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Merton Council

Sustainable Communities

Overview and Scrutiny

Panel



Date: 17 March 2020

Time: 7.15 pm

Venue: Committee Rooms CDE, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, SM4 5DX

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Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Membership

Councillors:

Natasha Irons (Chair)
Daniel Holden (Vice-Chair)
Ben Butler
David Dean
Anthony Fairclough
Aidan Mundy
Geraldine Stanford
Owen Pritchard

Substitute Members:

Nigel Benbow
Eloise Bailey
Nick Draper
Brenda Fraser
Edward Gretton

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 Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership.

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny describes the way Merton's scrutiny councillors hold the Council's Executive (the Cabinet) to account to make sure that they take the right decisions for the Borough. Scrutiny panels also carry out reviews of Council services or issues to identify ways the Council can improve or develop new policy to meet the needs of local people. From May 2008, the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and Panels have been restructured and the Panels renamed to reflect the Local Area Agreement strategic themes.

Scrutiny's work falls into four broad areas:

- ⇒ **Call-in:** If three (non-executive) councillors feel that a decision made by the Cabinet is inappropriate they can 'call the decision in' after it has been made to prevent the decision taking immediate effect. They can then interview the Cabinet Member or Council Officers and make recommendations to the decision-maker suggesting improvements.
- ⇒ **Policy Reviews:** The panels carry out detailed, evidence-based assessments of Council services or issues that affect the lives of local people. At the end of the review the panels issue a report setting out their findings and recommendations for improvement and present it to Cabinet and other partner agencies. During the reviews, panels will gather information, evidence and opinions from Council officers, external bodies and organisations and members of the public to help them understand the key issues relating to the review topic.
- ⇒ **One-Off Reviews:** Panels often want to have a quick, one-off review of a topic and will ask Council officers to come and speak to them about a particular service or issue before making recommendations to the Cabinet.
- ⇒ **Scrutiny of Council Documents:** Panels also examine key Council documents, such as the budget, the Business Plan and the Best Value Performance Plan.

Scrutiny panels need the help of local people, partners and community groups to make sure that Merton delivers effective services. If you think there is something that scrutiny should look at, or have views on current reviews being carried out by scrutiny, let us know.

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Agenda Item 3

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SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

25 FEBRUARY 2020

(7.15 pm - 9.55 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Natasha Irons (in the Chair),
Councillor Daniel Holden, Councillor Ben Butler,
Councillor Mary Curtin, Councillor David Dean,
Councillor Anthony Fairclough, Councillor Aidan Mundy and
Councillor Geraldine Stanford

Jason Andrews (Environmental Health Pollution Manager),
Cathryn James (Interim Assistant Director, Public Protection),
Chris Lee (Director of Environment and Regeneration) and Ben
Stephens (Head of Parking Services)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies received from Cllr Owen Pritchard (with Cllr Mary Curtin as sub)

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 of the previous meeting were agreed

4 CLARION HOUSING - REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE (Agenda Item 4)

Representatives from Clarion were welcomed and introduced to the Panel;

- Simon Gagen - Head of Responsive Repairs
- Vicki Bonner – Director of Housing
- Mike Robbins - Planned Investment Manager
- Paul Quinn – Director of Merton Regeneration

The Chair invited the resident speakers to share their views on Clarions repair and maintenance service.

Waqar Basit

- Constant leaks
- Electrics affected

Alexander Doty (read by Sara Sharp)

- Clarion provides a minimum of maintenance at High Path Estate yet increases the annual service charge every year. In 2019 my annual service charge increased nearly 18%. Unreasonable escalation of service charges is an abusive practice followed by resident associations generally.

- Very few services are provided adequately and most are not provided at all. For example, refuse is collected weekly and, as a result, bins overflow and refuse overflows onto the grounds. Communal cleaning is performed weekly and consists of sweeping and mopping the stairways. Marked, defaced, and broken building and utility structures are not cleaned or repaired. Grounds maintenance is performed weekly and consists of cutting grass with large mowers, leaving shrubs and edges untrimmed.
- I propose that a committee of High Path residents review the services provided at High Path and the related charges that are imposed in order that a recommendation may be made for their improvement and cost savings.

Cypren Edmunds

- Priory Close: Roof blocked with leaves has led to water not able to siphon appropriately which leads to direct leak (and ongoing issues: damp, condensation) into resident's property; also water tank doors of the block aren't fixed properly and pigeons can nest in the area thereby contaminating the water
- Vanguard House: water leaking into ceiling of kitchen & sitting room (severely overcrowded 5 persons (incl. young child) in 1 bedroom flat) from roof and water pressure has been altered because of incident in the cleaning team's area which led to pipes bursting in resident's kitchen. This has led to leaking into elderly neighbour beneath.
- Marsh Court: water flowing from overflow pipe ongoing since 2018 (official complaint made to Clarion) MP/Merton Council's Environmental are aware of case)
- Mychell House: (similar to Marsh Court) water pipe expelling water all day (Technical Inspection Officer, Caretaker and Neighbourhood officer are aware of this)
- May Court: A resident with multiple sclerosis & (young children) has unfinished work to be completed from a water leak which occurred in the summer of this 2019. Damp and condensation in property have developed to the point whereby the resident's health is at a very serious risk.

Pippa Maslin provided a written contribution

- Clarion subjected leaseholders to unreasonable major work's bills, compelling us to have new windows whether we wanted them or not. Originally told we would have to pay £13,000 over two years for new windows, inspections for asbestos, and the checking of and, if necessary, repairs to the roofs. None of us had a problem with the inspections, checks and repairs, but the price for the windows was ridiculous and they would not listen to anyone who did not need their windows replaced. Indeed, a few of the leaseholders got alternative quotes and even spotted that we needed different types of windows to the ones that Clarion had identified as suitable. Thus, Clarion changed the plan and, eventually, we each ended up paying about £5000 instead of £13,000. Furthermore, the people who did the work left a real mess, failing to use enough dust sheets and leaving all sorts of waste in people's gardens.
- Little is done to help make the estate a nice place to live
- No one makes sure that the playground is used appropriately. Smoking, drug taking and drinking take place there and parents are reluctant to allow their children in there.
- The various sheds for residents are in an awful state and need replacing.

In response to the speakers, the Head of Responsive Repairs explained;

- Moffatt Court has had relined gutters

- Marsh court – The condition and age of the block is a factor. The pipework configuration requires gaining entry to all flats. Residents will be rehomed in 18 months as part of the regeneration plans.
- Customer satisfaction from December is the first time all indicators have been green.

In response to Panel Members questions, the Head of Responsive Repairs and the Planned Investment Manager clarified;

- Lifts have a maintenance cycle of every 3-5 weeks. Investment is being considered in the next financial year.
- Data produced - real time info, no manual interference.
- Clarion agreed to share their quarterly figures.
- Clarion recognise there is an issue with the maintenance of the communal areas.
- Section 20s – we always seek the best value for Clarion and residents. We undertake aerial surveys to ensure work needs to be done. Whilst we recognise that cheaper quotes can be obtained by residents for the work, we have stringent Health and Safety regulations to adhere to.
- Clarion will follow up whether the job reference number can be communicated to the out of hours service as this has been a frustration for residents.
- Clarion are trialling a text service for resident satisfaction after any jobs are completed. If the trial is successful the app will be rolled out.

ACTION: The Director of Housing agreed with the Chair for the implementation of a working group consisting of senior Clarion representatives and Cllr Irons and Cllr Stanford to undertake site visits to those areas highlighted by residents, starting with Eastfields and High Path. The Director of Merton Regeneration suggested exploring using the Merton Community Panel as a focus for this activity.

ACTION: Clarion agreed to return to the Panel in the next municipal year, along with their annual data so the Panel can look at the trends.

5 DIESEL LEVY IMPLEMENTATION (Agenda Item 5)

The Director of Environment and Regeneration introduced the report and invited the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment to elaborate further.

In response to Members questions, the Director of Environment and Regeneration and the Environmental Health Pollution Manager and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport and the Head of Parking Services clarified;

- Consultation process starts in May 2020.
- CPZ's are triggered by petitions and resident led. This will continue to be the policy.
- The metrics for success will include air pollution levels and the health benefits.
- The borough does not yet comply with the Air Quality objective, we continue to monitor 50 spots in the borough
- The EQIA will be discussed with equality groups and mitigation action points looked at.
- A Panel member requested whether any other additional data sources inform the policy? Environmental Health Pollution Manager agreed to share the 3 year trends with the panel when they are available.

- A Panel member requested whether the TFL journey data shows any shift to public transport? The Head of Parking Services agreed this will be included in the Cabinet report.

Councillor David Dean raised a motion which is “If this Council believes diesel cars are dirty then every diesel car should be treated the same way”. The motion was seconded by Councillor Daniel Holden and debated by the Panel. (Two votes for, six against) Motion fell.

A Panel Member raised a motion requesting that “Cabinet considers the full EQIA of their proposals The distribution of vehicles should be looked at. Heavier polluting in some parts of the borough. There is an Equality Impact issue in terms of the changes to visitor permits. The Chair commented that permits are already being looked at and requested further clarification on the term ‘vehicle distribution’.

A Panel Member asked the Director of Environment and Regeneration whether it would be possible to obtain this type of data. The Director of E&R explained we would need to request whether the DVLA could provide this. The Director of E&R queried the link to the EQIA as geography is not a protected characteristic.

Cabinet considers the full Equality Impact of their proposals across the borough by looking at the available data on car vehicle ownership by area to see if it impacts the EQIA. Danil Holden seconded. Two votes for, six abstentions

The Chair queried whether the vote should pass given that there isn’t enough positive support for the motion and if the Panel were clear on what the recommendation was. Not enough conclusion to pass it.

Revote (Two votes for, six against). Motion fell.

Panel RESOLVED (eight votes for, none against) to make the following reference to Cabinet:

“This Panel recommends that Cabinet look at the available evidence with the intention of putting a greater focus on incentives to encourage and support residents to change vehicles to less polluting types, including examples from other boroughs’.

6 AIR QUALITY - ACTION PLAN (Agenda Item 6)

The Environmental Health Pollution Manager (Air Quality) gave an overview of the action plan.

7 PERFORMANCE MONITORING (Agenda Item 7)

Cllr Butler and the Director of Environment and Regeneration reviewed a small number of the KPI’s.

8 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 8)

The work programme was agreed.

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17 March 2020

Wards: All

Subject: Waste and street cleansing service performance update report

Lead officer: John Bosley - Assistant Director Public Space

Lead member: Cllr Tobin Byers - Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment

Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board

Contact officer: Charles Baker – Commissioning Manger Public Space

Recommendations:

- A. The Committee are asked to note the content of the report and provide officers with any comments regarding their experience, or reports they have received relating to the waste, recycling and street cleaning services.
- B. The Committee note the content of the Local Improvement Plan (LIP) prepared by our service provider, Veolia.
- C. The Committee note the recommended changes in the governance structure and role of the South London Waste Partnership (SLWP).

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is intended to provide Members with an update on the performance of the waste, recycling and street-cleaning service over the last six (6) months since the committee last reviewed the service in September 2019.
- 1.2. The committee will receive a separate paper detailing the current progress of the areas highlighted from the presentation of the previous report (Waste and street cleansing service performance report) during the meeting on the 3rd September 2019.

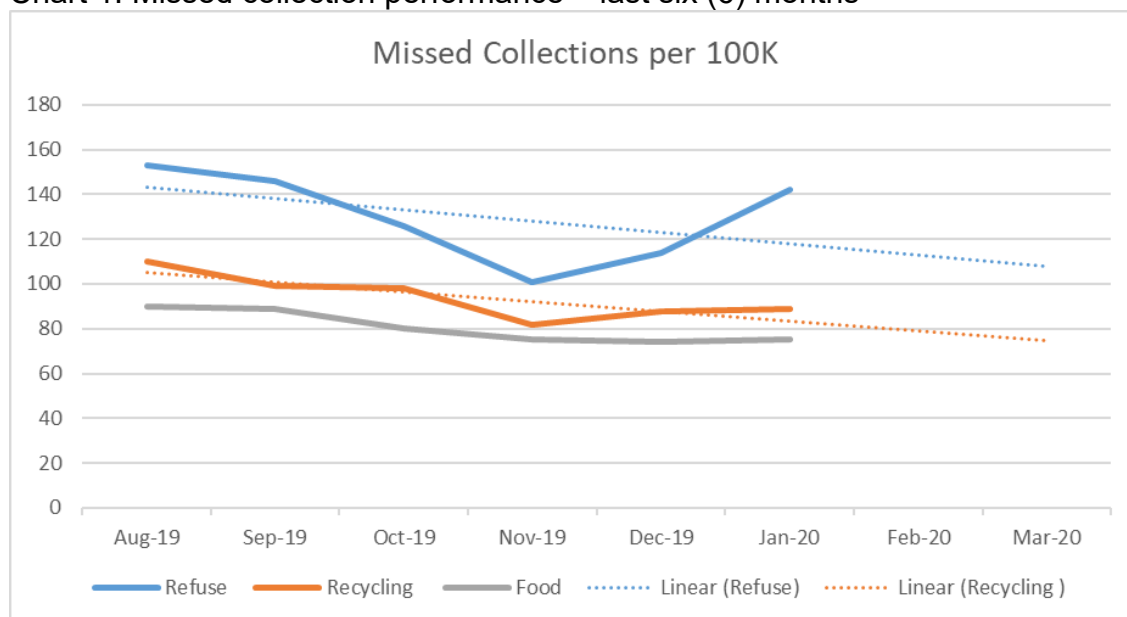
2 DETAILS

Waste collection – performance summary

- 2.1. Since Sept 2019, the trend for the number of missed collections /per 100K have fallen steadily on all collection streams. Veolia acknowledges that this improvement needs to continue and the local management teams within Veolia are continuously working with the operatives and the Client team to develop further service improvements in order to achieve the required contractual standard.
- 2.2. Chart 1 below, illustrates the level of missed collections per 100k collections which have been reported within 48hrs of the scheduled collection date.

Whilst there was an anticipated increase in January following the Christmas seasonal collection period, the general trend is demonstrating a steady decrease in the number of reported and actionable missed collections.

Chart 1. Missed collection performance – last six (6) months



2.3. Table 1 below, illustrates the comparison in missed collections over the last six (6) months as compared to the previous six (6) months and builds on the improvement illustrated in Chart 1 above. In summary, this equates to an average one (1) missed collection per crew per day. It should be noted, the higher value of garden waste missed collections is as a direct result of the methodology of the calculation based on c9, 900 customers.

	June - Sept	Oct - Jan
REFUSE	152	120
RECYCLING	108	89
FOOD	92	76
GARDEN	654	429

2.4. The client team has been recently working with Veolia, supported by bespoke advice materials and individual door-step assistance and support, to address non-conformance with the Council's excess residual waste policy.

2.5. The approach to tackle this issue is through a phased educational enforcement programme. The firsts phase has been successful and of the 1393 properties initially assessed, 208 properties received further notification of presenting excess waste. During the next collection cycle, 117 properties were identified and this was followed by the last collection cycle whereas only 28 properties presented excess waste, which is just 2% of the collection round.

2.6. A further phased delivery programme to implement this strategy in managing the excess waste collection issue is being planned for imminent delivery (early March 2020), with the next phase concentrating on the two adjacent collection rounds.

- 2.7. The client team will also be working with Veolia on the delivery of *service standards* undertaken during the collection service. This is a focus on improving the general standards when collections occur, such as the replacement of containers where they were collected from and tidiness of any spillages which may have occurred during the collection.
- 2.8. In addition to service standards, the containment of waste and recyclables is an important facet to minimise litter and waste being attacked by vermin. Recycling box lids are available for recycling containers and we are currently working on the most efficient way to get these to people who require them to improve containment of recyclables and limit wind-blown recycling litter.
- 2.9. Whilst the general improvement trend is positive, we are mindful of the need to further increase both the reliability of the service as well as the focused areas of improvement, listed below, over the course of the next financial year.
- 2.10. A summary of the areas of improvement within the collection services are;

Service standard issues – replacement of wheeled bins and recycling containers	Conclusion of estates waste containment reviews; including modifying recycling facilities decrease contamination levels
Collections from properties above shops, including time-banding	Side waste collections – Programme to eliminate requirement

Street Cleansing - performance summary

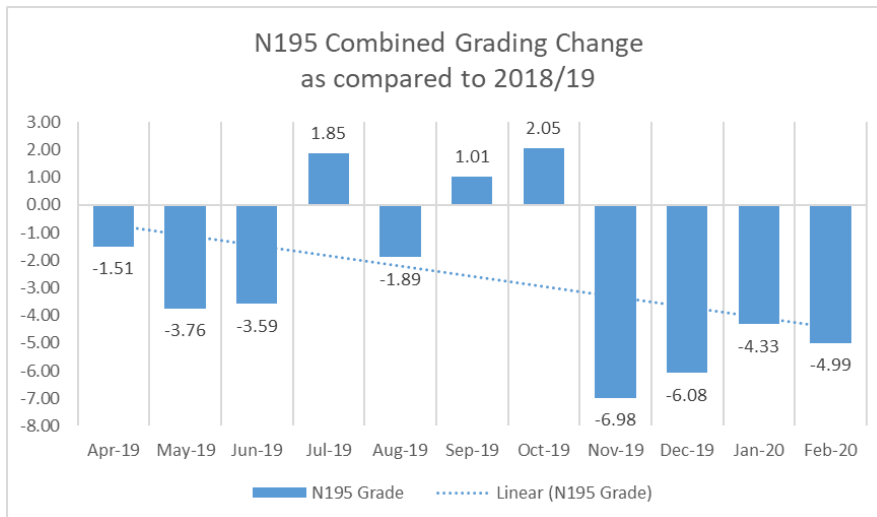
- 2.11. The street cleansing service continues to be a priority area of focus for our Client team, Veolia and our residents.
- 2.12. The standards associated with the delivery of the street cleansing service has not been optimal and this has been recognised and addressed by Veolia through the development actions outlined in the Local Improvement Plan to address deficiencies in the service, details of which are summarised in the table in 2.32.
- 2.13. The Council's performance monitoring officer continues to undertake both monthly and quarterly inspections at random sites across the borough to assess the level of contract performance separately. The data from these inspections provides an independent insight into the street cleanliness of Merton's roads over time.
- 2.14. The graphs below compare the results of these inspections over time. The scores are based on the former National Indicator (NI-195) for street cleanliness; LBM's performance target that is currently applied is less than 8% for litter and less than 10% for detritus; both of which are stricter targets than previous years.
- 2.15. The current service being delivered is consistently below the required standard, which is only being achieved on average 67% of the time over the last 3 years based on inspections undertaken by the service

2.16. The table below illustrates the current performance (street litter and detritus combined) over the last 4 years

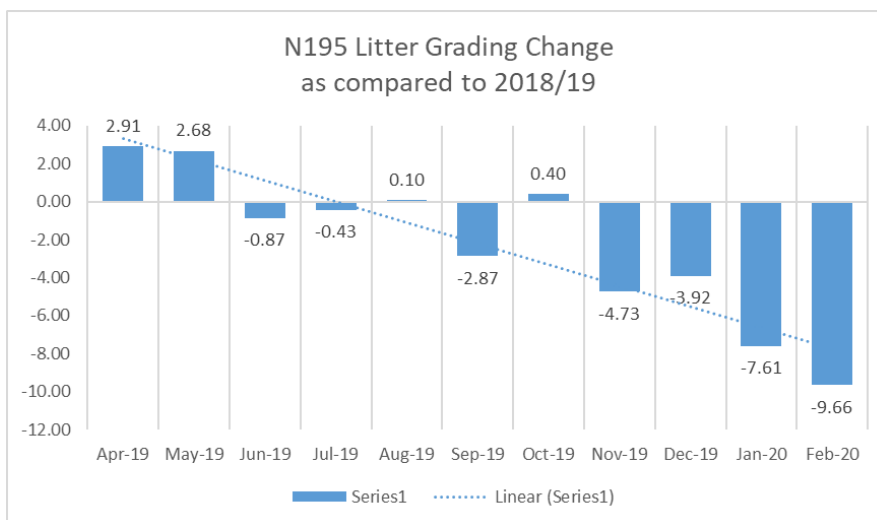
	A	B+	B	B-	C	C-	D
2016/17	0	0	82%	16%	1%	0	0
2017/18	0	0	66%	30%	3%	0	0
2018/19	0	0	68%	29%	3%	0	0
2019/20	0	0	71%	25%	3%	0	0

2.17. The Council’s client team has been seeing general performance improvements in the overall quality and outcomes achieved by the service over the last six (6) months as demonstrated by the following charts which are based on survey results by the Council’s performance monitoring officer.

