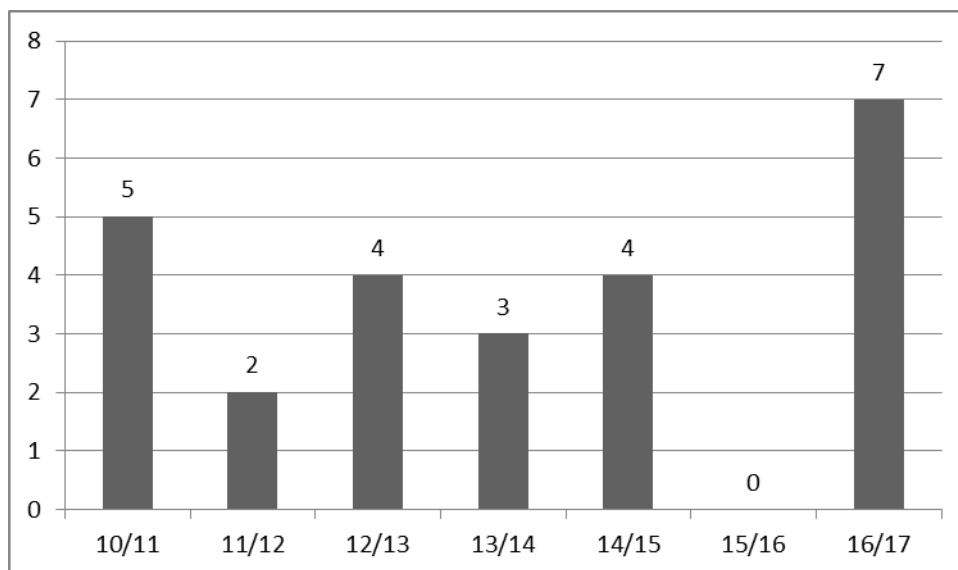
7. Pre-decision scrutiny

7.1. This year pre-decision scrutiny received a 70% effectiveness rating which is a 19% improvement from 51% in 2015/16. Only one respondent rated it 'not effective at all'. There were 9% of respondents who answered 'don't know' (an option which was not available in the previous year).

8. Call-ins

8.1. The effectiveness of call-in is still rated the lowest of any aspect of scrutiny's work. However, this is significantly improved on last year's performance. Just under half of all respondents (49%) view call-ins positively (either completely or somewhat effective) compared to just over a third last year (35%). This is probably explained by there being seven call-ins during 2016/2017 compared to none the previous year.

Diagram 4: The number of call-ins each year for the last seven municipal years



8.2. It is worth noting that of those that viewed the performance of call-ins positively, 21% regard them as completely effective. Those that regard call-ins as completely ineffective remains low, increasing marginally from 3% to 5% on last year. However, 28% still regard call-ins as neither effective nor ineffective.

9. Task groups

9.1. Task group work was once again rated the most effective element of scrutiny with a rise from 57% to 82% effectiveness rating (a combination of completely and somewhat effective). Along with pre-decision scrutiny, this aspect of scrutiny's work received the lowest number of members responding that they are undecided (neither effective nor ineffective).

9.2. As a result, there was a notable decrease in the number that reported task groups as somewhat ineffective: down from 27% last year to 2%.

9.3. This indicates that members continue to find task groups a productive and effective way to contribute to policy development and have a tangible impact on decision making. This is reflected in verbatim comments:

The Task Groups are very good and enable in depth discussion on potential policy direction.

Task Group recommendations have been welcomed and acted on by Public Health and CCG.

9.4. Respondents also offered constructive feedback on task groups:

Also important that recommendations are followed up on a regular basis and implemented.

My only comment on Task Groups is it would be helpful for officers/Cabinet Members to have early sight of recommendations. When I met with a task group chair it was clear some changes would be required for us to be able to accept the report, but the chair and officer were reluctant as the report had already been finalised.

10. Budget scrutiny

10.1. The effectiveness of budget scrutiny is deemed high, increasing from 57% to a 73% effectiveness rating (combining completely and somewhat effective). This is reflected in verbatim comments:

Recommendations on the budget in the Sustainable Communities Panel this year were listened to.

The Panels have been effective during budget discussions and the workshops.

Scrutiny comments during budget process taken on board.

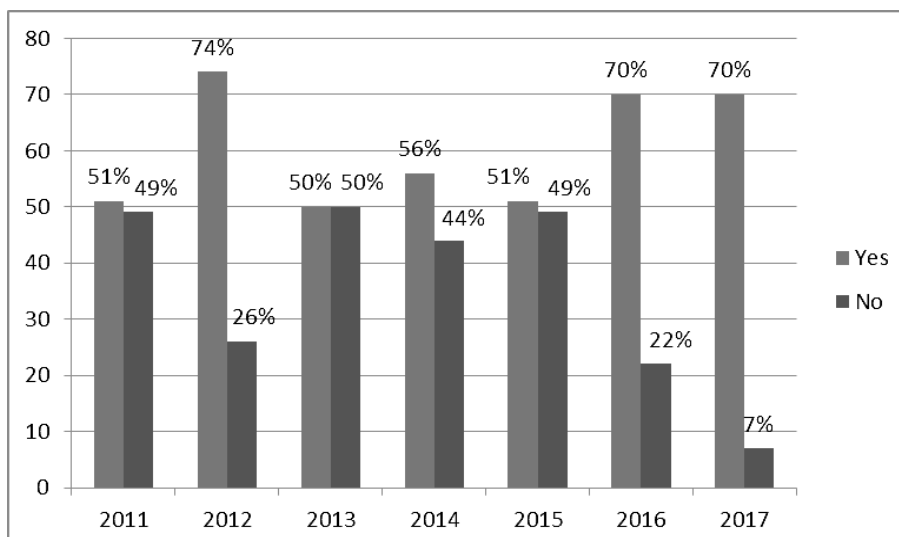
11. Performance monitoring

- 11.1. The effectiveness of performance monitoring has increased from 49% in 2015/16 to 76% in 2016/17 (combining completely and somewhat effective).
- 11.2. As a result, the third of members (35%) in 2015/2016 who stated that performance monitoring is neither effective nor ineffective has significantly reduced this year to 18%.
- 11.3. The approach to performance monitoring has differed over the past two to three years. Previously there was a performance lead for each Panel and the Commission who scrutinised a standard set of performance indicators prior to the meeting and drew Members' attention to any areas of concern.
- 11.4. Last year this was changed to allow the Panels to adopt a more tailored approach – Sustainable Communities reviewed a set basket of indicators at each meeting, and the Healthier Communities Panel reviewed performance as part of agenda items where relevant. The Commission received crime data at each meeting attended by the Borough Commander and delegated detailed quarterly financial monitoring to the Financial Monitoring Task Group.
- 11.5. For 2016/17 the Children and Young People's Panel (CYP) has reinstated a performance monitoring lead. This year 32% of respondents (thirteen people) were from the Children and Young People's Panel. Interestingly, all but one of the CYP respondents were positive about performance monitoring this year. The change in approach seems to have been well liked by CYP Panel members.

12. Scrutiny Agendas/Workload

- 12.1. 70% of respondents agreed that Commission/Panel agendas are the correct length and 35% strongly agreed. This meets the target set for the scrutiny team, and marks a strongly improving trend over the past two years.

Diagram 5: Are Commission/Panel agendas the correct length?



13. Development of the Commission/Panel Work Programmes

- 13.1. This year 77 % (down from 86% in 2015/16) agreed that they have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Commission/Panel work programmes.
- 13.2. We have looked at the two respondents who said they didn't have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Commission and/or Panel work programmes. One was a non executive member and the second was a member of the Sustainable Communities Panel. Not surprisingly, those who 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'don't know' tend to be Cabinet Members or non-executive members who are less involved in the topic selection process.
- 13.3. Action point: The scrutiny team will explore what more can be done to ensure all members have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Commission/Panel work programmes.

14. Scrutiny impact on decision making by the Cabinet

- 14.1. This year councillors feel decision-making by the Cabinet has been influenced by comments from the Commission and Panels; 72% (with 30% strongly) for the Commission and 59% (with 18% strongly) for the Panels. This gives an average rating of 66% of members agreeing scrutiny has had a positive impact on decision making by the Cabinet. This is an improvement on last year's rating and continues a three year positive trend.
- 14.2. Whilst the Commission is considered more influential than the Panel, this was not elaborated on in verbatim comments. Some respondents did take the opportunity to give examples of where there has been impact on Cabinet decision making:

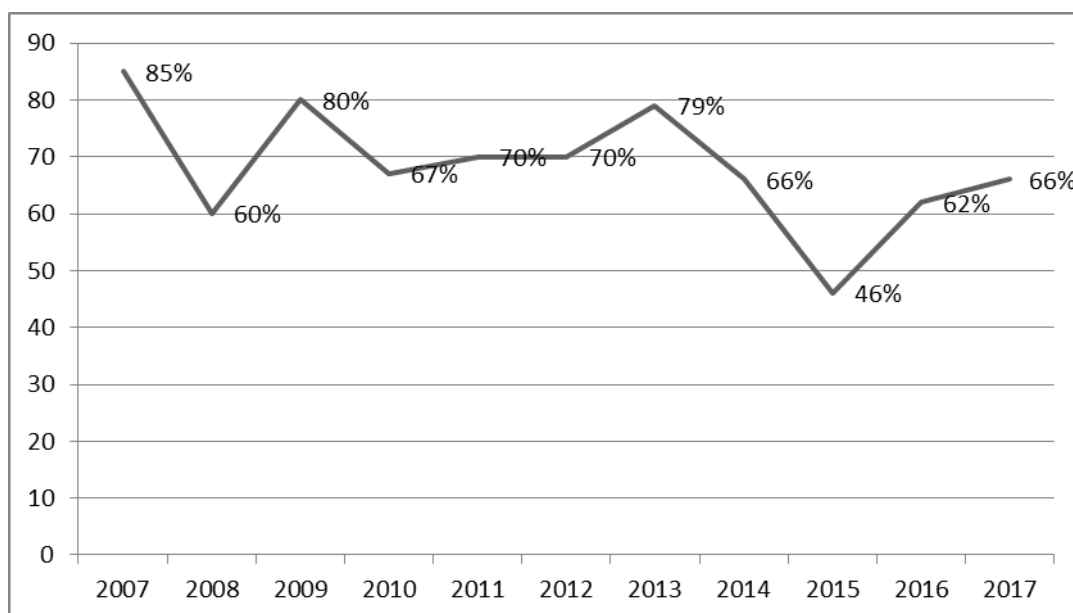
Cabinet continues to be responsive to suggestions from scrutiny when reviewing the budget.

Recommendations on the budget in the Sustainable Communities Panel this year were listened to.

Introduction of Housing Company as suggested by the Task Group on commercialisation.

I do feel that officers are made aware of views from backbench member which do not necessarily concur with cabinet members

**Diagram 6: Has scrutiny had an impact on Cabinet decision making?
(% saying it has had a positive impact)**



14.3. Respondents were also offered the opportunity to give examples of where the Commission and/or Panels have had a demonstrable impact (other than on Cabinet decision-making):

I like involving Scrutiny. Doing so makes you think things through better. So, for instance, the annual Libraries report and the annual Adult Education report give pause to review what's to be said about what's been done, and in so doing highlights areas for change, before scrutiny is even reached.

By deep dive investigations of particular council services eg. Community transport, the Financial Monitoring Task Group (FMTG) has encouraged better financial reporting standards and improved performance.

Health scrutiny produced good reports on dementia and on diabetes in the South Asian Community. They also did a good job scrutinising and questioning the CCG re-commissioning the GP surgery and walk in centre at the Wilson Hospital.

15. Better organisation

Diagram 7: In what ways do you think the Commission/Panel business might be better organised? 2016/17

More use of external experts to provide context and challenge	57%
Cross-party pre-meetings to agree lines of questioning for some agenda items	46%
Commission/Panels to be more selective when setting agendas	44%
Guidance provided on possible questions to be asked at meetings	44%
Background policy guidance provided	41%
Councillors supported to conduct their own individual reviews	38%
More meetings to accommodate all the items	18%

15.1. Over half (57%) of respondents would like to see more use of external experts to provide context and challenge and 47% would like to see cross-party pre-meetings to agree lines of questioning for some agenda items.

15.2. In 2016, 43% of councillors indicated their interest in conducting their own reviews, compared to 32% this year. An action in response to this last year was to provide support to one councillor to trial an individual rapporteur scrutiny.

15.3. Action points

- The scrutiny team will evaluate the individual rapporteur scrutiny model and assess how its potential could be expanded. If appropriate, the team will continue to explore a range of opportunities that support Members to conduct in-depth rapporteur scrutiny reviews which make effective use of the time available.
- The scrutiny team will, as part of the work programme process, explore with chairs and vice chairs the use of external experts, cross-party pre meetings where appropriate to agree lines of questioning and support with identifying potential questions for witnesses

16. Quality of evidence presented to overview and scrutiny

16.1. The majority of respondents (73%) said that the evidence presented to overview and scrutiny has been good and meets the needs of the session. This is slightly down on last year (78% and from the year before at 85%) but still comparable to rates in previous years.

16.2. A possible explanation for this decrease is that the question was framed differently than previously. This year respondents had the option of answering with 'don't know' or 'neither agree nor disagree', with five people stating the former and four people stating the latter option. This might give a more accurate reflection of members' views even if it makes direct comparison with previous years more difficult.

16.3. Members made some recommendations on the quality of evidence in their verbatim comments:

Some reports long and have so much information I need a longer lead up time to read them.