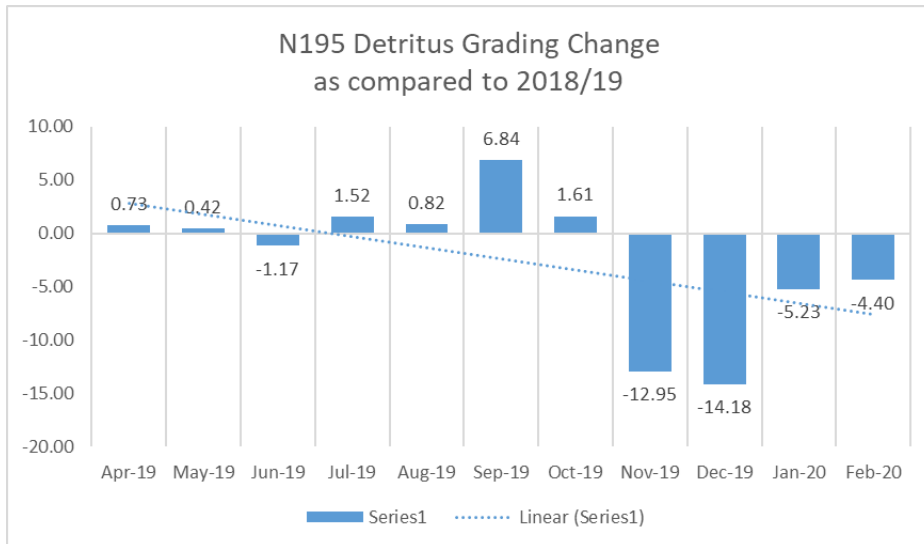
2.18. Chart 2. Improved outcomes through the reduced rate of inspection failures for assessments of streets for litter, detritus and weeds as compared to the same period last year.



2.19. Chart 3. The following chart demonstrates improvements in performance with litter collections within the contract as compared to last year.



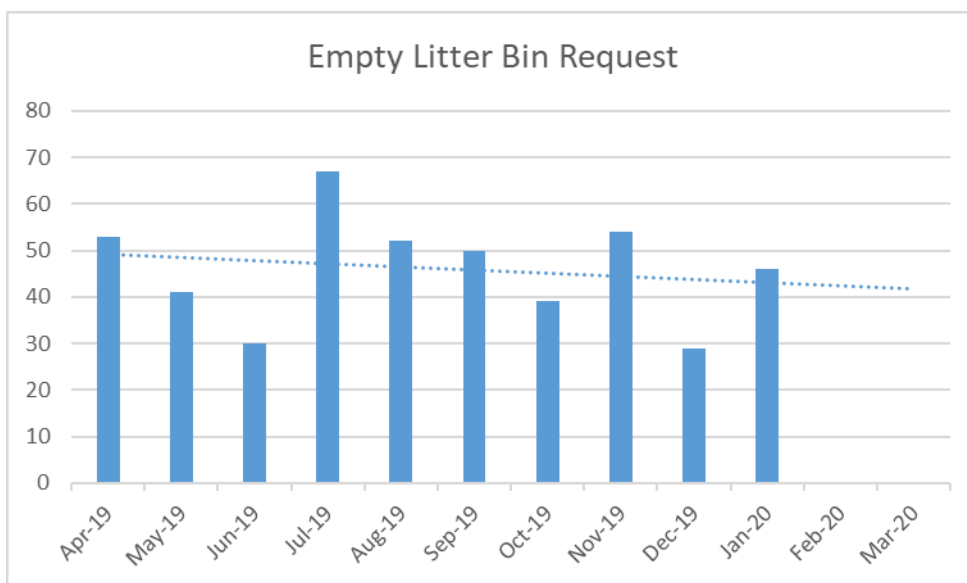
2.20. Chart 4. The below chart also demonstrates improved performance in the area of detritus cleansing as compared to last year. However, it also expresses that the trend of improvement is slower in this area. The Client team has identified this as an area for further investigation to determine barriers that may be limiting performance improvement and we will be targeting this within the next year's plan of action.



2.21. Further detailed performance data of monitored contract performance is attached in Appendix 1. This information details the granularity of information that is undertaken and will be further used to focus and prioritise the specific areas across the borough where we will collectively focus in order to further improve the service deliverables.

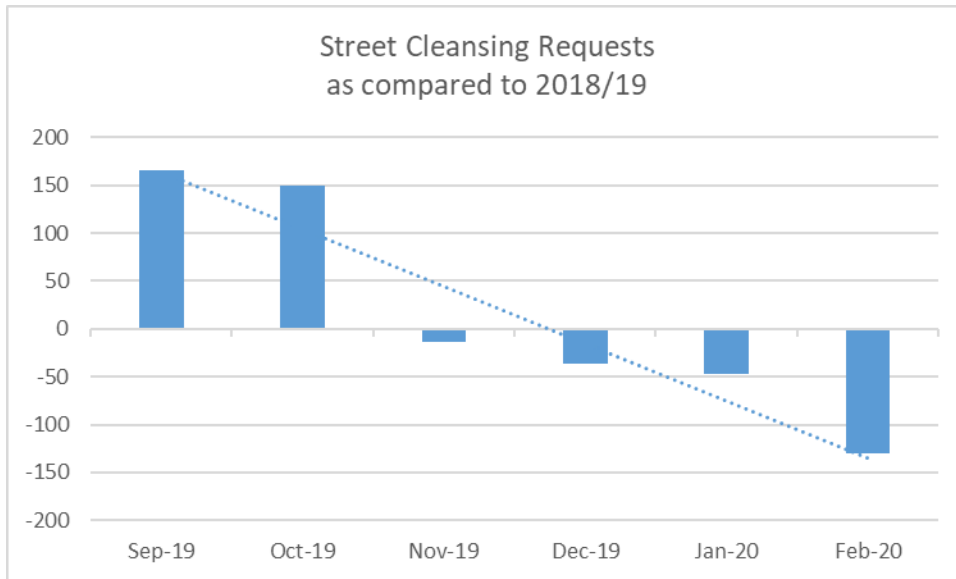
2.22. Over the last six months, we have received 270 reports of overflowing litterbins compared to 347 (22% reduction) for the same period the previous year. Over this period over 90% of all reported incidents have been rectified within the service level agreement as illustrated in the table below.

Chart 5. Overflowing litter bin reports – trend analysis



- 2.23. The most important indicator in measuring performance is the reduction of customer requests. The below analysis over the last six (6) months demonstrates that the trend is a decreasing amount of enquiries received.

Chart 6. Customer service requests (from Council CRM System)



- 2.24. The above analysis is further supported by the decreasing number of complaints managed through by the client's service team. A reduction of 93% in complaints associated with all services, when comparing the last six (6) months against the volume of complaint in 2018/19, has been observed (8473 as compared to 592). We are, however, mindful that there is a necessary requirement to further improve service deliverables.

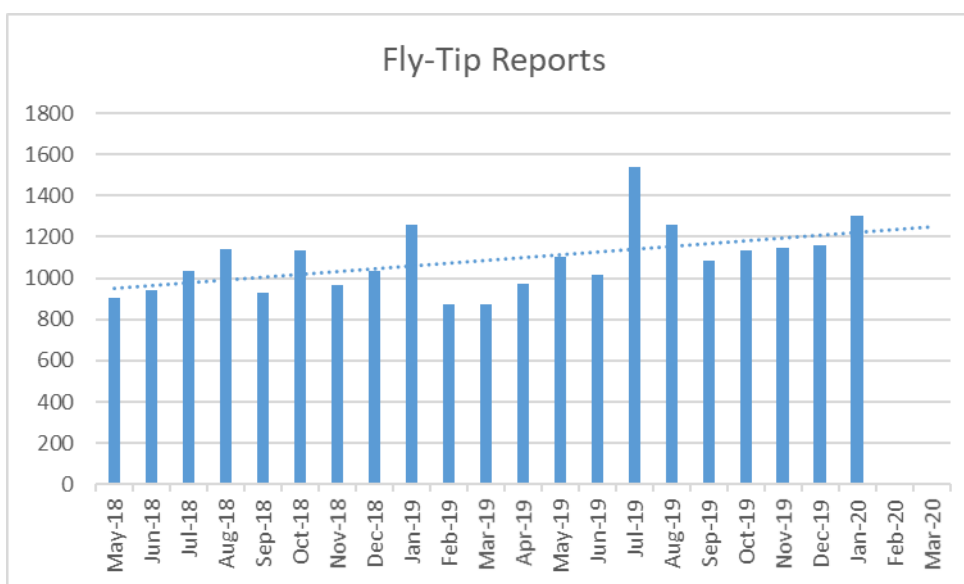
Fly-Tipping

- 2.25. A pressure on the service that both impacts the perceived visual amenity of our communities and the public's perception of the cleanliness of the borough is fly-tipping. This is being addressed by the service through the creation, consultation and adoption of the Council's fly-tipping strategy and through persistent enforcement action.
- 2.26. The Council's fly-tipping strategy, which was drafted and consulted on through Member workshops in December 2019, is further supported by the Fly-tipping Action Plan that is utilised by the enforcement team to coordinate specific actions to minimise these occurrences, through a range of both direct and indirect (i.e. communications and education) actions.
- 2.27. In terms of the impact on the service, the following charts demonstrates the growth pressure in this area and the contractor's performance in responding to these occurrences.
- 2.28. Our contractor's role in relation to fly tipping is to remove all reported fly-tips on public land within the SLA time frame. The table below illustrates Veolia's performance improvement since May 18 and the impact of the service

change in Oct 18 and their ability to respond within 24hrs. In order to maintain the level of service required Veolia has supplied additional resource, including two additional response teams, to assist in dealing with the increase in volume of fly-tipping.

- 2.29. Over the last 6 months (August 19 – Jan 2020) our service provider has responded to 99% of 7,091 fly-tips within SLA (24hours of reporting).
- 2.30. We continue to see a significant increase in the number of reported fly-tips and abandoned waste within the borough. In last calendar year there have been 13,423 reported fly-tips. The table below demonstrates the number of public reported fly tips since May 2018.

Chart 7. Fly-tipping service requests



- 2.31. Again, there has been a demonstrable improvement over the last six (6) months with the street cleansing range of services, but the improvement in this area will be of the highest priority of the client team over the next financial year.
- 2.32. The prioritisation of focus will be in improving the reliability of the service outcomes for residents and enhancing the cleansing standards in know hotspots.
- 2.33. The areas of improvement within the collection services are as follows;

Service delivery focus in improving the cleansing of detritus. Supported by reviewing with Veolia the effectiveness of the current schedule	Enhancements to the Client monitoring of the service. The Divisional restructure will focus more client officer time to monitoring and managing service delivery
Improved use of data and data systems to proactively deploy resources to improve localised service delivery	Increased monitoring of street cleansing in communities by doubling inspections with the aim to inspect all streets at least twice
Continued delivery of the outlined	Delivery of <i>the future improvement</i>

<p>objectives of the Local Improvement Plan which has the aims to improve baseline standards in street cleansing by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the supervisory structure of Veolia • Training, retraining and measuring staff outputs • Changes to the schedules of cleansing routes • Targeted deep cleansing of areas with persistent need 	<p>initiatives as outlined in the Local Improvement Plan;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping and development of an East borough sub-depot • Mechanised pavement cleansing (<i>Jockey Team</i>) to improve detritus cleansing • PROW cleansing scheduling and improvements to regularity of cleansing
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SLWP Contract Management

- 2.34. The Authorised Officer for the contract is the SLWP Strategic Partnership Manager and there is a separate Contract Manager for the Veolia contract within the partnership team. These roles are responsible for the management of the contract across all four of the partner authorities, LB Merton, LB Sutton, LB Croydon and RB Kingston.
- 2.35. During this year, the SLWP Partnership commissioned an independent review to look at the current governance arrangements and the client contract management functionality, testing its current model effectiveness and where improvements can be made to the benefit of local borough outcomes.
- 2.36. The review has highlighted a number of recommendations for the SLWP strategic management group to consider in relation to moving towards a localised contract management arrangement, moving to a more traditional direct management relationship between the Council and the service provider.
- 2.37. To address the principle accountabilities required to work effectively within a wider inter-borough partnership, the establishment and implementation of a new Joint Waste Officer Board (JWOB) has been agreed, which will comprise membership of the Head of Service (or equivalent) from each partnering borough.
- 2.38. The JWOB will be in effect from the next financial year, allowing the SLWP to focus on data analytics, strategic work, along with forward planning, whilst enabling localised focus on service deliverables by the Council's client team.

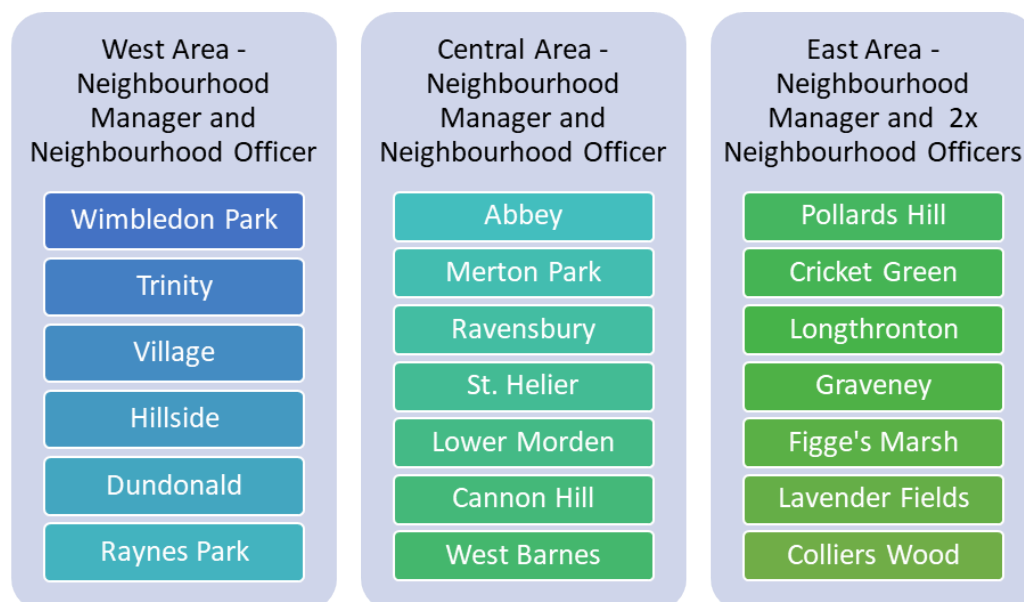
LBM Service and Contract Management

- 2.39. The operational performance of the contract is overseen and managed by our Neighbourhood Client Team, consisting of three experienced Neighbourhood Client Officers (NCOs), who monitor the contract through site visits and daily interaction with the contractors' Neighbourhood Environmental Managers, residents, stakeholders and local Members.
- 2.40. The Neighbourhood Client Team also gather business intelligence, performance information and analyse data held in the Council's customer

management system. In addition, they have access to the contractor's operational business management systems in order to determine what resources are being used in order to deliver the services.

- 2.41. To further improve the delivery of outcomes for the service users and to improve our confidence that the contract is maintaining improvements, the client team is being redesigned through a Divisional restructure.
- 2.42. A priority focus in the business case to support the restructure is improvements to contract monitoring and management outcomes, being achieved by increasing the representative sample size of inspections across the whole of the service.
- 2.43. The future directional of travel to support the above improvements in street cleansing contract management is being based on a neighbourhood approach with a focus on having officers '*in the field*' to further raise the focus of client management with the service provider and to improve the management of customer, residents and Member's needs.

Fig. 1 Neighbourhood approach by areas and Wards;



3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. None, for the purposes of this report

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. In Dec 2019 and Jan 2020 the Public Space department undertook a series of Members engagement sessions, Cllr Tobin Byers chaired a series of five (5) separate workshops, one for each waste collection day, to which all councillors of wards covered by the particular collection day were invited. As a consequence, there was cross party representation at four (4) of the five (5) workshops. The aim of the meetings was to consider the early evidence from the rollout and hear from the ward councillors about issues arising.
- 4.2. It should be noted that these were not meetings to deal with specific casework, rather they provided an opportunity to discuss the broader issues

that were affecting waste collection and cleanliness in their specific wards in a spirit of partnership working alongside both Veolia and the Client team representatives.

- 4.3. The round table discussions were useful and productive. The opportunity to engage with all Parties and Wards were incredibly valuable in ensuring mutual understanding of concerns and operational challenges. Local knowledge was shared and useful suggestions offered, which is key to a successful partnership approach.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. Contained within the content of the report

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None, for the purposes of this report

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. None, for the purposes of this report

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Further refinements to or improvements of the service have been considered and are subject to the original scope of service. No direct changes which have the potential to impact human rights, equalities or community cohesion have been identified.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The direct management of risk and health and safety provision for this service area is managed by the Client contract management team. There are no further changes or impact envisaged for the purposes of this report

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

- Appendix 1 – Localised street cleansing grading data (Litter)

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. **Cabinet** Jan 2020 – Annual Review and other matters relating to the Veolia Street cleaning and waste contract.
- 12.2. **Cabinet** Dec 2019 – Presentation of the Local Improvement Plan for street cleansing services developed by Veolia.
- 12.3. **Sustainable Communities Scrutiny and Overview Committee** Feb 2020 Annual Review and other matters relating to the Veolia Street cleaning and waste contract.
- 12.4. **Standards and General Purposes Committee** - March 2020 Environmental Enforcements update.