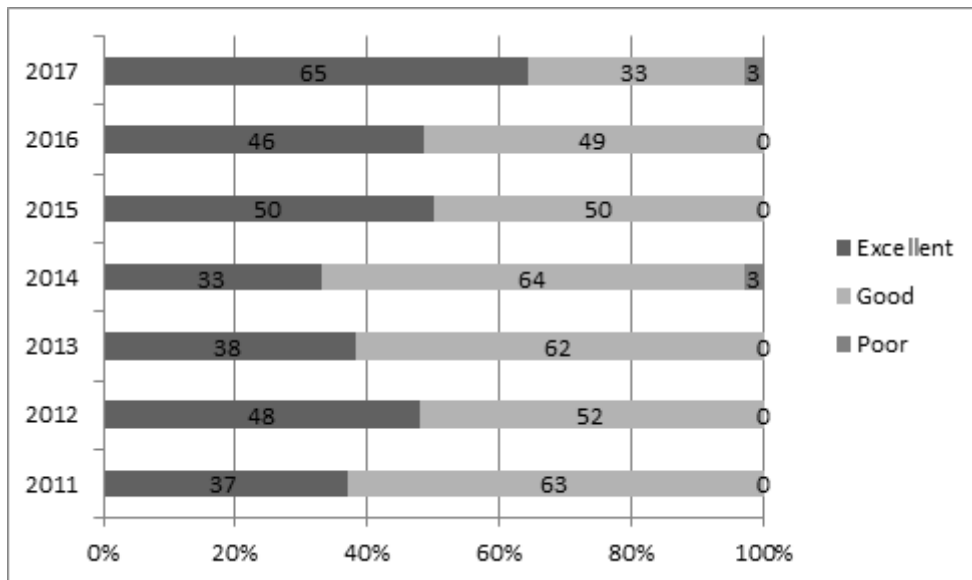
Clearer papers which focus on the main points but give fair presentations and unbiased views.

16.4. Action point: The scrutiny team will work with officers to understand what could be done to improve the quality and presentation of evidence provided to scrutiny meetings.

17. Support from the Scrutiny Team

17.1. Satisfaction with the service remained extremely positive and respondents gave the team a satisfaction rating of 98%. This is the highest rating received since 2011, with 65% of respondents rating the support provided as excellent (this is the highest ever received by some margin). A further 33% rate the team as good with one person describing the team as poor.

Diagram 8: Satisfaction with scrutiny team



17.2. Members were also invited to rate different aspects of the scrutiny team’s work. These results were positive and improved in all aspects from last year:

- Speed= 77% (up from 73%)
- Quality of response= 82% (up from 68%)
- Quality of email=80% (up from 76%)
- Quality of verbal= 87% (up from 78%)
- Quality of task group=87% (up from 76%)

17.3. There were no responses of ‘completely dissatisfied’ with any aspect of the scrutiny team’s work. This was reflected in the verbatim comments:

In comparison with other London boroughs, we have one of the best scrutiny teams in London

The Scrutiny Team are really excellent. We're very lucky to have them here in Merton. The advice they provide is extremely high-quality and their knowledge great.

I think the scrutiny team does a good job, Very good support, and there is always someone at the end of the phone to clarify any comments or concerns asked.

18. Members' training and development needs

18.1. The skills and knowledge which members bring to the overview and scrutiny process are crucial to its effectiveness, so the survey asked what scrutiny related training and development opportunities they would like to have provided in the coming year.

18.2. Based on those who responded, there is a reasonable level of demand for all the core training and development areas specified in the questionnaire:

Diagram 9: Demand for member training

How to monitor performance and interpret data	15 members
Chairing and agenda management	14 members
Questioning skills	12 members
Finance/budget scrutiny	12 members

18.3. Respondents were also given the opportunity to comment on any other support or training they required:

Updates on all areas regularly, I know this is not often practical as members have many other commitments and dates very often make this difficult in the short or medium time scale.

18.4. However, fourteen out of the forty-three respondents made no response to these core training opportunities.

18.5. Action points:

- That the Head of Democracy Services will, in discussion with HR (which has responsibility for Member development and training), ensure that appropriate training sessions are offered on all the areas identified by the survey during the municipal year.
- The Head of Democracy Services will ensure the promotion of member training opportunities in a timely way to maximise the take-up.

List of verbatim comments from respondents

Q6: Please give examples of where Cabinet decision-making has been influenced during the 2016/2017 municipal year by comments from the Commission and/or Panels.

Members of the scrutiny Commission or Panels:

- Cabinet continues to be responsive to suggestions from scrutiny when reviewing the budget.
- Scrutiny comments during budget process taken on board. Pity that Pre-decision scrutiny of diesel surcharge which put forward a range of views to Cabinet resulted in no change to Cabinet decision.
- New secondary school.
- We got only 1 meek savings proposal sent from Sustainable Communities to the commission, though we got some agreed savings brought forward.
- Areas within the Budget, for a start.
- Given the Labour majority there is never any chance of having a proper scrutiny unless the balance on committees is equal or the chair is prepared to take on board other views and understand issues the opposition parties raise
- Both. The ability to disagree with Cabinet members and officers and get changes not necessarily in policy but attitude in forming items to take members with them, this is not necessarily quantifiable but I do believe it does happen
- Air quality task group
- Budget (slightly)
- Introduction of Housing Company as suggested by the Task Group on commercialisation.

Co-opted Members:

- Adult social care.

Other non-executive Members:

- CYP understood why the commission had to make the decision they took, however, support in finding other sources to maintain delivery services to CYP.

Cabinet Members:

- The budget.
- The only one I am aware of where a decision has been overtly influenced was the reversal of cutting planning letters. I don't feel Councillor's representations on ASC contributed towards the decision to levy the precept and allocate growth to the budget.
- Areas within the Budget, for a start.

Q7: Please give examples of where the Commission and/or Panels have had a demonstrable impact (other than on Cabinet decision-making).

Members of the scrutiny Commission or Panels:

- In task groups, the commercialisation task group came up with good ideas. The health committee got a diabetes recommendation through. Sustainable communities has been good at grilling CHMP on housing and regen concerns.
- Task group recommendations have been welcomed and acted upon by CCG and Public Health

- I do feel that officers are made aware of views from backbench member which do not necessarily concur with cabinet members
- By deep dive investigations of particular council services eg. community transport, the Financial Monitoring Task Group (FMTG) has encouraged better financial reporting standards and improved performance
- Budget scrutiny
- Task groups can provide useful detail examination on important issues. Also important that recommendations are followed up on a regular basis and implemented.
- Finance Task Group
- Recommendations on the budget in the Sustainable Communities Panel this year were listened to.

Co-opted members:

- Council tax rise.
- only negative impact like the Diesel levy

Other non-executive Members:

- By engaging with other agencies who has an interest in delivering services in support within remit.
- The Panels have been effective during budget discussions and the workshops.

Cabinet Members:

- I like involving Scrutiny. Doing so makes you think things through better. So, for instance, the annual Libraries report and the annual Adult Education report give pause to review what's to be said about what's been done, and in so doing highlights areas for change, before scrutiny is even reached.
- Input on the equality strategy on meeting our objectives on the action plan.
- Regeneration
- Health scrutiny produced good reports on dementia and on diabetes in the South Asian Community. They also did a good job scrutinising and questioning the CCG re-commissioning the GP surgery and walk in centre at the Wilson Hospital.

Q9: In what ways do you think the Commission/Panels might be better organised (other).

Members of the scrutiny Commission or Panels:

- Be more like government select committees when we challenge and scrutinise external bodies.
- Cross-party pre-meetings to agree lines of questioning for some agenda items
- No items should be requested to be put on the agendas less than 5/6 days before the meeting. Certainly not on the night
- Tighter chairing of meetings. Should aim to finish 9:00 latest with guillotine 9:15 unless a vote to extend
- In some cases more data so that we can have more meaningful discussions. For example, if trends of an entire service are shown in aggregate there is no way of understanding the performance in separate sections. The recent review of last year's performance of MAE is a case in point
- Need to ensure that officers can support councillors conducting their own reviews but have set amount of officer time.
- Labour need to stop dictating. It's a complete waste of time and anti-democratic.

Other non-executive Members:

- Select one or two items to discuss at Panel, other wise time could be extended without a positive outcome.
- Scrutiny was better in the day that scrutiny officers advised members on questions to ask.

Cabinet Members:

- More intelligent timing of meetings. Although this would be a real pain, getting meetings at the time where predecision scrutiny is needed to make a decision would be so much more time-effective, and much cheaper, than trying to time decision-making so it fits in with the scrutiny timetable.
- I think more support for Cllrs general would be useful. In my experience, some Cllrs are more comfortable with questioning officers/Cabinet Members/external experts than others. Some support would improve the quality of questions/discussions.

Q10: What training do you need to support you in being part of overview and scrutiny? Other, please specify:**Members of the scrutiny Commission or Panels:**

- Updates on all areas regularly, I know this is not often practical as members have many other commitments and dates very often make this difficult in the short or medium time scale.
- Clearer papers which focus on the main points but give fair presentations and unbiased views.

Co-opted Members:

- Chairing and agenda management.

Other non-executive Members:

- I am very much interested in Public Speaking Skills training, because I believe this will develop my ability and confidence more.

Cabinet Members:

- Perhaps some extra budget training. Also training on our role as an employer.

Q12: Please use this box to provide any comments on the support offered by the scrutiny team.**Members of the scrutiny Commission or Panels:**

- In comparison with other London boroughs, we have one of the best scrutiny teams in London
- I think the scrutiny team does a good job.
- Some reports long and have so much information I need a longer lead up time to read them. more time before
- Team good. Labour Cllrs awful.
- The Scrutiny Team are really excellent. We're very lucky to have them here in Merton. The advice they provide is extremely high-quality and their knowledge great.

Co-opted members:

They take question and analyse it in order to reflect a good outcome.

Other non-executive Members:

- And there is always someone at the end of the phone to clarify any comments or concerns asked.
- Very good support
- Really appreciate support.

Cabinet Members:

- My only comment on Task Groups is it would be helpful for officers/Cabinet Members to have early sight of recommendations. When I met with a task group chair it was clear some changes would be required for us to be able to accept the report, but the chair and officer were reluctant as the report had already been finalised.

Q13: Do you have any suggestions for issues/themes that you would like to see explored as part of the overview and scrutiny work programme in 2016/17?**Members of the scrutiny commission or panels:**

- Proper review of cycling/walking options and how to improve this to encourage modal shift.
- Scrutiny of ANPR and traffic enforcement across the borough.
- Scrutiny of Veolia now that it is outsourced.
- Scrutiny of the diesel tax and measures to proactively help car type shift and measures to Improve air quality (i.e. follow up on whatever the current task group recommends).
- Think there should be a cross party task group review on how the Council intends to spend the additional Government funding for Adult Social Care.
- Air quality and pollution from diesel vehicles is rising fast up the agenda of residents' concerns. I know we already have a task group addressing this, but it needs to continue to keep pace with a fast changing legislative environment.
The "bigger picture" for the Commission is how the devolution of business rates will affect us, and how we can maximise its potential when it happens.
- Further work on climate change.
- First aid training for pupils/students even at a basic level in all schools.
- Review of white papers as they are issued to discuss potential impacts on the council.
- Regular reviews of the Merton Property Company.
- Social Housing eligibility criteria for women in DV shelters (who are often moved deliberately out of their area and lose local association).
- Male domestic violence.
- Homophobic hate crime.
- It would be pointless to support anything.

Co-opted Members:

- Housing.

Non executive members:

- I would like "Sickle Cell disease and Thalassemia" explore as part of Task Group and Health and Scrutiny work programme 2017/2018.
- Veolia Contract monitoring.
- The implications of the SLW partnership for rubbish collection and green spaces, requires monitoring to ensure Merton residents are very well catered for by this change.
- Housing is an issue.
- Frist aid training for pupils/students even at a basic level in all schools.

Cabinet Members:

- Housing should be looked at across all of the groups and then presented back to O&S Panel.
Mental Health CYP specific.
Domestic Violence and Abuse.
- I still want to see scrutiny look at promoting tourism within our Borough, with particular emphasis on the theatre offer, but extending across the borough. I'd also like it to look at ways to further encourage the Tech industry in Merton.
- Business rates proposals by Govt.
- Detailed scrutiny of the STP would be useful. To date it has been slightly ad hoc as the document was being drawn up in private - now it is a public document the panel should play a part in scrutinising it.

Q14: Please use this box for any further comments/suggestions you have about the overview and scrutiny function, including how it can be improved.**Members of the scrutiny Commission or Panels:**

- I believe the panel should receive the recorded minutes soon after that Panel meeting instead of shortly before the next meeting.
- Really comprehensive support from Stella and Julia.
- Support and advice from officers on this panel has been superb.
- Scrutiny can only be as good as residents' willingness to perceive it as a channel for democratic engagement with the council, and members' recognition of it as a means of influencing change for the benefit of residents.
- The usefulness of scrutiny would improve if members felt more able to engage in a proper debate. Even if, sadly, voting seems to go along strict party lines (data on this point would be interesting) at least there could be more engagement with some of the topics. Agenda items need to be presented in a way that encourages debate on key issues so that we get to the facts that matter, we can identify not just successes but where improvements are needed and we can debate problems and solutions.
- At times I think scrutiny does not work because not enough focus is given by members on panels to act like the government select committees, unfortunately the Labour members on panels are just mouthpieces of the administration and have no backbone and just try to silence discussion and not be helpful. Maybe a review of how committee members are appointed needs reviewing. Occasionally it has worked well, especially when we scrutinised CHMP.
- It needs to be more objective and less subjective, otherwise it is frustrating and disheartening
- Scrutiny process is ok as a way for cllr to stay informed but it does not meaningfully impact the decision making process.
- Still need to try and take politics out of the scrutiny process - could be a really useful tool to hold the administration to account but so often fails.
- Chairs have been good.
- My only concern is about all the Cllrs reading the papers in advance of the meeting. I'm not sure they do this and the level of questions and as such scrutiny suffers as a result. Not sure what can be done about this.
- I believe that scrutiny would benefit from being involved more in target setting. Perhaps a task group analysis and suggesting. Training on how targets are set and criteria etc.
- Dreadful. Nearly as bad as full council meetings. Let's have some democracy.

Other non-executive Members:

- The Scrutiny function is important in providing not only cross party work but hopefully checks and balances.
- The Task Groups are very good and enable in depth discussion on potential policy direction.
- More training should be made available.
- I haven't sat on a scrutiny panel for a long time, so don't feel qualified to comment on how they operate now. I have sat on the Borough Plan Advisory Panel for many years, but that is not in the options to comment on. Also, it operates in a different way to the other panels. Support and advice from officers on this panel has been superb.