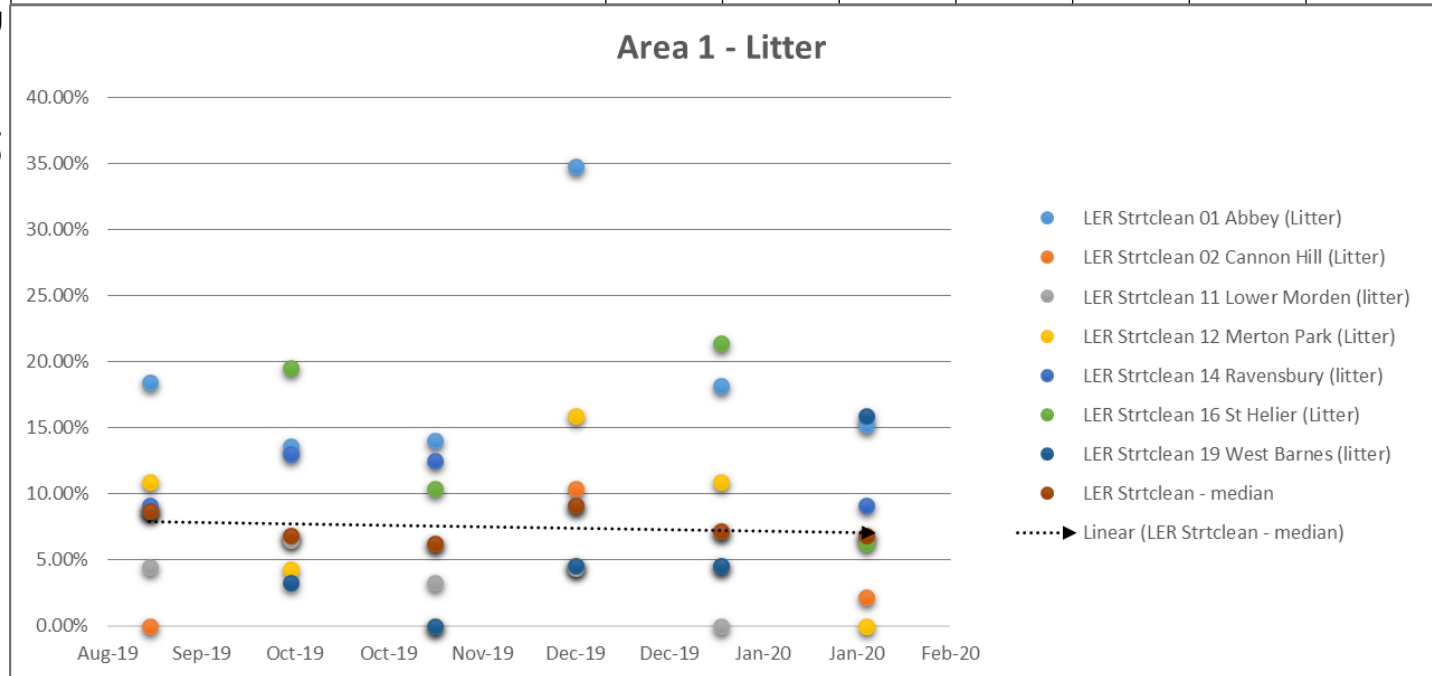
- 12.5. **Sustainable Communities Scrutiny and Overview Committee – Sept 2019 Review of the performance of Veolia.**
- Sustainable Communities Scrutiny and Overview Committee – Sept 2019 Fly tipping strategy.**

APPENDIX 1 – LOCALISED STREET CLEANSING GRADING DATA (LITTER)

Area 1

PI code and description	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	YTD result
LER Strtclean 01 Abbey (Litter)	18.48%	13.64%	14%	34.78%	18.18%	15.22%	20.08%
LER Strtclean 02 Cannon Hill (Litter)	0%	6.82%	6.25%	10.42%	7.14%	2.17%	5.04%
LER Strtclean 11 Lower Morden (litter)	4.44%	6.52%	3.26%	4.35%	0%	6.82%	4.48%
LER Strtclean 12 Merton Park (Litter)	10.87%	4.26%	0%	15.91%	10.87%	0.00%	6.50%
LER Strtclean 14 Ravensbury (litter)	9.09%	13.04%	12.50%	9.09%	4.55%	9.09%	13.44%
LER Strtclean 16 St Helier (Litter)	8.70%	19.57%	10.42%	4.55%	21.43%	6.25%	12.55%
LER Strtclean 19 West Barnes (litter)	8.70%	3.26%	0%	4.55%	4.55%	15.91%	3.75%
LER Strtclean - median	8.70%	6.82%	6.25%	9.09%	7.14%	6.82%	6.50%

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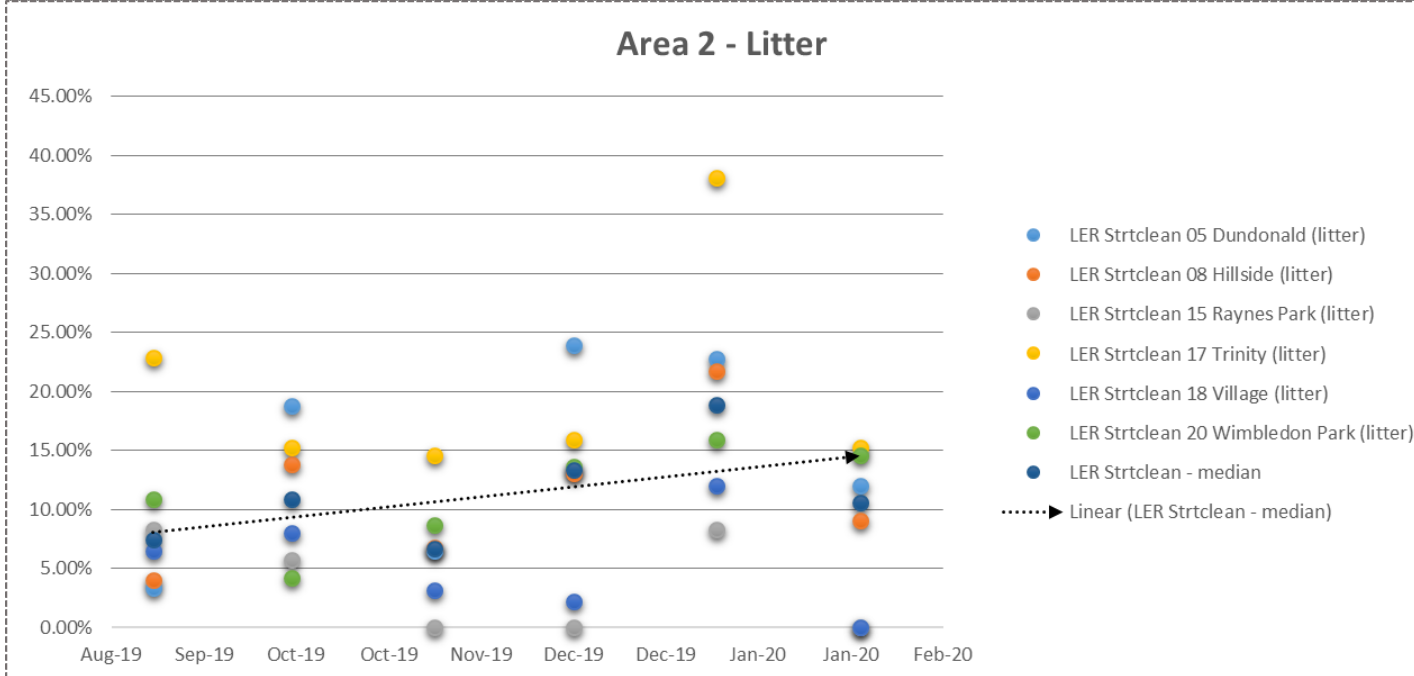


Area 2

PI code and description	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	YTD result
LER Strtclean 05 Dundonald (litter)	3.33%	18.75%	6.52%	23.91%	22.73%	12.00%	12.64%
LER Strtclean 08 Hillside (litter)	4%	13.83%	6.82%	13.04%	21.74%	9.09%	14.12%
LER Strtclean 15 Raynes Park (litter)	8.33%	5.68%	0%	0%	8.33%	0.00%	6.92%
LER Strtclean 17 Trinity (litter)	22.83%	15.22%	14.58%	15.91%	38.10%	15.22%	23.09%
LER Strtclean 18 Village (litter)	6.52%	8%	3.13%	2.17%	12%	0%	5.56%
LER Strtclean 20 Wimbledon Park (litter)	10.87%	4.17%	8.70%	13.64%	15.91%	14.58%	11.41%
LER Strtclean - median	7.43%	10.92%	6.67%	13.34%	18.83%	10.55%	12.03%

Area 2 - Litter

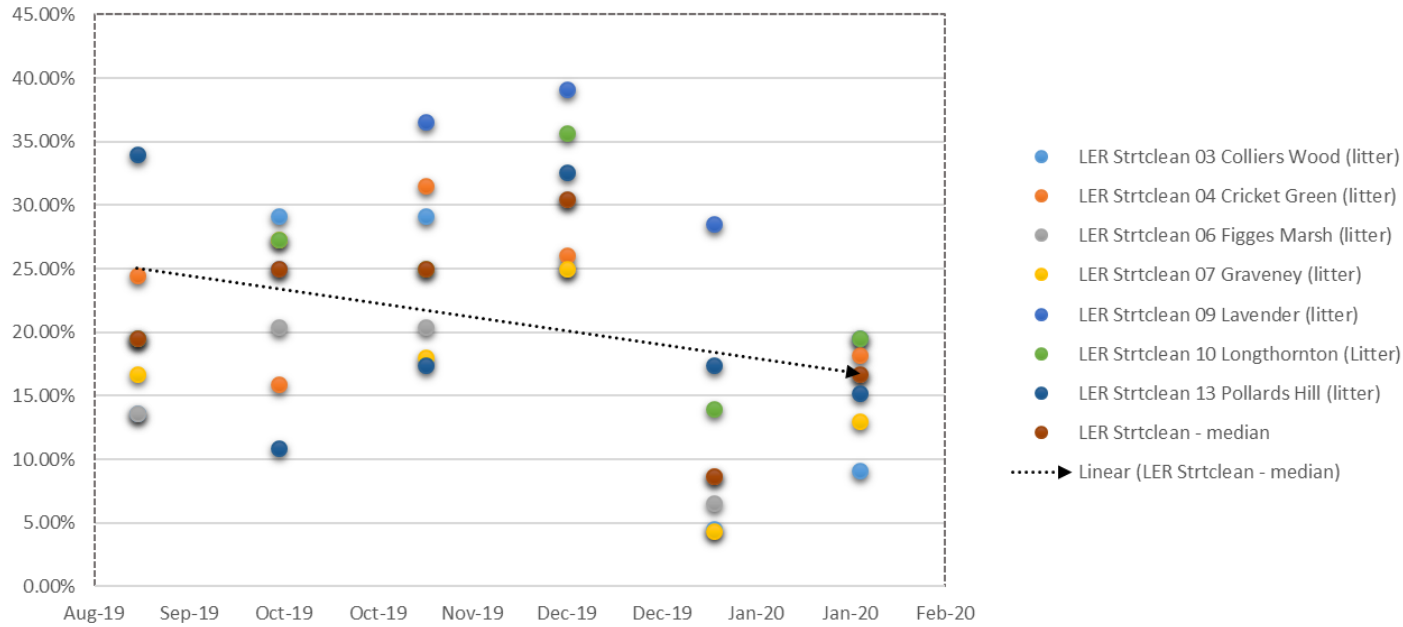
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Area 3

PI code and description	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	YTD result
LER Strtclean 03 Colliers Wood (litter)	13.64%	29.17%	29.17%	25%	4.55%	9.09%	22.18%
LER Strtclean 04 Cricket Green (litter)	24.49%	15.91%	31.52%	26.09%	8.70%	18.18%	22.12%
LER Strtclean 06 Figges Marsh (litter)	13.64%	20.45%	20.45%	30.43%	6.52%	16.67%	19.71%
LER Strtclean 07 Graveney (litter)	16.67%	27.27%	18%	25%	4.35%	13.04%	20.36%
LER Strtclean 09 Lavender (litter)	19.57%	25%	36.54%	39.13%	28.57%	19.57%	26.97%
LER Strtclean 10 Longthornton (Litter)	19.57%	27.27%	25%	35.71%	14%	20%	28.23%
LER Strtclean 13 Pollards Hill (litter)	34%	10.87%	17.39%	32.61%	17.39%	15.22%	25.10%
LER Strtclean - median	19.57%	25.00%	25.00%	30.43%	8.70%	16.67%	23.52%

Area 3 - Litter



Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17th March 2020

Agenda item:

Subject: Support to Private Rented Sector Tenants

Lead officer: Steve Langley, Head of Housing Needs

Lead member: Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport.

Contact officer: Steve Langley, Head of Housing Needs

Recommendations:

A. No decision will be required as the report is for information only.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to set out how the Council provides advice and support to private renters in Merton.

2 DETAILS

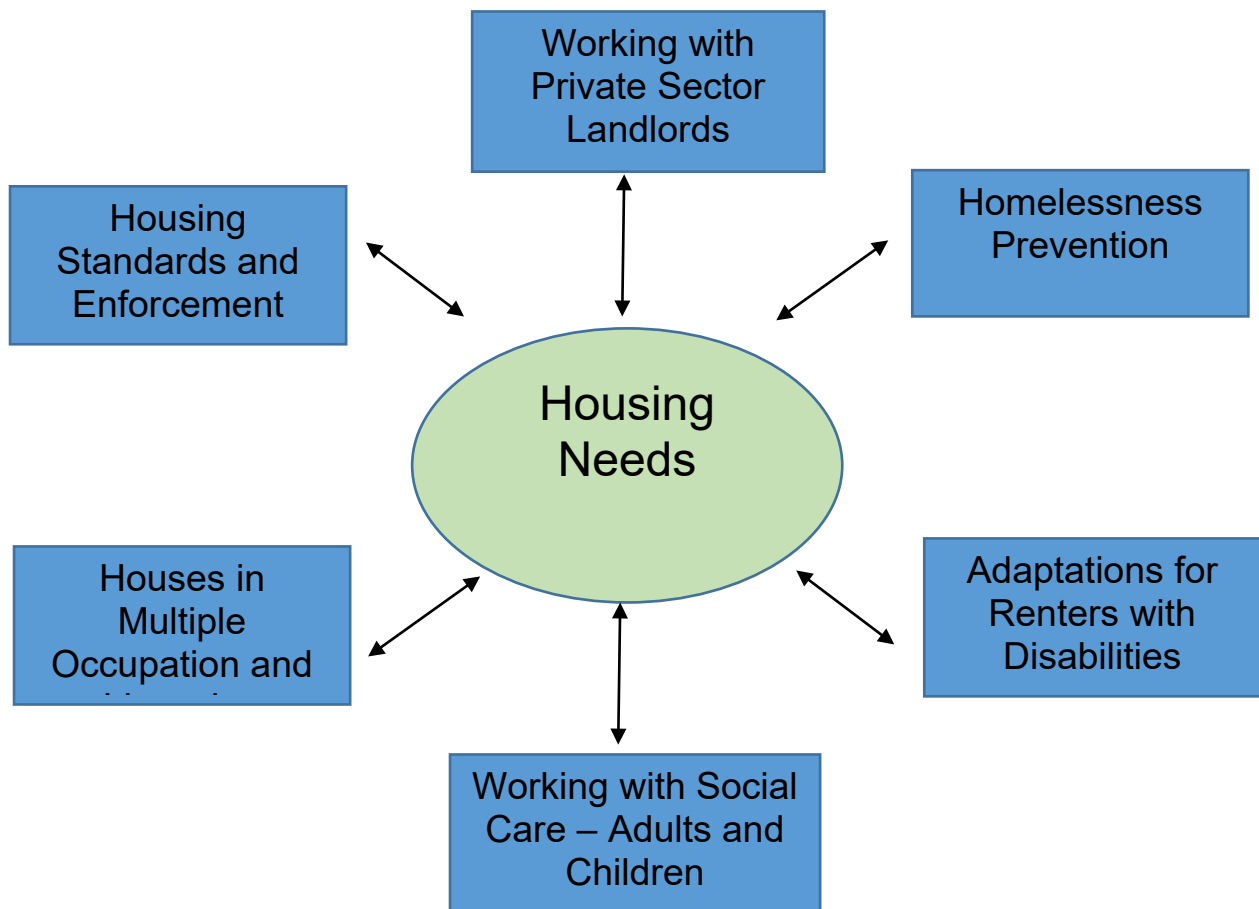
The Merton context.

Private sector housing plays a significant part in the housing provision within Merton accounting for 24.8% of supply and it is recognised that for the vast majority of private renters they occupy their homes peacefully and quietly without any need for interventions by the Council and its officers.

The Private Rented Sector is complex with 140 Acts of Parliament containing more than 400 individual regulations. It is important therefore that there is a joined up and co-ordinated approach in resolving private rented difficulties.

Private Sector support broadly falls into 6 areas:-

- Working with private sector landlords
- Housing standards and enforcement
- Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Homelessness Prevention
- Adaptations to renters with disabilities
- Working with Social Care (Adults and Children)



2.1. **Housing Standards and Enforcement**

Private sector housing plays a significant part in the housing provision within Merton. It is recognised that the majority of this housing is in good condition and well managed, however nationally the conditions in the private rented sector (PRS) tend to be less satisfactory than any other occupancy type. The Council has a responsibility to deal with unsatisfactory housing that presents health and safety hazards to the occupier.

It is not disputed that the private rented sector should provide high standards, secure swift and effective access to justice and that the large volume of powers to protect tenants from poor housing are being used.

The Council takes a proactive approach to dealing with “rogue landlords” and improving housing conditions in the borough, thus seeking to ensure that private renters can occupy their homes safely.

Housing Enforcement Activity during 2018/19

Number of cases

Labels	Count of Ref
C013 - Licensing Consultation	2
C014 - Planning Consultation	1
EMPT - Pro-active Empty Property	3
F&V - Filthy & Verminous	3
GPAY - Grant Repayment Query	13
HDIS - Housing Disrepair	311
HIMI - Immigration Housing Survey	1
HMOA - HMO Advice	245
HMOG - General HMO	269
HOTH - Housing - Other	110
HS08 - H&S Advice	1
HS09 - General	1
MEN - Members/ MP Enquiry	51
P001 - Rats	52
P002 - Mice	24
P003 - Cockroaches	3
P005 - Other	1
PDRA - Drainage	33
PTEN - EH TEN Consultation	1
REFU - Refuse/Rubbish	113
URGE - Urgent Housing Request	13
WID - Works in Default	2
(blank)	
Grand Total	1253

Upon consideration of all available evidence the Council has a number of options to resolve a private tenant's difficulties: Take no action, offer informal action/advice, serve a statutory notice, issue a formal caution, prosecute, carry out works in default.