Cabinet Members:

- As a cabinet member, I'd really like to see a more even challenge across the Parties and across the board. The Opposition tends towards party politics and obstructionism, and the ruling party tends towards defensiveness and silence. We could do better.
- Keep up the good work.

List of proposed action points

1. The scrutiny team will continue to improve both the content and delivery of the survey to maximise completion online and reduce the potential for inputting errors and duplicate responses.
2. Alongside the use of quantitative methods, the scrutiny team will use qualitative methods to explore the findings more fully. A number of in-depth interviews will be conducted immediately after the survey period
3. The scrutiny team will explore what more can be done to ensure all members have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Commission/Panel work programmes.
4. The scrutiny team will evaluate the individual rapporteur scrutiny model and assess how its potential could be expanded. If appropriate, the team will continue to explore a range of opportunities that support Members to conduct in-depth rapporteur scrutiny reviews which make effective use of the time available.
5. The scrutiny team will, as part of the work programme process, explore with chairs and vice chairs the use of external experts, cross-party pre meetings where appropriate to agree lines of questioning and support with identifying potential questions for witnesses
6. The scrutiny team will work with officers to understand what could be done to improve the quality and presentation of evidence provided to scrutiny meetings..
7. That the Head of Democracy Services will, in discussion with HR (which has responsibility for Member development and training) ensure that appropriate training sessions are offered on all the areas identified by the survey during the municipal year.
8. The Head of Democracy Services will ensure the promotion of member training opportunities in a timely way to maximise the take-up.

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Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 6 July 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2017/18

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead member: Cllr Peter Southgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Contact officer: Julia Regan: Julia.regan@merton.gov.uk 020 8545 3864

Recommendations:

That members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- i) Consider the proposed work programme for the 2017/18 municipal year, and agree issues and items for inclusion (see draft in Appendix 1);
 - ii) Discuss and comment on how they wish to draw on external experts this year and how the quality of evidence provided to scrutiny meetings could be improved.
 - iii) Appoint members to the financial monitoring task group, to meet on 25 July and three further dates (in November 2017, March 2018 and July 2018) to be determined by the task group;
 - iv) Consider whether they wish to establish a task group review this year;
 - v) Consider whether they wish to make visits to local sites; and
 - vi) Identify any 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 2017/18 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 Commission;
 - c) The findings of the consultation programme undertaken with councillors and co-opted members, senior management, voluntary and community sector organisations, partner organisations and Merton residents;
 - d) A summary of discussion by councillors and co-opted members at a topic selection workshop held on 26 June 2017; and
 - e) Support available to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to determine, develop and deliver its 2017/18 work programme.

2. Determining the Overview and Scrutiny Commission Annual Work Programme

- 2.1 Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2017/18 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 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has specific roles relating to budget and business plan scrutiny and to performance monitoring that should automatically be built into their work programmes.
- 2.3 Since 2012/13, the Commission has agreed each year to establish a financial monitoring task group to lead on the scrutiny of financial monitoring information on behalf of the Commission, with the following terms of reference:
- To carry out scrutiny of the Council's financial monitoring information on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission;
 - To advise on other agenda items as requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission;
 - To report minutes of its meetings back to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission;
 - To send via the Commission any recommendations or references to Cabinet, Council or other decision making bodies.
- 2.4 The Commission, at its meeting on 28 March 2017, resolved to re-establish this task group for the 2017/18 municipal year. The Commission is therefore requested to appoint members to the group. It is proposed that the task group will meet four times during 2017/18 to enable the financial monitoring information to be examined on a quarterly basis as well as scrutinising a small number of budget areas in-depth and reporting back any recommendations to the Commission. The meetings will be held in public and the agenda and minutes will be published on the Council's website, alongside those of the Commission.
- 2.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission 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.
- 2.6 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has six scheduled meetings over the course of 2017/18, including the scheduled budget meeting (representing a maximum of 18 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 3 hours per meeting). Members will therefore need to be selective in their choice of items for the work programme.

Principles guiding the development of the scrutiny work programme

- 2.7 The following key principles of effective scrutiny should be considered when the Commission 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 council 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** – The Commission 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 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

2.8 There are a number of means by which the Overview and Scrutiny Commission 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 Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Commission 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 one-day seminar-scrutiny of issues that, although important, do not merit setting up a ‘task-and-finish’ group.
Task Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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 Commission with their findings to endorse the submission of their recommendations to Cabinet/Council ■ This is the method usually used to carry out policy reviews
Commission asks for a report then takes a view on action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Commission 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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 Commission needs to have a more in-depth review of the matter s/he takes it back to the Commission for discussion
Individual Members doing some initial research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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 Commission if s/he still has concerns.

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

Support available for scrutiny activity

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

- Work with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission 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.

2.11 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission will need to assess how they can best utilise the available support from the Scrutiny Team to deliver their work programme for 2017/18.

2.12 The Commission 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.

2.13 This year, in response to the results of the scrutiny annual survey, the Scrutiny Team will also explore with chairs and vice chairs the use of external experts and the quality of evidence provided to Panels to understand what else might be done to meet members’ needs. In order to progress this, it is recommended that the Panel spend some time discussing this as part of the development of the work programme if these issues have not already been addressed at the topic workshop.

3. Selecting items for the Scrutiny Work Programme

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

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has the following remit: -

- Formal crime & disorder scrutiny
- Safer communities: the role of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, safer neighbourhood teams, anti-social behaviour, drugs & alcohol treatment, domestic violence and road safety
- Stronger communities: community leadership, voluntary & community sector, public involvement & consultation; community cohesion, service delivery diversity & equalities
- Cross-cutting & strategic matters, inc. scrutiny of the budget & business plan and the approach to partnership arrangements
- Corporate capacity issues – communications, legal, human resources, IT, customer service
- The performance monitoring framework
- Financial monitoring
- Responsibility for keeping scrutiny under review

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

3.2 A description of all the suggestions received is set out in Appendix 2.

3.3 The councillors who attended a “topic selection” workshop on 26 June 2017 discussed these suggestions. Suggestions were prioritised at the workshop using the criteria listed in Appendix 3. In particular, participants sought to identify issues that related 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.

3.4 A note of the workshop discussion relating to the remit of the Commission is set out in Appendix 4.

3.5 Appendix 1 contains a draft work programme that has been drawn up, taking the workshop discussion into account, for the consideration of the Commission. The Commission is requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.

4. Task group reviews

- 4.1 The topic workshop discussions identified recruitment of key workers as a priority areas for task group review, building on the work done by the Standards and General Purposes Committee. Draft proposals for the scope and terms of reference for such a review will be brought to the Commission's meeting on 6 July by the Chair and Head of Democracy Services.
- 4.2 The Commission will be asked to consider these draft proposals and decide whether it wishes to establish a task group review on the recruitment of key workers. The Commission may choose to establish a task group to examine another issue or it may choose not to establish a task group during 2017/18.
- 4.3 Whatever course of action the Commission decides to take, it is asked to be mindful that any task group will need to report back to the Commission at its meeting on 31 January 2018 so that it can be referred to Cabinet in March 2018.