2.2. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) & Licensing

Some privately rented houses are let to people from several different families, either as bedsits or as shared houses. Houses like this are known as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

HMOs provide a valuable source of rented housing to primarily single people in our area. However, this form of housing can be problematic due to fire safety issues and poor standards such as dampness, lack of affordable heating etc.

HMOs present higher risk accommodation particularly when considering fire safety. For that reason larger HMOs (housing 5 or more people) require a licence. At the present time there are 180 licenced HMOs in the borough and officers are working hard to identify any others to safeguard the occupiers.

Identifying, inspecting and licensing of HMOs became more challenging when the requirement to licence was extended in October 2018, where previously there was no requirement to register these dwellings.

Landlords operating licensable HMOs without a licence are committing a criminal offence. It is our legal responsibility to monitor and enforce the new law to improve housing conditions for the tenants.

The housing enforcement team identified 3 dwellings which were required to have a licence but the Landlord failed to apply. All three cases were to the subject of a criminal investigation and all three landlords were prosecuted. Offences included failure to licence an HMO, fire safety and HMO Management Regulations.

Selective Licensing Development

The council is currently exploring and investigating data to determine the legal viability of introducing a Selective Licensing scheme within the borough.

The selective licensing scheme is a discretionary one, which would require all private landlords (with certain exemptions operating within a designated zone) to operate under the terms of a licence awarded by the Council.

Licence conditions typically include a range of requirements aimed at ensuring that properties are safe and are managed in a satisfactory way.

Such a scheme would provide the Council with an additional tool to help better regulate privately rented accommodation and to uplift standards of management within the area. Selective licence schemes last for five years and there is a fee payable to apply for the licence which covers the cost of the administration and implementation of the scheme, including any required enforcement activity for non-compliance.

Civil Penalties

Section 23 and 126 and Schedule 9 to the Housing and Planning Act 2016 amended the Housing Act 2004 so as to provide for the imposition of civil penalties as an alternative to prosecution for certain specified housing offences.

This power is set out at section 249A of the Housing Act 2004, which states that a “local housing authority” may impose a financial penalty on a person if satisfied, beyond reasonable doubt, that the person’s conduct amounts to a relevant housing offence in respect of premises in England. A relevant housing offence for these purposes means one of the following offences under the Housing Act 2004.

- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice.
- Offences in relation to the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- Offences in relation to licensing of houses under Part 3 of the Act if the Council adopted selective or additional licensing in the future.
- Contravention of an overcrowding notice.
- Failure to comply with management regulations in respect of Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- Breach of a banning order.

Only one penalty, of up to £30,000 may be imposed on a person in respect of the same offence.

The Council has a number of cases in the pipeline where a Civil Penalty / Prosecution may be necessary and appropriate. A Civil Penalty Notice for a Housing Act 2004 breach of regulations has been served. The Notice is currently within the statutory review period that is provided for the Landlord to challenge the Council. This period will end on the 25th February.

2.3. Adaptations for Private Renters with Disabilities

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are available from the Council to pay for essential housing adaptations to enable disabled people, including private renters, to stay in their own homes. The funding comes from Central Government.

How it works

It is a means tested grant, so targets the most help to those who cannot afford to adapt their homes.

To apply, a tenant has to be assessed initially by an Occupational Therapist (OT). Their role is to determine what works are necessary and appropriate to meet the tenant/his/her family’s need.

The next stage of the process is a technical assessment to see if the recommendation made by the OT can be implemented in the property. We need to assess if the works are reasonable and practical to be undertaken. The funding of DFG is provided by Central Government and distributed locally as the Better Care Fund.

This process ensures that any home adaptations we carry out are part of the overall health and care system to deliver joined up services.

2.4. **Prevention of Homelessness**

The prevention of homelessness, for private renters is a central plank to the work of the housing team. As the table below sets out the number of homelessness preventions have remained fairly consistent.

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Dec 2019 ytd
458	465	504	371

Officers carry out an assessment of each person's individual needs and look at what housing options are available to prevent their clients from becoming homeless. These include:

- Advice on security of tenure.
- Advice on Protection from Eviction.
- Legal Advocacy on tenant's behalf with private landlords.
- Negotiating with hosts to allow clients to continue to stay with them.
- Offering incentives to Landlords to renew tenancies
- Increasing the security of the homes of the victims of domestic violence via the sanctuary scheme to allow them to stay.
- Home visits to confirm the circumstances of the client.
- Rent and mortgage rescue scheme to pay arrears where clients meet the criteria
- Increased priority on the Council's waiting list where the requirements of the council's Housing Allocations and Nominations Policy are met.
- Offers of accommodation from the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme.
- Arranging local supported housing / hostel places for single people.

The Council also provides advice and assistance to private renters who visit the Council's offices. Housing Officers are available on a drop-in basis, or alternatively can contact officers via email or telephone. In addition the Housing Advice website provides advice and assistance on a range of private sector matters including security of tenure, illegal eviction etc.

2.11 SUMMARY

There has been a shift in activity within the Housing Enforcement Team from responsive to proactive. An inspection regime has been introduced for the known poor areas of housing to be inspected and hazards identified in a co-ordinated way. As part of this shift in activity, and given that resources in the team are small, we are seeking to increase capacity by recruiting additional staff.

Our renewed enforcement approach has been communicated to landlords and their agents through the local Landlords Forum.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1 Not applicable as report is for information only.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. Not applicable as report is for information only

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. Not applicable as report is for information only

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Not for the purposes of this report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. Not for the purposes of this report

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. Not applicable

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. None.

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

- None.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17 March 2020

Wards: All

Subject: Merton Adult Learning Annual Report 2018/19 (academic year)

Lead officer: Anthony Hopkins; Head of Library, Heritage & Adult Education Service

Lead member: Councillor Eleanor Stringer; Cabinet Member for Schools and Adult Education

Contact officer: Anthony Hopkins; Head of Library, Heritage & Adult Education Service

Recommendations:

-
1. That the Scrutiny Panel review and discuss the progress over the last year of the Adult Learning provision in the borough.
 2. That the Scrutiny Panel review the good outcomes from the Ofsted inspection of the service in October 2019.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Since August 2016 Merton's Adult Learning Service has been operating in a commissioning model. The strategic rationale for moving to a commissioning model was to ensure that education grants received maximised investment in Merton residents, supporting them to develop new skills and improve their life chances. The change also ensured that the service could be managed within the funding allocation received to ensure the sustainability of adult learning in the borough.
- 1.2. A refreshed set of strategic objectives for the service were agreed by Cabinet on 27 January 2020:
- 1.3. *"The London Borough of Merton is committed to providing high quality and sustainable adult learning in order to improve the social, economic, health and wellbeing of our residents. We will deliver this through a strategic investment approach: commissioning provision to the best providers in the field and by developing sophisticated evidence based approaches to what we deliver.*
- 1.4. *We aim to reduce inequalities across the borough by focussing a significant proportion of our investment on those most socially and / or economically disadvantaged whilst providing a broad range of learning opportunities to develop all of our resident's skills."*
- 1.5. In October 2019 Merton Adult Learning Service was subject to a full inspection by Ofsted under the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and were the first borough in London to be inspected under the new framework. The inspectors noted the good progress made since the previous inspection and awarded the service 'Good' in all six judgment areas. The Ofsted inspectors noted that, "Leaders and managers ensure

that learners benefit from high quality courses. They pay close attention to planning a curriculum that meets the social, economic and health priorities of the borough.”

2 DETAILS

2.1. Adult Learning Strategy

2.2. Earlier this year Cabinet agreed the refreshed strategic objectives for the Adult Learning Service. The objectives are to:

- Use an evidence based approach to commissioning to ensure the fullest return on investment.
- Embrace technological developments and support residents through the delivery of courses that improve learners’ economic and digital opportunities.
- Deliver courses to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and reduce social isolation.
- Continue to provide popular courses whilst expanding provision for families to encourage intergenerational learning.
- Increase the quality and number of courses in employability and ensure that a thread of employability and life skills is weaved into all courses.
- Provide targeted courses for adults to improve literacy and / or numeracy skills to enable learners to participate more fully socially and / or economically.
- Further develop the range of courses for learners with learning difficulties and / or disabilities to enable them to live as independently as possible to improve their wellbeing and life chances.
- Tailor the learning journey for all learners from beginning to end so that they progress onto new opportunities.
- Deliver excellent teaching and learning across providers and work collaboratively with them to ensure that best practice is shared and embedded in course provision.

2.3. Providers

2.1. Merton Adult Learning Service commissions a range of providers in the borough to deliver services on its behalf. Contracts are currently in place with the following providers:

- a) South Thames College Group – Main adult learning contract. Accounts for approximately 80% of the grant allocation for Merton.
- b) GSS (Global Solution Services) – Contract for the provision of community based accredited learning courses.
- c) RHACC (Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College) – Contract for the provision of courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities (LLDD).

- d) A range of smaller providers are also commissioned on an annual basis to deliver community based family learning and employability programmes. Current providers being used include City Lit, MiComputSolutions, The Assessment and Training Centre (TATC) and Adult Training Network (ATN).

2.2. **Ofsted Inspection**

2.3. Merton Adult Learning was inspected by Ofsted under the new Education Inspection Framework between 8 and 11 October 2019. Ofsted noted that good progress has been made across all of the provision. They said:

- 2.1. *“Learners gain a range of benefits from their courses. They enjoy the subjects they study. Those facing social isolation build their self-confidence and form new friendships while they study. Learners are taught valuable skills that help increase their self-esteem and play a more active role in the community. Learners who are not confident with English improve their speaking and comprehension.*
- 2.2. *Tutors create a positive work-ethic among learners. It helps learners to develop the behaviours they need to go on to study at a higher level or increase their prospects of employment.*
- 2.3. *Learners receive a range of advice and guidance that enable them to make the right career and study choices. Specialist careers advisors know what learners who have been out of work for some time need to help them seek employment. Tutors help learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families find the right next step for them.*
- 2.4. *Learners appreciate the high-quality accommodation at the community venues in which lessons take place. They make productive use of the resources at the various community settings. Learners feel safe and know whom to approach should they have any concerns.*
- 2.5. *Tutors are experienced, knowledgeable and well qualified in their subjects. They have high expectations for their learners.*
- 2.6. *Leaders and managers ensure that learners benefit from high-quality courses. They pay close attention to planning a curriculum that meets the social, economic and health priorities of the borough. For example, learners with LDD benefit from courses such as cookery, information and communication technologies and gardening.*
- 2.7. *Leaders and managers work well with local partners to shape and deliver the curriculum offer. They work with subcontractors who offer courses that meet their curricular ambitions.*
- 2.8. *Effective governance has resulted in leaders working well together to improve the quality of the curriculum.*
- 2.9. *Leaders and managers place a suitable priority on safeguarding. Leaders are thorough in checking the safeguarding arrangements at subcontractors before working with them. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and the ‘Prevent’ duty. When they need to act to safeguard learners and promote their welfare they do so promptly and effectively.”*

2.10. Improvement actions have been incorporated into this year's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and formulate part of the continuous improvement of the service.

2.11. **Performance**

2.12. The table below summarises end of academic year performance:

Measure	Total Academic Year 2017/18	Target	Total Academic Year 2018/19	Trend
Number of unique learners funded by the ESFA	2,032	1,983	1,841	▼
Number of enrolments funded by the ESFA	3,598	3,691	3,697	▲
Overall achievement on accredited courses	74%	85%	87%	▲
% of new learners per annum	71%	50%	Pending	▼
% of learners from deprived wards	29%	27%	30%	▲
% retention rate per annum	91%	93%	97%	▲
% of end of course evaluations where teaching and learning is rated as good and above	99%	95%	99%	▶
Average cost per learner	£374	£241	£375	▲

2.13. Learner numbers decreased slightly in 2018/19 although enrolment numbers are up. To improve learner numbers for 2019/20 Merton Adult Learning have commissioned a number of new providers to deliver community based courses in priority areas of the borough. These new providers should improve performance of unique learners, enrolments, new learners and learners from deprived wards.

2.14. The percentage of learners from deprived wards has increased in line with the strategic objectives of the service and further courses will be delivered in these wards in 2019/20 onwards.

2.15. Achievement rates have significantly increased across the provision in the vast majority of areas and are well above national average. Performance reflects the high level of support and improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and was validated in the recent Ofsted inspection.

2.16. New learner numbers were expected to decline but are still above target. This reflects where providers are progressing learners onto new courses within their provision.

2.17. Progression pathways have been developed to complement the commissioned provision and to maximise the wider offer provided by other training providers in the borough.

2.18. The average cost per learner has increased this year due to learner number targets not being met and price increases for some courses commissioned.

2.19. Intervention and support that enabled learners to stay on programmes was good and is reflected in a 3-year high in Pass rates in qualifications (i.e.

those who complete their courses are likely to achieve good grades in their exams). The majority of learners who successfully complete their qualifications continue to study at a higher level.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. The London Borough of Merton undertook an extensive consultation process before deciding upon its commissioning model. All options of delivery were considered and the new model has achieved financial sustainability and a more developed curriculum to better meet the needs of Merton residents.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Feedback and evaluation is gathered from all learners. Learner feedback is very high with 99% of learners rating teaching and learning as good or above.
- 4.2. The service is working to improve the information it records to track learners progression onto new courses or onto new employment opportunities. A new performance measure will be included in next year's reports to measure progress in this area.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The Adult Learning Service Plan was reviewed at the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 6 February 2020 and details key project and timelines.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Merton Adult Learning relies solely on external grants to provide its provision. From the 2019/20 academic year the majority of the grants are now administered by the GLA and their allocation for Merton this year is £1,360,577. A smaller grant for out of London learners is administered by the ESFA of £36,710.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The main statutory basis for the adult learning service is section 15B of the Education Act 1996. This section empowers local authorities to secure the provision for their area of full-time or part-time education suitable to the requirements of persons who have attained the age of 19, including provision for persons from other areas. It includes power to secure the provision of training, including vocational, social, physical and recreational training, and of organised leisure time occupation which is provided in connection with the provision of education or training. The authority may do anything which appears to them to be necessary or expedient for the purposes of or in connection with the exercise of their functions under this section. In exercising their functions, the authority must in particular have regard to the needs of persons with learning difficulties or disabilities.

- 7.2. The authority does not therefore have a statutory duty to maintain an adult education service but must in considering whether to provide a service and what service to provide take account in particular of the needs of people with learning difficulties or disabilities.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. A significant proportion of Adult Learning's investment is on those most socially and / or economically disadvantaged whilst providing a broad range of learning opportunities to develop all resident's skills. Focussed programmes are developed that identify priority needs and use a wide range of sources to inform commissioning principles.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. No implications identified for the purpose of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. No implications identified for the purpose of this report.

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

- Ofsted Inspection of Merton Adult Learning 8 – 11 October 2019

Inspection of Merton Adult Education

Inspection dates: 8–11 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
<hr/>	
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Information about this provider

Merton adult education provides adult education programmes. The courses are managed by a range of subcontractors, with three providing courses at the time of the inspection. The aims of the service are to improve social, economic and health outcomes for residents, particularly those living in disadvantaged areas of the borough. The borough is characterised by a difference between the more deprived east, Mitcham, and the more prosperous west, Wimbledon.

At the time of the inspection, there were 1,400 learners. Around two thirds were on community learning courses, with the rest on courses leading to qualifications. The main curriculum areas were: English for speakers of other languages (ESOL); GCSE and functional skills English and mathematics; arts and crafts and programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Courses are from entry level to level 2.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Learners gain a range of benefits from their courses. They enjoy the subjects they study. Those facing social isolation build their self-confidence and form new friendships while they study. Learners are taught valuable skills that help increase their self-esteem and play a more active role in the community. Learners who are not confident with English improve their speaking and comprehension.

Tutors create a positive work ethic among learners. It helps learners to develop the behaviours they need to go on to study at a higher level or increase their prospects of employment. Tutors help learners to recognise and overcome the barriers that hinder their learning. Consequently, learners can set and achieve clear personal goals.

Learners receive a range of advice and guidance that enable them to make the right career and study choices. Specialist careers advisers know what learners who have been out of work for some time need to help them seek employment. Tutors help learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families find the right next step for them.

Learners appreciate the high-quality accommodation at the community venues in which lessons take place. They make productive use of the resources at the various community settings. They like working quietly and respectfully together in relaxed and calm learning spaces. Learners feel safe and know who to approach should they have any concerns.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Tutors are experienced, knowledgeable and well qualified in their subjects. They have high expectations for their learners. Most plan their teaching in a logical order so that learners have a sound foundation on which to build their knowledge and skills. For example, functional skills tutors in mathematics build on the basics of numbers, moving on to more complex topics such as ratios. ESOL tutors use verbs in basic sentences before moving learners on to more complex sentences and different types of text.

Tutors help learners to retain their knowledge and skills well. For instance, ESOL tutors use frequent spelling practice and reciting of words and sentences so that learners improve their spoken and written English and use the correct verbs.

Tutors use assessments effectively to help learners improve their skills and use the new knowledge they gain. For example, they assess well what learners know and can do at the start of their courses. Tutors then help learners to address specific gaps in their knowledge. Tutors check learners' homework assiduously to make sure learners have gone over and practised new concepts and skills. They use frequent tests that help learners on GCSE courses secure their knowledge of English and mathematics.

Tutors get to know their learners well and create a nurturing culture where learners feel able to approach staff if they are struggling with their course or have any concerns about their welfare. Learners' attendance at classes is high. They arrive on time and are ready to learn. They keenly take part in their classes.

Leaders and managers ensure that learners benefit from high-quality courses. They pay close attention to planning a curriculum that meets the social, economic and health priorities of the borough. For example, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from courses such as cookery, information and communication technologies and gardening. Tutors teach these well and consequently learners improve their well-being and develop the skills they need for work and their personal lives.

Leaders and managers work well with local partners to shape and deliver the curriculum offer. They work with subcontractors who offer courses that meet their curricular ambitions. For example, specialist subcontractors are skilled at supporting adults who are unemployed or in low-skilled jobs. They are adept at helping them learn the skills and knowledge that they need to gain employment or move forward in their career.

Effective governance has resulted in leaders working well together to improve the quality of the curriculum. Most learners, wherever they study, benefit from high-quality teaching. It supports them well to achieve their goals and qualifications and move on to further study.

Staff make sure that learners understand the importance of British values to their lives and the wider world. They build these aspects well into their programme of study. For example, ESOL learners discussed the role of the Queen and the prime minister and the relationships with the president of the United States of America, when building on their speaking and reading skills.

Across the provision, leaders ensure that the curriculum extends beyond learners' courses. This adds value to the learners' experiences and helps them develop a greater breadth of understanding of their subject. For example, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taught by staff how to use public transport and become more independent in their lives. Those studying creative arts visit exhibitions to help them recall critical artwork they have discussed in lessons. Learners on ESOL courses take part in activities such as charity events. This gives them a chance to practise and develop their language skills.

Leaders do not have a clear picture of the social, economic and health benefits of the courses for learners. They recognise this and are strengthening their information to help them better measure the impact.

ESOL tutors do not always check that learners have fully understood vital topics. As a result, they do not remember some important components from previous weeks and struggle at the beginning of their next class. A few learners on ESOL courses do not complete homework or understand the importance of this.

For a few learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, additional learning support in the classroom is not consistently effective. This hinders a few learners from engaging in the class, fully understanding the topic being taught and completing work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers place a suitable priority on safeguarding. Leaders are thorough in checking the safeguarding arrangements at subcontractors before working with them. They carry out frequent safeguarding reviews while working with them. Leaders and managers ensure that appropriate checks are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with learners. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. When they need to act to safeguard learners and promote their welfare they do so promptly and effectively.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that ESOL tutors check that all learners understand key components of knowledge during classes. Between classes, get learners to practise going over the knowledge they have gained, so they can remember it.
- Improve the quality of learning support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that all learners can fully engage in classes, complete work and understand key topics.
- Gain a fuller picture of the impact of the curriculum on the outcomes that learners achieve. Ensure that leaders use this information to better understand the social, economic and health benefits to the community.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53325
Address	Merton Adult Education, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX
Contact number	020 8545 3640
Website	https://www.merton.ac.uk
CEO	Ged Curran
Provider type	Local authority
Date of previous inspection	13–16 November 2017
Main subcontractors	Merton College (South Thames Colleges Group) Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College Global Solutions Services

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the service manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Jon Bowman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jane Hughes	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christina Christou	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Walters	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mike Finn	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17 March 2020

Wards: All

Subject: Library & Heritage Service Annual Report 2019/20

Lead officer: Anthony Hopkins – Head of Library, Heritage & Adult Education Service

Lead member: Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah – Cabinet Member for Commerce, Leisure and Culture

Contact officer: Anthony Hopkins – Head of Library, Heritage & Adult Education Service

Recommendations:

-
1. That the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel note progress made with the Library & Heritage Service in the last financial year, review performance and discuss key projects.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Library & Heritage Service annual report sets out the key achievements that have been delivered over the last year and highlights future projects. It also provides a summary of performance.
- 1.2. Merton's Library & Heritage Service continues to be a high performing and cost efficient service. It has kept all of its libraries open and has extended the opening hours of all of them over the last 10 years.
- 1.3. The main projects delivered over the last year include:
 - Further development of the Library System Platform (LSP) including the launch of a new customer app and improved marketing and promotion of library events.
 - The launch of Project Sense, an Arts Council England funded project, which has transformed all of Merton's children's libraries with new furniture and equipment and enhanced services for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
 - Further expansion of the cultural offer in libraries through the development of the Merton Arts Spaces.
 - Further work to enhance libraries as community spaces to promote prevention and to support people to live fuller and healthier lives.
 - The launch of two new heritage projects to provide improved services for people living with dementia and to further enhance the SEND offer.

- 1.4. The report details have been summarised under the objectives of 'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries 2016 – 2021', the DCMS's 5-year strategy for public libraries in England.

2 DETAILS

2.1. Increased Reading and Literacy

- 2.2. *Reading and literacy are two of the most fundamental skills in life. Libraries give everyone free access to books and literature regardless of age, disability, wealth or education. This access makes libraries a catalyst for improved reading and literacy skills.*

2.3. Project Sense

- 2.4. Project Sense is a £94,826 Arts Council England funded project to make Merton's children's libraries even more accessible. The funding has been used to develop a comprehensive SEND (special educational needs and / or disabilities) stock and equipment offer and to ensure all library staff and volunteers are trained in better supporting children with SEND and their carers or parents.

- 2.5. The project started with the transformation of Merton's seven children's libraries into themed sensory areas. A dedicated SEND arts and literature activities programme is being delivered across the libraries. It includes working with schools and partners to break down barriers and perceptions of SEND, reduce isolation and open new doors of opportunity for SEND children and their families. Over 216 events are planned for 2020.

- 2.6. There is a dedicated resource library (Learn, Play, Grow Resource Library) with specialist communication technology, specially adapted toys and switches and story bag books, which can be borrowed free of charge and are used for library activity sessions. Family learning courses including wellbeing, next steps back into education and employment and self-care and personal development will be taking place later this year for parents and carers of children with SEND needs.

2.7. Schools and Libraries Membership Scheme

- 2.8. Merton has a unique schools and libraries membership scheme that all school age children aged 5 - 14 are signed up to. The scheme is an invaluable way of promoting reading for pleasure amongst children and the improved life chances it brings.

- 2.9. The schools and libraries membership scheme has been extended to all SEND schools in the borough as part of Project Sense.

2.10. Reading Promotions and Campaigns

- 2.11. The Library & Heritage Service has further developed its promotions and campaigns to tie in better with initiatives such as World Book Day, National Poetry Day and Black History Month.

- 2.12. An annual calendar of events and promotions is drawn together and events are promoted widely through all available channels such as social media, the libraries e-newsletter, the libraries website and the libraries themselves.

- 2.13. Merton participated in the national Summer Reading Challenge for children aged 4 – 12 years. This year's scheme had 2,944 participants and an increase in participants completing the scheme of 2% to 1,726.
- 2.14. **Library Connect**
- 2.15. Library Connect is Merton's own pop up library solution. It is used in localities to drive up library usage and raise awareness of the offer. Over the last year 1,382 visitors attended Library Connect events, an increase of 43% from the previous year.
- 2.16. **Cultural and Creative Enrichment**
- 2.17. *Cultural and creative opportunities enrich lives. They are important in developing local quality of life, sense of place and individual wellbeing. Libraries are well placed to extend cultural engagement because of their use by all social groups and their role as inclusive cultural hubs within communities.*
- 2.18. **Merton Arts Space**
- 2.19. Merton has two established Arts Spaces in Wimbledon and Mitcham libraries. These spaces enhance the cultural offer through libraries and have flexible lighting, sound and stage facilities to enable professional productions in community settings. A wide range of cultural events across different artistic disciplines has been delivered.
- 2.20. Highlights in the 2018/19 calendar year included the Attic Theatre Company production of 'The Rebellious Women of Wimbledon', a large scale production of the 'King Arthur Opera' by the Colliers Wood Choral Society and the launch of Wimbledon Bookfest with an author talk by Lionel Shriver.
- 2.21. In 2018/19 an estimated 116,975 visitors were drawn to activities in the Arts Spaces. The Arts Spaces contribute to income generation when used out of normal opening hours for commercial purposes.
- 2.22. **Merton Memories**
- 2.23. The Merton Memories web resource continues to develop and there are now over 18,000 unique images of the borough available for residents to review. The community is continually encouraged to help identify photos and add comments and information relating to the images. Carved in Stone, Merton's digital archive dedicated to World War One, is also hosted via this website.
- 2.24. **Heritage Discovery Day**
- 2.25. Merton's annual Heritage Discovery Day celebrates the rich heritage of the borough and last year's event in the Heritage & Local Studies Centre was supported by 30 local heritage organisations and community groups. The event attracted over 2,500 people and was the biggest one yet.
- 2.26. **Common Sense and Memory Box Projects**
- 2.27. Supported through Winter Pressures funding, these projects intend to reduce isolation and offer therapeutic benefits to Merton residents with special needs by increasing access to and engagement with local heritage. Working with public health representatives, care providers and support groups, heritage staff and volunteers have been trained to recognise and

address the service needs of visitors living with dementia, visual / hearing impairments, autism and learning difficulties. Part of the Heritage Centre has been developed to host reminiscence and craft sessions for people living with dementia. Themed memory boxes combining objects, images and sensory material will be available to promote social interaction, memory sharing and enjoyment both for individual visitors and groups from local care homes. The same area has been equipped with sensory material, to support visitors with autism and special needs who may need occasional access to a quiet, safe space.

2.28. The Common Sense project has developed a sensory exhibition combining traditional displays with tactile maps / artwork, handling items, smells, sounds, touchscreen presentations and audio guides. Whilst open to all, this display is particularly designed to enable visitors with sight and / or hearing loss and special needs to fully engage with aspects of local heritage, whether independently or as part of visiting groups. Boxes containing sensory and themed activity resources will also be available for loan to day centres and residential units, enabling adults with autism and learning difficulties to engage with Merton's heritage in a familiar environment where they feel safe and comfortable.

2.29. **Merton Heritage Strategy**

2.30. Merton's Heritage Strategy is focussed around these four objectives:

- Raise Merton's profile by increasing public access to the borough's unique and diverse cultural heritage;
- Safeguard the borough's varied heritage sites and resources, protecting and conserving them for the benefit of future generations;
- Ensure that Merton's heritage provision is inclusive by working collaboratively to widen public engagement and participation;
- To recognise the important contribution of social enterprise and secure ongoing funding and investment in Merton's heritage through partnership work, external funding and sponsorship.

2.31. Merton's current Heritage Strategy (2015-2020) will shortly expire and is in the process of being refreshed with further public consultation to take place throughout the year. The refreshed Heritage Strategy is expected to be presented to Cabinet in autumn 2020.

2.32. **Improved digital access and literacy**

2.33. *Public libraries provide a trusted network of accessible locations with free WiFi, computers, and other technology. As the world becomes more digital, access to technology and the ability to operate confidently and safely are ever more important.*

2.34. *Trained library staff, supported by volunteers, help local people use online services covering areas like benefits, business, health and wellbeing. They also provide the training and support individuals need to become independent users of digital services.*

2.35. **Assisted Digital Support**

2.36. The Library & Heritage Service focusses its support on those most in need who potentially have limited access or knowledge of the Internet and other IT applications. In order to support residents, it provides a broad range of one to one and group IT support.

2.37. As part of the development of its assisted digital offer staff and volunteers have been trained in supporting customers with Universal Credit and other government services. Libraries play an important role in supporting customers with online Council services and applications for the EU Settlement Scheme.

2.38. **Library Services Platform (LSP)**

2.39. Libraries have recently replaced their core ICT infrastructure with a new system provided by Sirsi Dynix. Working collaboratively with the London Libraries Consortium (LLC), a consortium consisting of 18 London boroughs, a new platform has been procured that provides customers with improved web services including better personalisation of customer interests. The new solution also provides features such as a customer app and better integration with online services such as the borough's e-books and online reference resources.

2.40. Over the course of the contract the platform will be further developed to include additional features for customers including the enhancement of events and activities promotion along with new customisation and personalisation options.

2.41. **Self-Service Technology**

2.42. Self-service technology continues to be an important element of the libraries delivery model and accounted for 98% of customer transactions in 2018/19.

2.43. Self-service technology will be replaced in 2021 and new features are proposed to be introduced such as the ability to enable customers to access library services when there isn't a staffed presence through new membership card recognition systems.

2.44. **Healthier and Happier Lives**

2.45. *Councils have a responsibility for their communities' social wellbeing and for public health. They increasingly focus on preventative work, helping people manage their own health to reduce both the burden on the NHS and health inequalities. By extending joint working and sharing resources with health providers, public libraries will become increasingly important partners, leading to users having healthier and happier lives.*

2.46. **Prevention services**

2.47. Collaboration has been strengthened with partners to provide better support to assist people in living healthier and happier lives. This has included the introduction of new standards of service to make our buildings more dementia and autism friendly whilst enhancing the information offer.

2.48. The prevention offer through libraries and other public spaces is a key part of the Community & Housing Target Operating Model (TOM) plans.

2.49. **Health Offer**

2.50. The service works collaboratively with Public Health, social care, other health providers and Adult Learning colleagues to promote a range of initiatives to link in messages around good personal health. This includes supporting initiatives to raise awareness of health matters such as healthy eating, sexual health, diabetes and smoking cessation. A year round approach to promoting healthier lifestyles through libraries is in place and links in with national and local initiatives. In January libraries run the annual 'New Year, New Start' campaign that promotes a wide range of healthy living initiatives and promotes the work of health partners across the borough.

2.51. **Tuned In**

2.52. The impact of loneliness is a major public issue. It is known to have a detrimental impact on health and wellbeing causing depression and increasing the risk of premature death. Merton's public health team estimate that there are over 8,000 lonely people who live in the borough.

2.53. Tuned In launched in 2019 and is a project which aims to combat some of the issues of loneliness in the borough with funding from the Winter Pressures Fund. Tuned In works with acclaimed musician, performer, writer and London Libraries Ambassador Jah Wobble (aka John Wardle), who facilitates musical jam sessions every Monday at Merton Arts Space, Wimbledon library. The sessions share and develop musical skills and build knowledge, as well as helping individuals build social connections and friendship groups. They create an environment for people from all walks of life to come together and enjoy mutual support.

2.54. The project targets men, particularly those in the age group 50+, where loneliness is at its highest. However, the project is open and accessible to all. The sessions work on a drop in basis and regularly see 30+ individuals attend.

2.55. The project works with a number of partners in the borough to help promote healthy lifestyles, including One You Merton, GLL, AFC Wimbledon and Fulham Football Club. They help raise awareness of the social and health benefits of organisations in Merton and this combined with the musical jam session aims to help reduce isolation, loneliness and build social connections and communities.

2.56. To date over 130 people have participated in Tuned In sessions. Participants are tracked through their participation and asked a range of questions on their health and wellbeing. Of participants surveyed in the last evaluation round in winter 2020 the following outcomes were reported:

- 96% of respondents reporting that Tuned In sessions had improved their health and wellbeing.
- 35% of participants have increased their participation in sports, fitness or recreational (leisure) clubs or activities.
- 52% of participants are more aware of health services in the borough since attending Tuned In sessions.
- 83% have developed new friendships and / or relationships by attending Tuned In sessions.

- 61% have developed more satisfying friendships and relationships since attending Tuned In.
- 70% of participants feel more part of their local community since attending Tuned In sessions.
- 74% of participants now feel they have a greater network of people to ask for help.

2.57. **Stronger, More Resilient Communities**

2.58. *Libraries are open to everyone. Their staff understand their community's needs and are trusted to provide reliable guidance and support on a wide range of issues when people need help. So they're vital to help public service's reach out into communities.*

2.59. **Volunteering**

2.60. Merton's volunteering numbers are some of the highest of any UK library authority with 545 volunteers contributing 27,437 hours in 2018/19. A campaign to recruit additional volunteers continues to promote new opportunities including recruitment for support with Project Sense.

2.61. **Widening the community offer**

2.62. The library service provides a wide range of activities and events working in partnership with organisations from the community, business and health sectors. It also organises events to coincide with national initiatives such as LGBTQ Month, Black History Month, World Book Day and Dementia Awareness Week and supports borough events such as Wimbledon Bookfest and Merton Arts Trail.

2.63. **Greater Prosperity**

2.64. *The prosperity of an area is crucial for residents' wellbeing and quality of life. We want everyone to have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from this. Libraries support business to start up and grow by providing information and working with local economic development organisations to signpost businesses to sources of support and advice.*

2.65. **Employability and skills support**

2.66. Libraries provide a range of employability support services working with training providers. Examples include CV writing workshops, job clubs and other skills training.

2.67. The use of library services is integral for a number of community based courses and in a more informal way through sessions such as one to one IT support and other activities delivered by partners and volunteers.

2.68. Wimbledon Library hosts 'Wimbletech', an organisation that provides space, advice and support for start-up companies and co-workers and is part of Merton's Inward Investment Strategy. It currently has almost 200 resident members with a community digital platform scheduled to launch shortly.

2.69. **Helping Everyone Achieve Their Full Potential**

2.70. *Libraries raise people's aspirations and promote lifelong learning, supplementing formal education provided through schools, colleges and adult education. This is increasingly important given the accelerated pace of change in the workplace and the world more generally, meaning that skills and knowledge need more frequent updating.*

2.71. **Online Services**

2.72. With the introduction of the new LSP online services have been enhanced and mean that customers have improved access to resources such as e-books and online reference resources. The e-book offer has also significantly expanded due to collaboration work with other boroughs. Residents have access to over 80,000 e-book titles and around 400 e-magazines are published monthly.

2.73. **Adult Learning Services**

2.74. A range of services are provided in libraries to encourage lifelong learning and the service works closely with schools, colleges and adult learning to complement the borough offer.

2.75. Following the commissioning of adult learning services libraries are increasingly being used as venues for training. This includes a high proportion of courses in priority areas such as courses for people with learning disabilities and community based employability and language courses. Housing providers use libraries for their community training programmes too. The library setting provides an excellent environment for people to develop their skills and utilise the free resources available to them.

3 PERFORMANCE

3.1. The full year 2018/19 KPI (Key Performance Indicators) are summarised below:

Service Plan #	Description of performance measure	2017/18	2018/19	Target
SP08	No. of people accessing the library service by borrowing an item or using a People's Network terminal at least once in the previous 12 months	65,154	71,648	56,000
SP09	Number of visitors accessing the library service online	250,011	234,486	220,000
SP279	Monthly transactions – Staff and Self-Service	98%	98%	97%
SP280	Active volunteering numbers in libraries	293	276	230
SP287	Income generation	£361,512	£374,024	£317,167
SP480	Visitor Numbers	1,088,515	1,124,613	1,200,000

3.2. Performance has improved across most of the indicators with an increase in the number of active users of Merton's libraries meaning that Merton still retains the highest user to resident ratio of any London borough.

3.3. The only target not to be met was the library visitor figure target although performance has improved over the last year. The projects outlined in this report are expected to assist with further improvements in the performance of this indicator.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. Merton Library Customer Survey

4.2. The Library & Heritage Service Customer Survey was undertaken in October 2019. The responses showed high levels of customer satisfaction. The survey was conducted in two parts with a survey constructed for users of the library aged 16 and over and a separate survey for children and young people aged under 16.

4.3. The library customer survey for users over the age of 16 reported the following headline figures:

- 95% of respondents rated the service overall as very good or good, an increase of 2% compared to the last survey, with 100% of respondents satisfied.
- 96% of respondents said they would recommend the service to someone else.
- 93% of customers rate library opening hours as very good or good and 100% of respondents are satisfied with the current opening hours offer.
- 99% of respondents regarded libraries as a safe space.
- Book borrowing remains the most popular service with 63% of respondents saying they had borrowed a book in the last year.
- 94% of respondents rated the overall customer service experience as very good or good with 100% satisfied with their experience.
- The biggest improvement area in terms of results was in the difference that libraries have made to people's lives with 75% of respondents saying using the library had made a difference to their lives; an increase of 5% compared to the last survey, with:
 - 53% of respondents saying the library had improved their confidence, a 15% increase since the previous survey;
 - 34% said it had helped them get better at reading, an increase of 9% since the last survey;
 - 30% saying it had improved their social life, an increase of 12% since the last survey;
 - 19% said they had improved their relationships as a result of using libraries, an increase of 7% since the last survey;
 - 14% said that using libraries had improved their health, a 4% increase since the previous survey.