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 Commission.
- 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 Commission 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 Commission/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 Commission 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. Training and visits

Training

- 6.1 The annual member survey asked what scrutiny related training and development opportunities councillors and co-opted members would like to have provided in the coming year.
- 6.2 Twenty one respondents agreed that they had a need for training and development opportunities in at least one of the core areas specified in the questionnaire:
- chairing and agenda management (14 respondents)
 - questioning skills (12)
 - how to monitor performance and interpret data (15)

- finance/budget scrutiny (12)

6.3 The report of the annual member survey, elsewhere on this agenda, contains two recommendations on training:

- That the Head of Democracy Services will, in discussion with HR (which has responsibility for member development and training) ensure that appropriate training sessions are offered on all the areas identified by the survey.
- The Head of Democracy Services will ensure the promotion of member training opportunities in a timely way to maximise the take-up.

6.4 The Commission is asked to consider whether there are other training needs and to provide comments on how the training needs identified by the annual member survey could be met.

Visits

6.5 Commission members are asked to identify any visits that they would find helpful to provide a context for scrutinising service delivery or policy changes.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1 A number of issues highlighted in this report recommend that Commission members take into account certain considerations when setting their work programme. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission is free to determine its work programme as it sees 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.

7.2 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.

8. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

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

- a. Letter to partner organisations and to a range of local resident groups, 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 and via the Overview and Scrutiny Member Survey 2017; and
- c. Officers have been consulted via discussion at departmental management team meetings and through an item in the Staff Bulletin.

9. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 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.

10. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Overview and scrutiny bodies operate within the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 10.2 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.

11. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 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.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 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.

13. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 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.

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

- 14.1 Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Commission draft work programme 2017/18
- 14.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of topics relating to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission's remit suggested for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme
- 14.3 Appendix 3 – Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 26 June 2017

14.4 Appendix 4 – Notes from discussion of topics relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, Scrutiny Topic Selection Workshop on 26 June 2017

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 None

Draft work programme 2017/18**Meeting date – 6 July 2017**

Item/Issue
Leader and Chief Executive – vision, key priorities & challenges for 2017/8
Merton Partnership annual report
Embedding challenge in models of service delivery
Report from Safer Merton
Analysis of annual members' scrutiny survey

Meeting date – 20 September 2017

Annual Residents Survey - presentation
Customer contact programme - update
Discussion of questions for the Borough Commander

Meeting date – 15 November 2017

Borough Commander – policing in Merton
Budget scrutiny round 1

Meeting date 25 January 2018 – scrutiny of the budget**Meeting date 31 January 2018**

Customer contact programme update
Registrars service
Shared and outsourced services task group – update on action plan
Final report of Commission's 2017-18 task group
Discussion of questions for the Borough Commander

Meeting date 21 March 2018

Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-20 – action plan
Hate crime strategy – progress report & discussion with community organisations
Borough Commander – policing in Merton
Overview and scrutiny annual report

Description of topic suggestions received in relation to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission 2017/18

The following topics were suggested by residents, local groups, councillors and officers, for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, for their 2017/18 work programme.

POLICING IN MERTON

Who suggested this issue?

In previous years the Commission has received regular updates on crime and policing from the borough commander as a standing item.

Summary of the issue:

In 2016/17, the Commission has questioned the Borough Commander on two occasions, examined crime data and scrutinised the deployment of police officers in the borough. The Commission also discussed the Mayor of London's policing priorities with the London Assembly Member for Merton and Wandsworth.

What could Scrutiny do?

It is recommended that the Commission should continue to invite the Borough Commander to attend twice yearly. Identifying questions in advance of the meeting has worked well in the past year and it is recommended to continue this approach.

The Safer Merton Manager has suggested that the Commission requests updates on the proposed One Met Model (relating to the reduced number of borough command units) and the rollout of actions from the Mayor of London's Police and Crime Plan 2017-21.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Who suggested this issue?

A local resident has suggested that scrutiny look at how to tackle recreational drug use and drinking in large groups in local parks and public benches such as in the Motspur Park/West Barnes area. The resident is concerned about the impact this has on park users, especially families.

Summary of the issue

The Police are responsible for tackling drinking and drug taking in public places, working in conjunction with Safer Merton. Add comment about what work is being done/measures taken and, if applicable, that it is a priority area.

What could scrutiny do?

Next time the Borough Commander attends a meeting of the Commission he could be questioned about what action is being taken to deal with these issues. The resident who made the suggestion would be invited to attend and contribute .

Alternatively, the Commission could establish a task group borough-wide review of street drinking and drug use. These are complex issues that affect services provided and/or commissioned by all directorates within the council as well as relating to policing of the borough.

HATE CRIME

Who suggested this issue?

The Director of the Commonsense Trust has suggested that the Commission examine the recent increase in hate crime against EU nationals and other ethnic minorities. This has been brought to her attention by organisations such as the Polish Family Association. She has suggested that scrutiny could assess the scale of this problem, examine Merton's response and identify potential areas for improvement and for joint working with local organisations.

A second suggestion on hate crime was received by a councillor who has suggested that the Commission review homophobic hate crime.

Summary of the issue

Hate crime is any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, that is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's race, religion or belief, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. A hate crime may also be committed against a person by association, such as against the parent of a disabled child or the partner of someone of a different ethnicity. Hate crimes are now also recognised as a form of abuse in relation to safeguarding adults at risk; this stems from the introduction of the Care Act 2014 and the revised London procedures that were launched in 2016

Hate crime in Merton has increased since 2012 at a faster rate than the Metropolitan Police Service area as a whole. Racially aggravated offences make up the largest proportion of hate crimes committed in Merton – 76% of the total.

The Merton Partnership has recently launched the 2017-2021 hate crime strategy, which aims to develop a victim-oriented, multi-agency approach to tackling all forms of hate crime across the borough. The associated hate crime strategic plan 2017 – 2021 will initially be overseen by the Safer Stronger Executive Board.

What could Scrutiny do?

It is recommended that the Commission receives a progress report on the hate crime strategic plan towards the end of the municipal year. This should include the latest available local data on hate crime. It is recommended that the partner organisations that were involved in the development of the strategy (Victim Support, Merton CIL, Merton LGBT+ forum, MVSC, Merton Polish Family Association and the Police) be invited to attend and contribute to this item.

SAFER MERTON UPDATE

The Commission has already agreed to receive a report at its meeting in July 2017 that will include updates on:

- anti social behaviour
- violence against women and girls
- services for women and children in refuges

In response to a suggestion from a councillor that the Commission review male domestic violence, the Safer Merton report will also include facts and figures on male domestic violence in Merton.

CUSTOMER CONTACT PROGRAMME

Summary of the issue:

The Commission has scrutinised the development and implementation of this important programme over a number of years. The programme's key objective is to improve the way the council interacts with its customers, in line with the Customer Contact Strategy agreed in 2013, to improve customers' experiences as well as increase efficiency.