4.4. The library customer survey for children and young people under the age of 16 reported the following headline results:

- 100% of respondents were satisfied with their library experience with 97% of respondents rating the library as very good/good, a 4% increase on the previous survey.
- 100% of respondents were satisfied with the overall customer service they experienced with 97% rating it as very good/good, a 4% increase since the previous survey.
- 95% respondents rated the inside of the library as very good/good, up from 91% since the last survey.
- 100% of respondents considered Merton's libraries to be a safe place with 95% of respondents rating the safety of the library as very good/good, an increase of 4% from the previous survey.
- 83% of respondents rated the choice of books as very good/good, a 6% increase in satisfaction since the last survey.
- 100% of respondents were satisfied with staff helpfulness with 96% rating it as very good/good, a 2% increase from the previous survey.
- 88% of all respondents said that the library had helped them in some way, a 20% increase since the previous survey.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. The Library & Heritage Service Plan 2020/21 outlines key projects to be delivered and was presented at the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 6 February 2020.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The Library & Heritage Service has 7 libraries and a Heritage & Local Studies Centre based on the second floor of Morden Library. All libraries have either seen significant redevelopment works or new libraries have been built since 2005 apart from West Barnes Library.

6.2. There has been a pause in redevelopment proposals for West Barnes Library whilst Cross Rail 2 development options were considered by Network Rail. Officers are currently undertaking renewed work to move forward with the redevelopment proposals for West Barnes Library.

6.3. The Library & Heritage Service has a controllable budget of £1,701,000. It has one savings objective for this year to generate £38,000 of additional income through use of the Merton Arts Spaces, which is projected to be delivered.

6.4. A savings proposal in the MTFs has been proposed to deliver £60,000 of savings in 2022/23 through the reduction of the current security guard contract (£45,000) and an increase in income generation at the new library proposed at West Barnes Library (£15,000).

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The Council is required under section 7 Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service, addressing the 'needs of adults and children'. Local authorities have a statutory duty to make provision for a library service but may decide on how this is to be done.
- 7.2. Certain aspects of the service must be provided for free including free lending of books, free access to information and free library membership.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Libraries hold a unique place within the community as a public space that is open to all. Where customers cannot make it to libraries a Home Visits Library Service provides books and other materials to people's homes. Increasingly Library Connect is also used as a way of engaging with underrepresented groups.
- 8.2. Residents from BAME backgrounds make the most effective use of libraries with high proportions in particular of Asian and Black British people.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None identified for the purpose of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. No specific issues identified in this report. A risk register is maintained for projects detailed in the Library & Heritage Service Plan.

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

- None included for the purpose of this report.

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Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17 March 2020

Wards: All Wards

Subject: London Borough of Culture

Lead officer: Chris Lee, Director of Environment & Regeneration

Lead member: Councillor Cooper-Marbiah, Cabinet Member for Commerce, Leisure and Culture

Contact officer: Christine Parsloe, Leisure & Culture Development Manager

Recommendations:

- A.** To note the progress being made in the delivery of Merton's involvement in the Mayor of London's 'London Borough of Culture' initiative and the delivery of the programme in the Cultural Infrastructure Levy Award.
- B.** Receive an update of the plans and priorities for the future delivery of this programme.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report updates members about the London Borough of Culture programme, the Impact Award made by the Mayor and the related Community Infrastructure Levy award. It updates members on delivery so far and the plans for the future.

2 DETAILS

2.1. Background

- 2.1.1 This is the second annual report to this panel about the London Borough of Culture programme. The first was considered in April 2019 and contained full details of the bid, which won the Cultural Impact Award and the development of further cultural work in the borough.

- 2.1.2 In summary, Members are reminded that:

- A number of business and cultural leaders in the borough came together in a partnership, now called the Cultural Advisory Group (CAG) to promote a bid for the London Borough of Culture status and for other, related projects aimed at 'bridging the gap' in participation, cultural engagement and promoting the borough.
- The Council's bid, entitled *Common Ground*, included an exemplary project, Film Merton, which won Cultural Impact Award funding from the GLA.
- The Council also awarded Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to be set aside for the CAG to use in the delivery of Film Merton and other cultural projects.

2.2. Governance and Partnership

2.2.1 The CAG has a regular calendar of monthly meetings at which it shapes its strategy for the future and considers reports on progress to date. CAG has considered all matters relating to both Film Merton and other projects that are set to take place once Film Merton concludes. Membership of CAG (at March 2020) includes:

- Somayeh Aghnia, Geeks (co-Chair)
- Greg Vincent, Morrisons Law (co-Chair)
- Conrad Murray, Artistic Director, Beatbox Academy
- Kristina Burton, Mitcham Town Community Trust / SHINE Merton
- Lynette Shanbury, Polka Theatre (alternate: Nick Parr, New Wimbledon Theatre)
- Jean-Marc Flambert, freelance marketing professional
- Councillor Oonagh Moulton
- Councillor Linda Kirby
- Christine Parsloe, Leisure & Culture Development Manager

2.2.2 Membership during the year has also included John Merriman of Crown Lane Studios (previous Chair) and Cindy Sasha, freelance photographer.

2.2.3 CAG continually reviews its membership and ways of working to maximise effective participation and leadership. It does not have a formal legal existence and is, therefore, not able to contract services in its own right. CAG members have presented its work to the Merton Partnership.

2.2.4 The Merton CAG continues to represent an important approach and opportunity for the borough. Unlike many other such steering groups it is business led, which has enabled an innovative and energetic attitude. The Group is strongly committed to values of inclusion, economic and civic participation and long-term thinking.

2.2.5 The future of CAG continues to be under active consideration. Further projects have been commissioned, but the members of the group rely on support to ensure good accountability both from their delivery team and from the funders. As the resources for this support grow less, it will be harder for CAG to maintain its momentum. The Council's Cultural Strategy is due to be updated in 2020 and will need to consider this issue.

2.2.6 CAG has already travelled a considerable distance. From its beginning in late 2016, it has:

- Developed *Common Ground* and launched its work with a major event at New Wimbledon Theatre
- Nearly completed FilmMerton, a brand new programme centred around film in the broadest sense

- Created two new major cultural projects in *Radio Local* and to promote cultural and creative businesses in the borough

2.3. Cultural Impact Award - FilmMerton

2.3.1 The funding agreement between the Council and the Greater London Authority (GLA) has clear targets, outputs and outcomes. All of these will be fully reviewed and reported in a final evaluation report at the end of the project.

2.3.2 FilmMerton has four central objectives. They are not separately prioritised and activities within the programme will support more than one.

Table 1 – Project Objectives

Ref	Objective
O1	To create ambitious and inclusive new work
O2	Build the audience for film in the east of the borough to support the ambition for a new cinema
O3	Building groups and communities who have taken and can take leadership roles in expanding cultural and civic participation in the east of Merton
O4	Put Merton, and particularly Mitcham, on the map as open to and excited by emerging immersive technologies in augmented and virtual realities to support economic development objectives

2.3.3 Table 2 – Project Outcomes

Ref	Outcome	Objectives supported
OC1	Demonstrable growth in film audience in eastern half of the borough	O2
OC2	New groups and individuals in the community engaged with cultural activity leading to overall growth in activity	O1, O2, O3
OC3	New groups with ongoing cultural capacity through decision making and commissioning	O1, O2, O3
OC4	New commissions in film and immersive technology which are welcomed by key audiences including both communities and creative practitioners	O1, O3, O4
OC5	New partnerships with the film sector, including cinema operators, heritage groups, film clubs, film makers, producers and distributors to take forward future work towards a permanent cinema in the east of the borough	O1, O4
OC6	A successful immersive (VR and AR) festival <i>Mitcham Reality</i> which engages the community with those new technologies	O2, O3, O4

OC7	<i>Mitcham Reality</i> has capacity to become a regular fixture and is engaged with other festivals across London and beyond	O1, O2, O3, O4
OC8	A robust and accessible evaluation which enables communities, funders and the cultural leadership of Merton to build on success for future activities	O3
OC9	A reputation for Merton as borough where exciting cultural activities, led by and empowering local communities and producing amazing work, will be found	O1,O3,O4

2.3.4 Table 3 – Project Targets / Outputs

Ref	Targets / Outputs	Objectives	Progress to date
T1	Achieve target growth in film audience (established in relation to baseline to be determined in late 2018)	O2	To be included in Final Evaluation Report
T2	At least 8 robust community panels, representing at least 32 people) engaged in curating film seasons with support and mentoring, building a long term and informed cadre of film fans, by February 2020	O2, O3	11 community organisations engaged in curating film seasons with support and mentoring.
T3	At least (say 10 per film for 96 films) 960 film goers for the film seasons of which at least 25% (240) saying they are seeing a film they would not otherwise have seen by February 2020	O2, O3	1,226 film goers viewing 99 films. 50 films chosen by community organisations and 49 chosen by guest curators.
T4	At least three new groups in the community actively engaged in cultural commissioning and decision making that are not so engaged at September 2018, by December 2019, in ways which outlast the individual commission or season	O3	11 community groups engaged. None had previously been engaged in cultural commission and decision making of such work. Legacy project in development to sustain this work beyond Film Merton
T5	Positive community and critical reception for the newly commissioned work	O1, O4	To be included in Final Evaluation Report

T6	Ambitious and high profile programme of guest curated seasons well received by audiences	O2,O4	Range of diverse and acclaimed guest curated seasons showing 49 films selected by 12 guest curators and shown across the borough in different venues
T7	A well-attended and watched <i>Mitcham Reality</i> festival in 2020	O4	To be included in Final Evaluation Report as event takes place on 6 and 7 March (Verbal update at meeting)
T8	Full funding for FilmMerton as envisaged at May 2018 achieved by December 2018.	O3	To be included in Final Evaluation Report. Fully funded through 'cash and kind'
T9	Further funding attracted to expand the programme, either to extend film seasons or create additional new work	O1,O2, O3	To be included in Final Evaluation Report
T10	At least three robust partnerships created with film industry partners to sustain through Film Merton and beyond, and in particular to support creating a cinema in Mitcham by September 2019.	O1,O4	9 industry partnerships created and legacy projects to sustain are in development

2.3.5 The programme has five main strands:

- Community Film Seasons: Community groups curate short seasons of films alongside local events to build the audience. These happen in a range of venues across the borough
- Commissioning New Work: Four new short films, 2 from young people (18-25) who are emerging film makers in the borough and 2 from more established film makers. All have strong 'Merton' threads, were filmed wholly in Merton and offered opportunities for local people both in front and behind the camera. Also commissioning a new augmented reality app showcasing Mitcham Status Fair
- Working with volunteers to deliver events and grow skills
- A festival, held in early March 2020, with the working title *Mitcham Reality*, celebrating and showcasing augmented and virtual reality
- Evaluation and reflection so the programme can inform other and future work.

2.3.6 CAG commissioned consultants to deliver this programme:

- Community engagement and curated film seasons - designing and delivering film seasons has been led by Maureen McKerkiel Associates
- New film commissions and the Mitcham Virtual Reality Festival have been led by Digital Drama
- Evaluation, managed by Maureen McKerkiel Associates, has been delivered by Audience Agency and Rebecca Cresta Photography.

2.4. Film Seasons

2.4.1 This strand has seen film seasons chosen by community groups and guest curators.

2.4.2 Community groups:

A diverse range of community groups have chosen a wide selection of films from food to feminism through to freedom fighters, attracting audiences from across the borough, mainly from the eastern side. Twelve community seasons have run through eleven community groups using thirteen different venues.

- **Friends of Pollards Hill Youth Centre** – a group of residents on Pollards Hill Estate who support and work with young people at the local centre, particularly in the promotion of positive images of BME people. This group organised two seasons including the best attended film season so far – ‘Hidden Stories’ attracted 150 people over 4 films
- **Focus 4-1** – a completely user-led mental health project which focuses on the recovery of BME communities. Group of BME women with PTSD curated season of films on Inspirational Black Women
- **Dementia Alliance** – part of Merton Alzheimer’s Society ran a season as part of National Dementia Day challenging assumptions on the condition
- **Soul Productions** – community group who work with young people making short films about their experiences. They chose a season of films looking at gangs and peer pressure
- **Dynamic Living** – local organisation that manages two homes in Mitcham for young people in care living semi-independently. Film choices explored issues such as county lines and gang violence
- **Morden Community Cinema** – a coalition of local community groups in parts of the borough with high number of Referendum Leave voters. Season focused on tolerance and understanding of difference
- **Commonside Trust** – organisation runs community centre delivering local services such as lunch clubs for older people. Season focused on mental health
- **SHINE** – a Saturday club for primary-aged school children from socially excluded communities in Mitcham. Season of films centred on friendship
- **Johmard Community Lyme Youth Group** – works with young people in the area – film choices focus on the portrayal of black love on film (February-March 2020)
- **Merton LGBT+ Forum** – season celebrates LGBT+ History Month in February 2020
- **Lantern Arts Centre** – a community centre linked to the local church, which provides arts activities for users including older people and children/youth

groups. Organised season of films about food and linked in with local restaurateurs who delivered demonstrations and samples.

2.4.3 **Venues:**

A wide range of venues have been used for the seasons, bringing films to new places and opening up the opportunities to new audiences:

- Mitcham Library
- Vestry Hall
- New Horizon Centre
- Pollards Hill Library
- Johmard Community Centre
- Pollards Hill Youth Centre
- Colour House Theatre
- Farm Road Pavilion
- Lawrence Weaver Institute
- Wimbledon Library
- St Helier Methodist Church
- Mitcham Fire Station
- Lantern Arts Centre

2.4.4 **Audiences:**

At the time of writing 1,226 people have attended the showing of 99 different films to date. Definitive numbers will be provided once the seasons have finished and all data collected and analysed.

So far, preliminary findings about the audiences are:

- 60% women
- 80% Black minority ethnic background
- 20% White other
- 70% 35-55 age range
- 30% 15-25 age range
- 90% East of the borough
- 10% other parts/ outside of the borough

2.4.5 **Key Findings:**

At this early stage, it is clear that audience numbers and the range of groups involved exceed the targets agreed for the GLA funding, which will be reflected in the final evaluation reports.

It should be noted that these numbers do not include attendances from the final three seasons of the programme.

It is also clear that people:

- Are coming to film events who have not come before
- Are much more interested in films they or their community members have chosen rather than those chosen for them
- Would rather use known and trusted venues than seek a new one out. This finding has immediate relevance to the ambition of seeking to create a cinema.

2.5. Commissioning New Work

2.5.1 New films

- Two produced by two 18-25 year-old film makers living in the borough
- Two from more established film-makers from anywhere. (Infact the director of Just Delivered also lives in Merton.)
- All four films were required to be 'about' Merton.
- The commissioned films include two heart-warming comedy dramas about love and friendship; a stop-motion animation about a local football team; and a visually artistic homage to the hidden beauty found.

The four films are:

- HIS NAME WAS GERRY directed by Peter Lee Scott
- JUST DELIVERED directed by Rosie Gaunt-Mathieson
- THE STREETS THAT SHAPE US directed by Matvi Khosho (Young film-maker)
- THE WIMBLEDON FOOTBALL CLUB STORY, AS TOLD IN LEGO directed by Charlie Strank (Young film-maker)

2.5.2 The two Young Merton filmmakers were also awarded Festival passes to the prestigious BFI Future Film Festival, access to BFI filming recording equipment to use on their production and mentoring to help develop and encourage their film-making skills and experience. Runners up who unsuccessfully applied for Young Merton film commissions were also awarded Festival passes to the BFI Future Film Festival.

2.5.3 Augmented reality (AR) commission

- An AR app, which brings photographs to life
- Featuring historic pictures of Mitcham Fair
- Developed to be used as part of an installation at Mitcham VR Festival, bringing Mitcham's rich community heritage to life using the latest tablet technology.
- Research and content for the AR app was developed with the input of volunteers from the local community, giving them the opportunity to experience working with AR
- Local community volunteers tested out the app to check its usability and accessibility and give feedback accordingly
- At the time of writing, the delivery team are working with the Council's Heritage Service to make sure the photographic element continues to be readily available for future use.

2.5.4 Mitcham Virtual Reality (VR) Festival

- Details of the Mitcham VR Festival is attached at Appendix 1
- Took place on 6 and 7 March at the (General Giles Social Club on Mitcham Fair Green)
- The Festival venue was donated for this event by a local businessman, who is keen to encourage local participation in film, music and the arts and has been inspired by the FilmMerton project
- At the time of writing, the Festival is being heavily publicised both to the industry and across the local community

- It is programmed to be an exciting free 2 day Virtual Reality Film Festival held in the heart of Mitcham
- Day 1 (Friday 6th March) was for invited guests only from the local community and key funding partners
- Day 2 (Saturday 7th March) was open to the general public for bookable and turn up and see activities
- Members will have a verbal update at the meeting.

2.6. **Advanced Publicity and Communications**

- 2.6.1 The Mitcham VR Festival received great coverage across London based press outlets. Most notably, Time Out included the festival online and in print, saying that '*Mitcham is about to become an epicentre of technology with a day of '360-degree films'*'. Justin Johnson and Rosie Gaunt-Mathieson had a wonderful interview on BBC Radio London: Robert Elms Show on 3rd March. The Resident also recommended the festival in their Things To Do section.

Links to the online versions are included below:

<https://www.timeout.com/london/things-to-do/mitcham-vr-festival>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p081h9jl>

<https://www.theresident.co.uk/london-culture-events/things-to-do-this-weekend-in-london-7-8-march-2020/>

- 2.6.2 The festival was also recommended in local press outlets. Absolutely Magazine South West, Families South West Magazine, South London Press, Wimbledon SW19 and Time & Leisure Magazine all recommended the festival. We also reached out to AFC Wimbledon who ran a news article. Mária Rakušanová also spoke to South West Londoner for a large feature ahead of the festival. Links to the online articles can be seen below:

<https://absolutely.london/things-to-do-this-month-in-london/>

<https://www.londonnewsonline.co.uk/mitcham-vr-festival-at-the-general-giles-social-club-mitcham/>

<https://www.wimbledonsw19.com/#!/pages/wimbledonsw19:info:filmmertonvirtrealrealityfestival001>

<https://www.afcwimbledon.co.uk/news/2020/february/our-history-as-youve-never-seen-it-before/>

- 2.6.3 The Mitcham VR Festival has also received great coverage in industry specific press outlets. Gizmodo, a key tech site, interviewed Mária and will be speaking to people at the festival. VR Focus, XR Central, Techristic, Cinema Go Trailers, XR Must and JumpCut Online also all ran previews for the festival. Links to the online articles can be seen below:

<https://www.vrfocus.com/2020/01/gloomy-eyes-bro-bots-more-part-of-free-mitcham-vr-festival/>

<https://www.xrcentral.com/gloomy-eyes-bro-bots-more-part-of-free-mitcham-vr-festival/>

<https://techristic.com/gloomy-eyes-bro-bots-more-part-of-free-mitcham-vr-festival/>

<https://cinemagotrailers.co.uk/free-vr-festival-comes-to-merton-london/>

<https://xrmust.com/events/mitcham-vr-virtual-reality-festival-2020/>

<https://jumpcutonline.co.uk/2020/02/free-vr-film-festival-heading-to-london/>

- 2.6.4 Various theatre press outlets also covered the festival, including Broadway World, From Page To Stage, Theatre Weekly, Bakchormeeboy and At The Theatre. Links to the online articles can be seen below:

<https://www.broadwayworld.com/uk-regional/article/Free-VR-Festival-Comes-to-Merton-London-20200121>

<https://from-page-to-stage.com/2020/01/21/news-vr-and-film-festival-comes-to-mitcham/>

<https://theatreweekly.com/unique-vr-and-film-festival-comes-to-mitcham/>

<https://bakchormeeboy.com/2020/01/25/arts-of-the-uk-2020-mitcham-vr-festival-comes-to-merton-london/>

<https://www.atthetheatre.co.uk/unique-and-free-arts-festival-comes-to-londons-mitcham-7-march-2020/>

2.7. **Volunteers**

- 2.7.1 The FilmMerton programme has always had an important commitment to working with volunteers. Volunteers have been recruited via:

- Advertising using the MVSC network, via libraries and spreading information across all the networks cultivated during the formulation of the original *Common Ground* project and in the call-outs for films seasons
- 26 volunteers registered are were used within the project for the Film Seasons, including a new group for whom we do not yet have background data, but this will be included in the final end of project reports
- The data to date indicates that the majority are:
 - Aged 17 - 60 years old
 - 50% split between male/female
 - 50% are from a BAME background with 15% White other and 35% Unknown
 - 80% come from the east of the borough and 20% other parts/outside borough
- In creating the new films, a number of additional voluntary input has been involved, not least from approximately 60 local people who took part in the programme and local businesses that have given their support
- Film students at Ravensbourne University have also played an important voluntary role: 2nd year students created a 3-minute promotional video about the FilmMerton short film commissions to be used to promote Mitcham VR Festival as well as being used as a legacy for the short film commissions (to sit on the FilmMerton website etc). They also produced three 30 second social media promos for the Mitcham VR Festival.

2.8. **Evaluation and Reflection**

- 2.8.1 Evaluation and reflection have been ongoing features during the delivery of this programme. The impact of this approach is evidenced by positive actions including adjusting seasons and venues on the basis of feedback received.

- 2.8.2 The evaluation strand includes both creative recording (through photography) and statistical evaluation.
- 2.8.3 Detailed reports on the programme are expected in April and will inform the work of CAG in the future. Some lessons, as noted at para 2.4.5 above are already clear.
- 2.9. **Partnerships**
- 2.9.1 A key objective of the programme is to forge new partnerships, build audiences and support cultural investment in Merton. The programme has been successful to date in this regard, and now a key legacy challenge is maintaining this momentum. New relationships with cultural organisations include:
- British Film Institute: have given considerable support to filmmakers (see above), chaired events and panels, and promoted the programme
 - Film London
 - Cinema For All
 - FilmBank Media
 - Park Circus
 - ICA Cinema
 - Dogwoof
 - Birds' Eye View
 - Independent Cinema Office
- 2.9.2 A number of new relationships with community organisations have been created. These are either new in the sense that the groups have previously had relatively little contact with the Council, or in the sense of creating a new arena for joint working around cultural engagement. These relationships include Soul Productions and Morden Community Cinema. In considering the legacy proposals below, retaining these relationships has been an important element.
- 2.9.3 With support from officers in FutureMerton, CAG held early positive discussions with independent cinema operators elsewhere in London. It remains difficult to see a robust pattern for investors. At the same time, the experience of the community seasons has shown that local people want to see films they themselves have chosen in trusted venues. This experience has shaped the legacy project (outlined below).
- 2.9.4 The Cultural Advisory Group (CAG) is itself an important partnership. Its core membership, besides Councillors, represents businesses, schools and creative practitioners. As noted at paragraphs 2.2 above, this is a new approach in the borough and has taken significant steps towards greater cultural participation.
- 2.10. **Legacy from Film Merton**
- 2.10.1 Whilst the formal evaluation reports due in April will be profoundly important to the learning from FilmMerton, CAG has been committed to maintaining momentum and is therefore working with Commonsense Development Trust to allocate sufficient resources to continue programming community seasons through 2020-21. This will also retain the relationships with technical suppliers involved in providing equipment and the Independent Cinema Office. This legacy project is afforded within the overall budget for this programme of work.
- 2.11. **2020 Work Programme**

2.11.1 CAG has ensured that they robustly commit to working in ways which empower people; puts participation at the heart of commissioning and decision making; and which supports innovation to address tough problems. These priorities inform both the work the group is doing and the way it works. When the bid was made for LBOC and a council partnering contribution using CIL, it included a number of key elements which forms the basis for the current and future work programmes:

- FilmMerton delivery
- Commissioning new creative work
- Support to the creative and cultural sector
- Enabling governance and support

2.11.2 CAG has focused its next round of projects on three strands:

- Visible and engaging cultural activity in Mitcham to follow on from Film Merton
- Building the cultural and creative sector in the borough's economy, especially in the east
- Continuing the film-audience development, through legacy from FilmMerton

2.11.3 ***On the streets of Mitcham: Radio Local*** – CAG sought out an intervention, which would be highly accessible to the general public while providing a platform for artists, and which would enable a particular emphasis on music and the spoken word. CAG have commissioned performance artists Hunt+Darton to deliver their project *Radio Local* project in Mitcham in the summer of 2020.

2.11.4 This project is a strongly locally-adapted version of a successful initiative already undertaken in a number of other towns across the country. Hunt+Darton ultimately create a 12 hour long live broadcast radio show in partnership with a local radio station, run from the public streets of the chosen area. In preparing this broadcast, they commission artists to work locally and develop strong relationships with a range of community groups. Members can see more about *Radio Local* in other areas at <http://www.radiolocal.co.uk>

2.11.5 ***Building the cultural and creative sector*** in the borough is a longstanding objective for the Council. CAG, following its review of existing material and through the consultations, which informed the original *Common Ground* bid, decided that some robust research was required on which to base a future strategy. After a competitive process, AlwaysPossible Ltd of Worthing were commissioned to deliver this project. Their first report, on space and venues for such businesses, will be considered by CAG in mid-March and their final reports are due in June 2020. Again, this material will inform both economic development and cultural strategic work by the Council and its partners in the future.

2.11.6 ***Continuing film-audience development work.*** As noted above, the partnership with Commonsides Development Trust will be a key element of taking this forward.

2.12. Summary

2.12.4 In deciding to bid for the London Borough of Culture (LBOC) title, and making a significant investment through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the Council

made a strong statement of commitment to cultural success in the borough, predicated on taking a new approach to 'bridging the gap' and on innovative business leadership. This approach has seen notable successes as detailed in this report and includes a breadth of engagement in the programme, including people from a wide range of communities and across the borough.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. The Council considered alternative options very carefully before bidding for LBOC and decided to proceed given the commitment of partners, especially in the ascent of CAG, and the benefits of profile it offered.
- 3.2. At the time of considering the CIL allocation, the Council identified four options before deciding to fund the CAG to deliver FilmMerton and lay the groundwork for longer-term sustainability:

Table 4 – CIL Funding Options

	Detail	Outcome
1	To deliver the whole Common Ground programme (£2.1m) without further support from the Mayor, using LBM resources	Rejected - as beyond available budgets
2	Not to deliver FilmMerton, returning the resources to the Neighbourhood Fund and rejecting the award from the GLA	Rejected - as would fail to fulfil community ambitions and commitments made in bidding for the award
3	To only fund the Cultural Advisory Group to the minimum required to deliver FilmMerton with no support to its sustainability in future	Rejected - as not investing in community ambition and aspiration at this time, when Cabinet have already committed the resources for investment in cultural activities which support bridging the gap, community empowerment and economic opportunity
4	To fund a the Cultural Advisory Group with the sum originally provisionally allocated to Common Ground to deliver FilmMerton, promote its legacy, develop other cultural opportunities and extend the partnerships created	Accepted as the most cost effective way to develop cultural empowerment in the borough

- 3.3. CAG, including Council Members and with officer advice, continues to carefully consider options for delivery within the framework of the funding available and the agreements reached with the GLA. Options considered for specific strands

of work are influenced by impact on community engagement and bridging the gap; support to the profile of the borough; and the opportunities to create excellent work and strengths within the cultural sector.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. As described in the 2019 Scrutiny report, the preparation of ‘*Common Ground*,’ included substantial consultation. This has continued during FilmMerton, especially through detailed discussion with a wide range of community groups on community seasons, identifying film makers and preparing for the augmented reality app and the Film Festival.
- 4.2. CAG has also continued consultation on future work. The business support project is itself a form of extended consultation/research on requirements of the Creative Industries Sector in Merton.
- 4.3. CAG is strongly committed to both consultation and reflection, using time at monthly meetings to consider recent consultation and use it to shape the next steps in their work.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The FilmMerton programme has run since January 2019 to its last season which ran during the last week of February/first week of March 2020. The final large scale event will be the Virtual Reality Festival of 6-7 March, followed by final evaluation reports and CAG reflection.
- 5.2. The timetable for future CAG work is set out under the relevant headings above, and is focused on maintaining momentum and informing future work in this area.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The clear long-term objective for CAG is to demonstrate effective delivery against the strategic aims of bridging the gap, and to deliver support to the sector without reliance on public sector resources.

- 6.2. The main sources of funding to date are:

- CIL funding from L B Merton - £ 213,000
- Cultural Impact Award Funding from the GLA - £ 40,000

There have also been numerous areas of support in-kind, some of which are detailed below.

- 6.3. The breakdown of the budget as agreed in the CIL decision and later updated by CAG in agreement with the delegated authority officers is:

Table 5 – Budget

Item	£	Comments
FilmMerton	167,300	Detailed budget agreed by CAG and reviewed monthly: includes £40,000 from the GLA
Business development for the sector	10,000	This strand of work was advertised through the council’s procurement portal and is now underway

Radio Local	24,999	This strand of work was advertised through the council's procurement portal and is now underway
Legacy Film Merton partnership with Commonsense Community Trust	15,000	This partnership is now being finalised
Cultural Leadership Development	23,900	This covers: * the sum allocated in the Common Ground bid for governance and limited support for delivery over the two years from April 2018 to April 2020 * a small amount for marketing and comms across the whole programme after FilmMerton
Music and outreach	11,000	This is a provisional sum for two emerging and related projects under active discussion at the time of writing
Contingency	1,801	To enable additional marketing etc. as required
Total Expenditure	£ 253,000	

6.4. CAG keeps its budget under close review and the proposed work programme is currently covered.

6.5. A significant number of partners have supported with use of venues and resources in-kind. This is part of the evaluation is still under review and being prepared for inclusion in the final reporting and declaration of the total value of the complete programme. Examples include:

- Video assets from Ravensbourne students worth approximately £1,000
- Donation of the General Giles Club for the Festival, worth £2,000
- The BFI Future Film team have donated time and resources to help develop Young Merton filmmaking talent, alongside time to chair events
- Other volunteer time and venues for the seasons

6.6. CAG has used a proportion of its budget both to commit to a stipend for the Chair, which enables small business owners to play a prominent role in its work, and for consultancy for a Critical Friend, who is both supporting the group and ensuring delivery of this work programme. These costs are contained within the Cultural Leadership Development budget line.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. Expenditure of funds by the Council must be compliant with lawful procurement rules as are appropriate to the level of expenditure whether under the Council's Standing Orders or under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The

obligations contained in any funding agreements must be followed and evidence of compliance with such obligations should be recorded in writing.

- 7.2. Under the CIL Regulations the Neighbourhood Fund, CIL must be spent on local infrastructure to support the demands of development. Government guidance states that local authorities should engage local communities and agree with them how to best spend the Neighbourhood Fund and that the cost of administering the fund should be reasonable and proportionate to the amount of funding received.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. The delivery of FilmMerton is being monitored to measure the engagement across communities, with a particular view to the over-riding objective of 'bridging the gap'. It is clear from the community seasons and the appointments for film making that communities not usually engaging with such opportunities have been attracted, including from ethnic minority and younger groups, and from the eastern part of the borough.
- 8.2. This is an issue of particular concern to CAG and funders and influences programme design and consultation.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications.
- 9.2. Members may wish to note that some of the community groups have identified disorder and related issues to be highlighted in their seasons, such as Soul Productions, who curated a season connected to gangs and peer pressure. As seasons are connected to community events, this has been a valuable opportunity to work with young people around strategies to resist such pressure.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no specific risk management or health and safety implications. The delivery team worked closely with specific venues and community groups to ensure health and safety requirements were properly managed.

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

Appendix 1 – Promotion of the Mitcham Virtual Reality Festival on the Digital Drama Website

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. Merton's – '*Common Ground*' bid.
- 12.2. CIL report.
- 12.3. Scrutiny Report 2019.

Appendix 1

Promotion of the Mitcham Virtual Reality Festival on the Digital Drama Website



Showcasing the latest immersive experiences, **Mitcham VR Festival** on **Saturday 7th March** will be the culmination of FilmMerton, the year-long project aiming to encourage participation with film throughout the London Borough of Merton. At Mitcham VR Festival, interactive Virtual Reality experiences will be showcased alongside 360-degree films and a unique Augmented Reality installation to give visitors the opportunity to engage with a broad range of immersive experiences from sci-fi thrillers to romantic dramas and comedy flicks. The event will be free.

All the Fun of the Fair

All the Fun of the Fair will enable Mitcham VR visitors to step into their local history through the technology of an Augmented Reality installation. With a unique soundscape and images springing to life on iPads, *All the Fun of the Fair* will transport audiences back in time to the Mitcham Fair, rumoured to be the oldest fair in England.

FilmMerton Commissions

Alongside Mitcham VR Festival, a series of four short films have been especially commissioned by FilmMerton and selected by a board chaired by Justin Johnson (Lead Programmer, British Film Institute Southbank) and will premiere at the festival. These have all been produced in Merton and showcase work from both established and aspiring filmmakers. Local Mitcham resident, Rosie Gaunt-Mathieson (*Dawn of a New Gay*, selected for London Short Film Festival 2020) will present *Just Delivered*, a heart-warming romantic comedy. Peter Lee Scott (*Sketch*, winner of Best Film at British Independent Film Festival 2018) will share *His Name is Gerry*, a drama-comedy about young people and bereavement. Aspiring filmmaker Matvi Khosho, a former asylum seeker brought up in Mitcham, will highlight the multicultural foundations of Merton with *The Streets That Shape Us*. The final short will be Wimbledon resident Charlie Strank's *The History of Wimbledon Football Club – As Told in Lego* which documents 'football coming home' to the local community.



MITCHAM VR FESTIVAL SELECTION

Gloomy Eyes

The sun grew tired of humans and decided to never rise again. The darkness awoke the dead from their graves. A zombie kid called Gloomy and a mortal girl called Nena fall in love, forming a deep connection that even the most powerful man cannot destroy. This is a beautifully animated VR love story.



Memoria: Stories of La Garma

Memoria: Stories of La Garma is an interactive Virtual Reality journey narrated by Geraldine Chaplin that allows you to explore the memories, paintings and objects trapped intact inside the cave of La Garma for over 16 thousand years. You can walk around three spaces of the cave and unleash the memories of each space, including palaeolithic hunters, a mom and her child and the terrifying cave lion who made his way deep into the cave to live his final days.



The Curious Tale of the Stolen Pets

Experience an interactive tale of childlike wonder! Help your grandfather solve the mystery of the stolen pets by exploring wonderful miniature worlds. Use a hairdryer to melt snow in a wintery landscape! Search the wreck of a pirate ship partially hidden under the surface! Every world is unique, full of interactions and colorful life.



360° Films Playlist 1

Judi Dench: My Oak Tree VR

Judi Dench: My Oak Tree VR is a pioneering, immersive 360 film that allows viewers to fly around and through the most impressive oak tree in Judi Dench's garden. Combining cutting-edge graphics, real scan data, state-of-the-art 360° filming techniques and poetic storytelling, this heart-warming journey brings the tree alive in a completely new way, and shows how trees can help to save our planet.



Anonymous

Anonymous is a 360° narrative film sharing the personal story of being a child of an alcoholic. After 28 years, Samantha shares her story of living with an alcohol-dependent parent, hiding the secret and dealing with the death of that parent. You come face to face with Samantha, who will address you directly as she works through her five stages. This piece highlights a story that 2.5 million children experience throughout the UK. The anonymous.



360° Films Playlist 2

Crackle Pop

Part documentary, part music experience, *Crackle Pop* explores the phenomenon of sound to colour synesthesia. Experience the neurological phenomenon of sound to colour synesthesia – the perception of colours or shapes when listening to sounds and music. Documentary and music video collide in this kaleidoscopic 360° film, pieced together from the descriptions of synesthetes listening to the breathtaking music of Paul Russell's post-punk orchestra, *Human Pyramids*.



Kinch and the Double World

Kinch and the Double World brings the fantasy adventure genre to cinematic Virtual Reality. Set in Victorian London, it tells the story of Kinch, an orphan who gets caught up in a stage magician's trick and ends up being transported to a magical world. In this alternate reality, the moon is falling, threatening to destroy the world. This 360° film was produced by the multi award-winning British studio Figment.



Bro Bots

Bro Bots is a VR animated comedy series. In the not-so-distant future, robots are everywhere. They talk like us. They walk like us. And they have really big personalities. Two British robots – Otis and Roberto – arrive in New York and join the NY Police Department. After hearing news that a wanted suspect will be taking to the stage at the Comedy Cellar that evening, Otis and Roberto are sent to investigate. What they discover leads to a highly dangerous assignment – locating an unregistered server deep within the heart of Botcorp, the world’s most powerful robot corporation.



All the Fun of the Fair

All the Fun of the Fair will enable Mitcham VR visitors to step into their local history through the technology of an Augmented Reality installation. With a unique soundscape and images springing to life on iPads, *All the Fun of the Fair* will transport audiences back in time to the Mitcham Fair, rumoured to be the oldest fair in England.





Mitcham VR Festival is part of London Borough of Culture, a Mayor of London initiative supported by the City of London Corporation's Charity, City Bridge Trust and Airbnb.

www.london.gov.uk/mylocalculture

@LDN_Culture
#mylocalculture
#MitchamVR

SEARCH DIGITALDRAMA.ORG

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London Borough of Culture is a Mayor of London initiative, supported by the City of London Corporation's charity, City Bridge Trust and Airbnb.