What could scrutiny do?

It is recommended that the Commission should continue to receive regular progress updates in 2017/18.

OUTSOURCED AND SHARED SERVICES TASK GROUP REVIEW

Summary of the issue

The Commission received the initial action plan for implementation of the task group's recommendations in March 2017.

One of the recommendations was that the Chief Executive should be invited to attend a meeting of the Commission annually to report on how challenge has been embedded in the choice of the most appropriate delivery model for each service. He has been invited to do so at the Commission's meeting on 6 July 2017.

What could scrutiny do?

It is recommended that a further action plan update be received in November 2017 or March 2018.

COMMISSIONING OF COUNCIL SERVICES

Who suggested this issue?

Two suggestions have been received:

1. The CEO of Merton Centre for Independent Living has suggested that the Commission examine how local residents could be involved in the commissioning of council services. She has cited Hammersmith & Fulham as an interesting example of how this could be approached.
2. A local resident has suggested that a review of commissioning could examine the criteria used to evaluate/analyse tenders issued by the Council to ensure that we get maximum benefit for the local community and optimise the opportunities to address what she perceives as a general lack of trust in local government. She has suggested that including social value criteria in tenders could lead to an increase in local jobs, apprenticeships, local purchasing and promote local cohesion. The Council would be proactive in investing locally, supporting young people and addressing the impact of cuts imposed by central government. She has also suggested looking at Preston Council as a good example of a 'think locally' approach to commissioning.

Note – last year Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage Group suggested that scrutiny examine how decisions to contract out key services are made, especially to ensure effective and transparent consideration of other options and appropriate community involvement.

The Council's Procurement Strategy 2013-16 and the Council's Business Plan 2017-21 aims to ensure that procurement activities are undertaken efficiently and economically whilst contributing to the realisation of the economic, social and environmental benefits for the borough. It is based on the development of the principles and good practice established through the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government.

http://www.merton.gov.uk/merton_2015_ps_procurement_strategy_final.pdf

<https://www.local.gov.uk/national-procurement-strategy>

The Strategy is supported by the Council's Contract Standing Orders (Part 4G of the Council's Constitution) which set out the regulations to be followed by council employees when engaged in procurement activities on behalf of the council:

<http://democracy.merton.gov.uk/documents/s2592/Part%204G.pdf>

The Council is also in the process of drafting a Social Value Toolkit to assist Commissioners with driving greater local value from the services they deliver to the wider community.

What could scrutiny do?

There is some overlap with the work done by the shared and outsourced services and also some overlap with the suggestion that the Commission examine the recruitment of key workers (see below).

If the Commission wishes to focus on procurement, it could receive a report setting out what is being done to improve the council's performance on procurement, its approach to social value and to getting a balance between reducing the number of supplier and engaging more with local businesses and voluntary or community organisations.

Alternatively the Commission may wish to set up a task group or ask the financial monitoring task group to investigate current performance and future plans and make recommendations on how to improve the council's performance on procurement.

The Commission could also follow up on previous information received of difficulties in recruiting procurement officers and review what is being done to address this. Alternatively this could be done as part of a wider piece of work on the recruitment of key workers as suggested below. The Head of Commercial Services has recommended the wider piece of work since the recruitment issues are not unique to procurement officers and it runs parallel to a planned redesign of the team.

RECRUITMENT OF KEY WORKERS

Who suggested this issue?

Difficulties with the recruitment and retention of teachers was drawn to the attention of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel's attention by the headteacher of Priory Primary School, speaking on behalf of all headteachers in Merton.

Difficulties experienced in recruiting in a number of other key worker and specialist areas has also been highlighted to the financial monitoring task group during its discussions of council spend on agency and temporary staff and as part of its task group review of shared and outsourced services.

What could scrutiny do?

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, at its meeting in February 2017, discussed whether to review the recruitment and retention of teachers. The Panel, mindful that this had been subject to a task group review in 2014, suggested that the Commission could establish a task group to look more widely at the recruitment of all council key workers where there have been difficulties in filling permanent vacancies.

MY MERTON

Who suggested this issue?

A local resident has suggested that the council should stop production of My Merton as part of its budget savings and use the money to pay for other services.

Summary of the issue

My Merton, the official magazine of Merton Council, is published quarterly and distributed free to more than 80,000 households across the borough. It is also published in digital format on the council's website, where site visitors can also view previous editions.

In November 2014 the Overview and Scrutiny Commission scrutinised information on the cost (at the time, overall cost was £15k per issue) and distribution methods of My Merton. It found that costs had been reduced by reducing the number of issues and were partly offset by income from advertising. It also heard that My Merton is well regarded by the public as indicated by the Annual Residents Survey.

What could scrutiny do?

The Commission could receive an update report on costs and alternatives to My Merton if members thought that this should be a priority for inclusion in the Commission's 2017/18 work programme.

CONSULTATION

Who suggested this issue?

The Corporate Services Departmental Management Team suggested that the Commission could receive a report to examine what are the best mechanisms for the council to use when conducting large scale public consultation.

Summary of the issue

In March 2017 the Commission received a report on consultation and community engagement in response to a request made at Council on 23 November 2016. This report provided information on Merton Partnership's community engagement strategy, the online consultation hub, residents survey, community forums and the e-petition system.

What could scrutiny do?

The Commission could receive a report on the methods available and associated costs to the council for large scale consultations if members thought that this should be a priority for inclusion in the Commission's 2017/18 work programme.

REGISTRARS SERVICE

Who suggested this item?

The Corporate Services Departmental Management Team suggested that the Commission could receive a report to update it on recent developments in the registrar's service.

Summary of the issue

The registrars service includes:

- registration of all births, deaths and stillbirths in Merton Registration district
- custody of the registers relating to births, deaths and marriages from the Merton district since 1837 and can, on request, issue copies of the entries.
- conduct and register all civil marriage ceremonies and all civil partnership registrations occurring within the Merton Registration district.
- support to clergy and authorised persons registering marriage throughout Merton registration district.
- a nationality checking service for prospective new British citizens from anywhere in the UK.
- conduct all citizenship ceremonies in the Merton Registration district.
- conduct Naming Ceremonies and Renewal of Vow Ceremonies.

What could scrutiny do?

The Commission could receive an update report at one of its meetings.

MONITORING THE EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2017-21

Summary of the issue:

In previous years the Commission has received an annual update on implementation of the Council's Equality Strategy Action Plan.

In March 2017 the Commission made comments on the new draft Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy that has brought together the former Equality Strategy and the Community Cohesion Strategy.

What could scrutiny do?

The Commission could receive a progress report on implementation of the new action plan.

FINANCIAL MONITORING:

At its meeting on 28 March 2017 the Commission resolved to re-establish the financial monitoring task group in 2017/18 and ask it to carry out in-depth work ("deep dives") on a small number of service areas as well as continuing to receive quarterly financial monitoring reports.

COUNCIL TAX

Who suggested this issue?

A local resident asked that the Commission consider a report on the level of council tax and what residents get for their money. This should include a comparison table showing what other boroughs charge and what their residents get.