MAYOR OF LONDON



merton

Winner Mayor's Cultural
Impact Award

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Sustainable Communities – January 2020 performance

Dept.	PI Code & Description	Polarity	Jan 2020					YTD Result	Annual YTD Target	YTD Status
			Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend			
Housing Needs & Enabling	CRP 061 / SP 036 No. of households in temporary accommodation (Monthly)	Low	186	230				174.9	230	
Housing Needs & Enabling	CRP 062 / SP 035 No. of homelessness preventions (Monthly)	High	388	375				388	375	
Housing Needs & Enabling	SP 037 Highest No. of families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation during the year (Monthly)	Low	1	10				2.7	10	
Housing Needs & Enabling	SP 038 Highest No. of adults in Bed and Breakfast accommodation (Monthly)	Low	8	10				6.9	10	
Libraries	CRP 059 / SP 008 No. of people accessing the library by borrowing an item or using a peoples network terminal at least once in the previous 12 months (Monthly)	High	63,137	56,500				63,137	56,500	
Libraries	CRP 060 / SP 009 No. of visitors accessing the library service on line (Monthly)	High	210,897	195,830				210,897	195,830	
Libraries	SP 279 % Self-service usage for stock transactions (libraries) (Monthly)	High	96%	97%				96%	97%	
Libraries	SP 280 No. of active volunteers in libraries (Rolling 12 Month) (Monthly)	High	277	230				277	230	
Libraries	SP 287 Maintain Library Income (Monthly)	High	£388,863	£345,000				£388,863	£345,000	
Libraries	SP 480 Visitor figures - physical visits to Libraries (Monthly)	High	974,066	1,000,000				974,066	1,000,000	

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E&R Public Protection performance report

PI Code & Description	Jan 2020					2019/20				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
Parking										
CRP 044 Parking services estimated revenue (Monthly)	1,793,301	1,746,448				15,430,300	15,509,791			
SP 258 Sickness- No of days per FTE from snapshot report (parking) (Monthly)	2.5	0.67				17.04	6.66			
SP 509 NEW FOR 2019/20 % of Permits applied/processed online (Monthly)	81%	55%				75%	55%			
SP 510 NEW FOR 2019/20 % of PCN Appeals received online (Monthly)	65%	55%				60.6%	55%			
SP 511 NEW FOR 2019/20 Blue Badge Inspections (Monthly)	0	81				0	81			
SP 512 NEW FOR 2019/20 Total cashless usage against cash payments at machines (Monthly)	61%	60%				57.35%	60%			
SP 513 NEW FOR 2019/20 Percentage of cases 'heard' and won at ETA (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					77.1%	73%			
Regulatory Services										
LER 060 Income generation by Regulatory Services (Monthly)	£16,273	£30,120				£340,108	£491,220			
SP 111 No. of underage sales test purchases (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					68	76			
SP 255 % licensing applications determined within 28 days (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					88.7%	98%			
SP 316 % Inspection category A,B & C food premises (Annual)	Annual						100			
SP 418 Annual average amount of Nitrogen Dioxide per m3 (Annual)	Annual						40			
SP 420 Annual average amount of Particulates per m3 (Annual)	Annual						40			

PI Code & Description	Jan 2020					2019/20				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
SP 494 Nitrogen Dioxide Diffusion Tube Monitoring Sites in the Borough exceeding National Levels (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					43	0			
SP 519 NEW FOR 2019/20 Total % of broadly compliant food establishments rated A-E (Annual)	Annual						95%			
SP 520 NEW FOR 2019/20 Schedule B Prescribed Premises due for inspection completed (Annual)	Annual						100%			
SP 521 NEW FOR 2019/20 Total % compliance of non-road mobile machinery on major construction sites with GLA emissions standards (Annual)	Annual						85%			
SP 522 NEW FOR 2019/20 % of noise and nuisance complaints received from residents receiving a frontline response (visit/advice) within one week of receipt (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					84.26%	90%			

SP 000

E&R Public Spaces

PI Code & Description	Jan 2020					2019/20				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
Street Cleansing										
CRP 048 / SP 455 % of sites surveyed on local street inspections for litter that are below standard (Monthly)	13.3%	8%				14.79%	8%			
LER 058 % Sites surveyed on street inspections for litter (using NI195 system) that are below standard (KBT) (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					16.57%	8%			
SP 062 % Sites surveyed below standard for graffiti (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					5.67%	5%			
SP 063 % Sites surveyed below standard for flyposting (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					0.95%	1%			
SP 139 % Sites surveyed below standard for weeds (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					9.21%	11%			
SP 140 % Sites surveyed below standard for Detritus (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					20.72%	9%			

PI Code & Description	Jan 2020					2019/20				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
SP 269 % Residents satisfied with street cleanliness (Annual) (ARS)	Annual					?	?	?	?	?
Waste Service										
CRP 093 / SP 478 No. of refuse collections including recycling and kitchen waste missed per 100,000 (Monthly)	80.00	40.00				74.20	50.00			
CRP 094 / SP 485 No. of fly-tips in streets and parks recorded by Contractor (Monthly)	1,277	700				11,138	7,000			
SP 064 % Residents satisfied with refuse collection (Annual) (ARS)	Annual					?	?	?	?	?
SP 065 % Household waste recycled and composted (Monthly in arrears)	41.18 %	48%				43.51%	48%			
SP 066 Residual waste kg per household (Monthly in arrears)	41.37	39.5				376.18	395.5			
SP 067 % Municipal solid waste sent to landfill (waste management & commercial waste) (Monthly in arrears)	5%	10%				7%	10%			
SP 262 % Residents satisfied with recycling facilities (Annual) (ARS)	Annual					?	?	?	?	?
SP 354 Total waste arising per households (KGs) (Monthly in arrears)	70.34	75				665.97	750			
SP 407 % FPN's issued that have been paid (Monthly)	70%	75%				68.1%	75%			
SP 454 % of fly-tips removed within 24 hours (Monthly)	99%	95%				82.44%	95%			
Parks										
LER OS 01 Parks Quality Management Score (PQMS)		5				4.98	5			
SP 026 % of residents who rate parks & green spaces as good or very good (Annual) (ARS)	Annual					?	?	?	?	?
SP 027 Young peoples % satisfaction with parks & green spaces (Annual) (ARS)	Annual					?	?	?	?	?
SP 032 No. of Green Flags (Annual)	Annual					?	6	?	?	?

PI Code & Description	Jan 2020					2019/20				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
SP 318 No. of outdoor events in parks (Monthly)	0	0	✓	↓	↓	222	136	✓	↓	↑
SP 514 NEW FOR 2019/20 Income from outdoor events in parks (Annual)	Annual					?	£531,230.00	?	?	?
SP 515 NEW FOR 2019/20 Average Performance Quality Score (Grounds Maintenance Standards) (Annual)	Annual					?	5	?	?	?
SP 516 NEW FOR 2019/20 Annual basal & epicormic growth programme completion by 31 Aug each year) (Annual)	Annual					?	100%	?	?	?
SP 517 NEW FOR 2019/20 Number of street trees planted (Annual)	Annual					?	235	?	?	?
Leisure										
SP 251 Income from Watersports Centre (Monthly)	£251	£0	✓	↓	↓	£402,705	£361,500	✓	↓	↑
SP 325 % Residents rating Leisure & Sports facilities Good to Excellent (Annual) (ARS)	Annual					?	?	?	?	?
SP 349 14 to 25 year old fitness centre participation at leisure centres (Monthly)	5,974	10,000	⊘	↑	↓	78,941	84,400	⊘	↓	↓
SP 405 No. of Leisure Centre users (Monthly)	99,768	95,000	✓	↑	↑	932,417	896,000	✓	↓	↓
SP 406 No. of Polka Theatre users (cumulative) (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					7,532	7,500	✓	↓	↓
Transport										
SP 136 Average % time passenger vehicles in use (transport passenger fleet) (Annual)	Annual					?	85%	?	?	?
SP 137 % User satisfaction survey (transport passenger fleet) (Annual)	Annual					?	97%	?	?	?
SP 271 In-house journey that meet timescales (transport passenger fleet) (Annual)	Annual					?	85%	?	?	?
SP 526 NEW FOR 2019/20 % of Council fleet using diesel fuel (Annual)	Annual					?	80%	?	?	?
SP 456 Average days lost to sickness absence - Transport (Monthly)	2.06	0.79	⊘	↑	↑	34.24	7.92	⊘	↑	↓

E&R Sustainable Communities

PI Code & Description	Jan 2020					2019/20				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
Development and Building Control										
CRP 045 / SP 118 Income (Development and Building Control) (Monthly)	133,898	157,166				1,653,655	1,571,660			
CRP 051 / SP 114 % Major applications processed within 13 weeks (Monthly)	100%	68%				76%	68%			
CRP 052 / SP 115 % of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks (Monthly)	83.78%	71%				78.97%	71%			
CRP 053 / SP 116 % of 'other' planning applications determined within 8 weeks (Development Control) (Monthly)	76.74%	82%				84.94%	82%			
SP 040 % Market share retained by LA (Building Control) (Monthly)	53.75%	54%				50.72%	54%			
SP 113 No. of planning enforcement cases closed (Monthly)	160	43				910	433			
SP 117 % appeals lost (Development & Building Control) (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					37.43%	35%			
SP 380 No. of backlog planning enforcement cases (Monthly)	555	849				555	849			
SP 414 Volume of planning applications (Monthly)	290	365				3,447	3,650			
Future Merton										
SP 020 New Homes (Annual)	Annual						1,328			
SP 260 % Streetworks inspections completed (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					45.48%	37%			
SP 327 % Emergency callouts attended within 2 hours (traffic & highways) (Monthly)	100%	98%				99.34%	98%			
SP 328 % Streetworks permitting determined (Monthly)	100%	98%				99.9%	98%			
SP 389 Carriageway condition - unclassified roads defectiveness condition indicator (annual)	Annual						75%			

PI Code & Description	Jan 2020					2019/20				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
SP 391 Average number of days taken to repair an out of light street light (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					1.18	3			
SP 475 Number of publically available Electric Vehicles Charging Points available to Merton Residents (Annual)	Annual						49			
SP 476 Number of business premises improved (Annual)	Annual						10			
SP 508 NEW FOR 2019/20 Footway condition - (% not defective, unclassified road) (Annual)	Annual						75%			
Property										
SP 024 % Vacancy rate of property owned by the council (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					1%	3%			
SP 025 % Debt owed to LBM by tenants inc businesses (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					3.14%	7.5%			
SP 386 Property asset valuations (Annual)	Annual						150			
SP 518 NEW FOR 2019/20 Number of completed Rent Reviews (Quarterly)	Measured quarterly					17	15			

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Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17 March 2020

Subject: Planning the Panel's 2020/21 work programme

Wards: All

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead member: Councillor Natasha Irons, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Contact officer: Rosie Mckeever, Scrutiny Officer, 020 8545 4035

Recommendations:

- A. That the Panel reviews its 2019/20 work programme (set out in the appendix), identifying what worked well, what worked less well and what the Panel would like to do differently next year;
 - B. That the Panel suggests items for inclusion in the 2020/21 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics; and
 - C. That the Panel advises on agenda items for its meeting on 25 June 2020.
-

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To enable the Panel to plan its work programme for the forthcoming municipal year and, in particular, to agree agenda items for the first meeting of the municipal year.

2. DETAILS

Identifying issues for the 2020/21 work programme

- 2.1 At the beginning of each municipal year, each Overview and Scrutiny body determines the issues it wishes to build into its work programme for the forthcoming year. The Overview and Scrutiny bodies have specific roles relating to budget and business plan scrutiny and performance monitoring, and these should automatically be built into the work programme.
- 2.2 In addition to this, Overview and Scrutiny bodies may choose to build a work programme which involves scrutinising a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development reviews carried out by task groups, performance monitoring, on-going monitoring items and follow up to previous scrutiny work.
- 2.3 The remit of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is as follows:
 - Housing, including housing need, affordable housing and private sector housing;
 - Environmental sustainability, including energy, waste management, parks and open spaces and the built environment;
 - Culture, including tourism, museums, arts, sports and leisure;
 - Enterprise and skills, including regeneration, employment, adult education and libraries; and
 - Transport.

- 2.4 The scrutiny officers are currently gathering suggestions for issues to scrutinise, either as Panel agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions are being sought from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the police, NHS and Merton Voluntary Service Council. The council's departmental management teams are being consulted in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the Panel could contribute to the policymaking process.
- 2.5 The Panel is therefore invited to suggest items for inclusion in the 2020/21 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics.
- 2.6 All the suggestions received will be discussed at the Panel's topic workshop on 8 June 2020. As in previous years, participants will be asked to prioritise the suggestions using criteria so that the issues chosen relate to:
- The Council's strategic priorities;
 - Services that are underperforming;
 - Issues of public interest or concern; and
 - Issues where scrutiny could make a difference

Planning the first meeting of the 2020/21 municipal year

- 2.7 A note of the workshop discussion and draft work programme will be reported to the first meeting of the Panel in the new municipal year. The Panel will be requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.
- 2.8 The Panel is asked to advise on any other items that it would be helpful to include on the agenda for its 25 June 2020 meeting.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Panel can select topics for scrutiny review and for other scrutiny work as it sees fit, taking into account views and suggestions from officers, partner organisations and the public.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1 To assist Members to identify and prioritise a work programme for 2020/21, the Scrutiny Team will undertake a consultation programme with Panel Members, co-opted members, members of the public, LB Merton Officers and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to determine other issues/items for Members' consideration for inclusion in the Panel's 2020/21 work programme.

5. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 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.

6. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 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.

- 7. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1 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 engaging with local partners in scrutiny reviews. Furthermore, the outcomes of reviews are intended to benefit all sections of the local community.
- 7.2 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.
- 8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the crime and disorder issues relating to the topic being scrutinised.
- 9. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1 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.
- 10. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
- 10.1 2019/20 work programme
- 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 11.1 None

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Sustainable Communities Work Programme 2019/20



This table sets out the Sustainable Communities Panel Work Programme for 2018/19; the items listed were agreed by the Panel at its meeting on 27 June 2019. This Work Programme will be considered at every meeting of the Panel to enable it to respond to issues of concern and incorporate reviews or to comment upon pre-decision items ahead of their consideration by Cabinet/Council.

The work programme table shows items on a meeting-by-meeting basis, identifying the issue under review, the nature of the scrutiny (pre-decision, policy development, issue specific, performance monitoring, partnership related) and the intended outcomes.

Chair: Cllr Natasha Irons

Vice-chair: Cllr Daniel Holden

Scrutiny Support

For further information on the work programme of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel please contact: -

Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer

Tel: 020 8545 4035; Email: rosie.mckeever@merton.gov.uk

For more information about overview and scrutiny at LB Merton, please visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Meeting date: 27 June 2019 (**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 18 June 2019)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Parking Consultation	Written update report	Cathryn James, Interim Assistant Director, Public Protection	
Performance management	Performance monitoring	Basket of indicators plus verbal report	Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration Steve Langley, Head of Housing Needs	To highlight any items of concern and for the Panel to make any recommendations or to request additional information.
Setting the work programme	Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel work programme 2019/20	Written report	Rosie Mckeever, Scrutiny Officer	To agree the work programme and select a subject for task group review.

Meeting date: 3 September 2019 (~~**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 26 August 2019~~)

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Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Cabinet Members priorities	Verbal update	Cabinet Members for Commerce, Leisure and Culture; Regeneration, Housing and Transport; Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment	To understand current priorities in relation to Panel work programme.
Holding the executive to account	Waste, recycling and street cleaning: performance update:	Written update report	John Bosley, Assistant Director, Public Space Scott Edgell, Veolia	To monitor performance and to seek resident feedback on the service.
Scrutiny reviews	Environmental Enforcement: Fly Tipping Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written report Presentation	John Bosley, Assistant Director, Public Space	Opportunity to understand the team's remit in more detail and give feedback on new strategy
Performance management	Performance monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basket of indicators plus verbal report 	Councillor Ben Butler Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	To highlight any items of concern, make recommendations and/or request additional information
Setting the work programme	Work programme 2019/20	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	Standing item

Meeting date: 30 October 2019 (**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 22 October 2019)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Budget scrutiny	Budget/business plan scrutiny (round 1)	Written report	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To discuss and refer any comments to the O&S Commission
External scrutiny	Clarion Housing Group: regeneration	Responses to members' questions to be printed as part of the agenda	Representatives from Clarion Housing Group will be invited to attend the session and answer member questions.	This session will be used to focus on Clarion's estates regeneration.
Holding the executive to account	Town centre regeneration	Presentation	Paul McGarry, Head of <i>futureMerton</i>	Progress update
Scrutiny review	Single use plastics – Action plan	Written report	Task Group Chair; Mark Humphries; Stella Akintan	
Performance management	Performance monitoring	Basket of indicators plus verbal report	Councillor Ben Butler Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	To highlight any items of concern, make recommendations and/or request additional information
Holding the executive to account	Bishopsford Road Bridge	Update report		Added to agenda as requested
Setting the work programme	Work programme 2019/20	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	Standing item

Meeting date: 6 February 2020 (~~Deadline for papers: 12pm, 29 January 2020~~)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Budget scrutiny	Budget and business planning (round 2)	Written report	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To comment on the budget and business plan proposals and make any recs to the Commission to consider and co-ordinate a response to Cabinet.
Holding the executive to account	Annual Review (and other matters relating to the Veolia Street cleaning and waste contract)	Written report	Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	Additional item added to update the Panel on progress against the recommendations
Holding the executive to account	Fly Tipping Strategy update	Written report	John Bosley, Assistant Director Public Space	Additional item added to update the Panel on progress against the recommendations
Scrutiny review	Local Implementation Plan	Written report	James McGinlay	Update report
Performance management	Performance monitoring	Basket of indicators plus verbal report	Councillor Ben Butler Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	To highlight any items of concern, make recommendations and/or request additional information
Setting the work programme	Work programme 2019/20	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	Standing item

Meeting date: 25 February 2020 (**Deadline for papers: 12pm, 17 February 2020**)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
External scrutiny	Clarion Housing Group: repairs and maintenance	Verbal update	Representatives from Clarion Housing Group will be invited to attend the session and answer member questions.	This session will be used to focus on repairs and maintenance work
Holding the executive to account	Diesel levy implementation	Written report	Cathryn James, Chris Lee	Update report
Holding the executive to account	Air Quality Action Plan	Written report	Jason Andrews	Update report
Performance management	Performance monitoring	Basket of indicators plus verbal report	Councillor Ben Butler Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	To highlight any items of concern, make recommendations and/or request additional information
Setting the work programme	Work programme 2019/20	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	Standing item

Meeting date: 17 March 2020 (**Deadline for papers: 12pm, 9 March 2020**)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Waste, recycling and street cleaning		John Bosley, AD Public Space; Scott Edgell, Veolia	Additional item added to update the Panel on progress against the recommendations
Holding the executive to account	Housing Strategy	Written report	James McGinlay	Update report
Scrutiny reviews	Support for private renters	Written report	Steve Langley, Head of Housing Needs	Update report
Holding the executive to account	Merton Adult Education	Annual report	Anthony Hopkins	Update on performance of the service
Holding the executive to account	Libraries and Heritage	Annual report	Anthony Hopkins	Update on performance of the service
Holding the executive to account	London Borough of Culture	Annual report	Christine Parsloe	Update on performance of the service
Holding the executive to account	Design Review Panel	Written report	Paul McGarry	Update on DRP consultation
Performance management	Performance monitoring	Basket of indicators plus verbal report	Chris Lee	To highlight any items of concern
Setting the work programme	Topic suggestions 2020/21	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	To seek suggestions from the Panel to inform discussions about the Panel's 2020/21 work programme

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