Summary of the issue

All councils are required by law to publish information about the level of council tax and details of spending on council services. This is published on Merton council's website:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/advice-benefits/counciltax/ctax-guide.htm>

What could Scrutiny do?

The Commission may decide that it would be helpful to examine comparative data published by other councils. If so, it is recommended that the Commission's financial monitoring task group could receive the report at one of its meetings.

BUSINESS RATES

Who suggested this issue?

A Cabinet Member has suggested that scrutiny could examine the government's business rate retention proposals.

Summary of the issue

In October 2015, the Government announced its intention that proposals whereby local authorities will be able to keep 100 per cent of the business rates they raise locally - a fundamental change to in the way local government is financed.

The Department for Communities and Local Government has consulted widely and worked with the Local Government Association on the various elements of the proposals, including on what additional responsibilities would be funded through business rates retention.

What could scrutiny do?

The Commission could receive a report, either separately or as part of the business plan report in November, on the proposals and what the implications would be for the council's medium term financial strategy. Alternatively, the commission could delegate consideration of this issue to the financial monitoring task group.

BUDGET SCRUTINY

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has a constitutional duty to coordinate the scrutiny responses on the business plan and budget formulation.

It is recommended that, as in previous years, the Commission should put aside some time in its meeting in November and prepare to devote the whole of its January meeting to budget scrutiny.

The Chief Executive Officer of Merton Centre for Independent Living has expressed an interest in working with the Commission to explore how to make budget-setting and the MTFs more accessible and based on consultation. If the Commission wished to take this further, it is suggested that initial work could be carried out by the financial monitoring task group in order to identify the parameters and scope of the exercise.

ANNUAL REPORTS RECEIVED BY THE COMMISSION IN PAST YEARS:

- Analysis of the annual member survey on the scrutiny function
- Overview and Scrutiny annual report

Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 26 June 2017

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

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:

- Is the issue strategic, significant and specific?
- Is it an area of underperformance?
- Will the scrutiny activity add value to the Council's and/or its partners' overall performance?
- Is it likely to lead to effective, tangible outcomes?
- Is it an issue of community concern and will it engage the public?
- Does this issue have a potential impact for one or more section(s) of the population?
- Will this work duplicate other work already underway, planned or done recently?
- Is it an issue of concern to partners and stakeholders?
- Are there adequate resources available to do the activity well?

Note of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission topic selection meeting on 26 June 2017

Attendees:

Councillors Peter Southgate (Chair), John Dehaney, Brenda Fraser, Abigail Jones, Sally Kenny, Brian Lewis-Lavender, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Dennis Pearce and David Williams.

Co-opted member Mansoor Ahmad

Councillor Edith Macauley, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities

Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services

John Hill, Head of Public Protection

Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services (note taker)

Apologies:

Councillor Mark Allison, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Policing in Merton

AGREED to continue to invite the Borough Commander to attend twice yearly and to continue to send questions to him in advance of the meeting. AGREED to ask him for an update on the One Met Model (consultation regarding the configuration of the proposed Borough Command Units) and the rollout of actions from the Mayor of London's Police and Crime Plan 2017-21.

Members were recommended to request a police "ride-along" if they had not previously done so.

Drugs and alcohol

AGREED to ask the Borough Commander about how drinking and drug taking in public places is being tackled by the police.

Discussed the feasibility of carrying out a scrutiny task group review of street drinking and drug use and concluded that there would not be sufficient time in the coming municipal year to address such complex issues.

AGREED that the Sustainable Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel would invite members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to attend its discussion on Public Space Protection Orders on 5 September.

Hate crime

Noted that hate crime in Merton has increased since 2012 at a faster rate than the London area as a whole.

AGREED that members should read the recently launched Hate Crime Strategy 2017-21 and that the Commission would receive a progress report on this later in the year. AGREED to invite partner organisations to attend and contribute to this item. This will include organisations involved in the development of the strategy as well as those experiencing hate crime first hand. SUGGESTED that this meeting should be held in a community venue such as Vestry Hall.

Councillor Macauley said that the Joint Consultative Committee would be looking at the issue at its next meeting and hearing from a number of community groups.

Safer Merton update

NOTED that the Commission would be receiving a report from safer Merton at its meeting on 6 July 2017.

Customer contact programme

AGREED that the Commission should continue to receive regular progress updates in 2017/18. Members would like these updates to include information on how successful the new website has been in terms of content being uploaded in a timely manner, level of uptake and customer feedback on aspects of the website including user friendliness and effectiveness of the search facility. Members also asked whether the new website would add anything to the way in which the council consulted with residents.

Annual Residents Survey

AGREED to add a presentation on the survey results to the 2017/18 work programme.

Outsourced and shared services task group review

NOTED that the Chief Executive would be providing an update to the Commission at its meeting on 6 July.

AGREED to receive a further action plan update in November 2017 or March 2018.

Commissioning of council services

NOTED that aspects of this have been included in the work of the outsourced and shared services task group. Noted also that there is some overlap with the suggestion that the Commission examine the recruitment of key workers.

Recruitment of key workers

Councillor Pearce said that this issue had been drawn to the attention of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny panel by a headteacher talking about the difficulties schools were experiencing with recruitment and retention of all categories of staff, particularly teachers. He added that recruitment and retention been a long standing issue for the council in relation to social workers. Other members stated that there was an issue across public sector services in London, including GPs and police officers.

Members noted that the Standards and General Purposes Committee had received a number of reports about the number of interim and agency staff employed by the council and actions being taken to address this. The Director of Corporate Services added that the Corporate Management Team had been looking at the Merton offer to staff as part of its response to the most recent staff survey. She said that much of the offer was similar to that provided by other London boroughs.

AGREED that the Chair and the Head of Democracy Services would bring draft proposals to the Commission's meeting on 6 July so that the Commission could decide whether it wishes to carry out a review of recruitment and retention. Any scrutiny work would build on what has already been done by the Standards and General Purposes Committee.

My Merton

AGREED that this was not a priority for inclusion in the 2017/18 work programme as information on the cost and distribution methods had been scrutinised in November 2014.

Consultation

AGREED that this was not a priority for inclusion in the 2017/18 work programme as the Commission had received a thorough report on these issues in March 2017. SUGGESTED that this might be timely for consideration during 2018/19.

Registrars Service

AGREED to receive an update report on development in marketing, potential for expanding the service and the works being carried out in the courtyard and garden.

Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy

AGREED to receive an annual progress report on implementation of the action plan for the Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy.

Financial Monitoring

AGREED that the Commission should re-establish the financial monitoring task group and ask it to continue to carry out in-depth work ("deep dives") on a small number of service areas as well as continuing to receive quarterly financial monitoring reports.

Council tax

Noted that information on how council tax is spent is already published on the website. Noted also that the level of council tax is extensively discussed as part of the budget setting process.

AGREED that this was not a priority for inclusion in the 2017/18 work programme.

Business rates

AGREED to take no further action on this at present as the relevant legislation had not been included in the Queen's Speech.

Budget scrutiny

AGREED that the Commission should continue to put time aside at its November meeting and devote the whole of its January meeting to budget scrutiny.

Annual reports

AGREED that the Commission should continue to receive the analysis of the Members' survey and the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.

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