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# Merton Council

## Council Meeting

### Membership

**The Mayor:** Councillor Michael Brunt

**The Deputy Mayor:** Councillor Edith Macauley MBE

**Councillors:** Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE, Stephen Alambritis MBE, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Eloise Bailey, Thomas Barlow, Nigel Benbow, Hina Bokhari, Adam Bush, Omar Bush, Ben Butler, Billy Christie, David Chung, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Pauline Cowper, Stephen Crowe, Mary Curtin, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Anthony Fairclough, Edward Foley, Brenda Fraser, Jenifer Gould, Edward Gretton, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Andrew Howard, Janice Howard, Natasha Irons, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Paul Kohler, Rebecca Lanning, Najeeb Latif, Russell Makin, Peter McCabe, Simon McGrath, Nick McLean, Oonagh Moulton, Aidan Mundy, Hayley Ormrod, Dennis Pearce, Owen Pritchard, Carl Quilliam, David Simpson CBE, Marsie Skeete, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Eleanor Stringer, Dave Ward, Martin Whelton, Dickie Wilkinson, David Williams MBE JP and Helena Dollimore

**Date: Wednesday 2 February 2022**

**Time: 7.15 pm**

**Venue: Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX**

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# Council Meeting

## 2 February 2022

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**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. For further advice please speak with the Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership.

Partnership.

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# Agenda Item 3

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## COUNCIL

17 NOVEMBER 2021

(7.15 pm - 10.13 pm)

## PRESENT

(in the Chair), Councillor Michael Brunt, Councillor Edith Macauley, Councillor Agatha Mary Akyigyina, Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Councillor Mark Allison, Councillor Stan Anderson, Councillor Laxmi Attawar, Councillor Eloise Bailey, Councillor Thomas Barlow, Councillor Nigel Benbow, Councillor Hina Bokhari, Councillor Adam Bush, Councillor Omar Bush, Councillor Ben Butler, Councillor Tobin Byers, Councillor Billy Christie, Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Councillor Stephen Crowe, Councillor David Dean, Councillor John Dehaney, Councillor Nick Draper, Councillor Anthony Fairclough, Councillor Edward Foley, Councillor Brenda Fraser, Councillor Jenifer Gould, Councillor Joan Henry, Councillor Daniel Holden, Councillor James Holmes, Councillor Andrew Howard, Councillor Janice Howard, Councillor Natasha Irons, Councillor Sally Kenny, Councillor Linda Kirby, Councillor Paul Kohler, Councillor Rebecca Lanning, Councillor Najeeb Latif, Councillor Russell Makin, Councillor Peter McCabe, Councillor Simon McGrath, Councillor Nick McLean, Councillor Oonagh Moulton, Councillor Aidan Mundy, Councillor Hayley Ormrod, Councillor Dennis Pearce, Councillor Owen Pritchard, Councillor Carl Quilliam, Councillor David Simpson, Councillor Peter Southgate, Councillor Geraldine Stanford, Councillor Eleanor Stringer, Councillor Dave Ward, Councillor Martin Whelton, Councillor Dickie Wilkinson, Councillor David Williams and Councillor Helena Dollimore

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gretton.

Councillors Chung, Cowper, Curtin and Skeete attended remotely.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on 15 September 2021 are agreed as an accurate record, subject to the following amendment:

*That the minutes be amended to correct the name of the Chair to Councillor Michael Brunt, from Councillor Sally Kenny as listed in the original minutes.*

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Agenda Item 4)

The Mayor announced the sad recent passing of Miranda Foley, wife of Councillor Foley and consort to the deputy mayor 2019/20. The Mayor expressed the thoughts and condolences of the whole Council to Councillor Foley, his children and family.

The Mayor then provided a brief update on upcoming activities and events.

There were no announcements from the Leader or Chief Executive.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 5)

The responses to the written public questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of the questioners in turn to ask (if they wished) a further question to the Cabinet Member. A copy of the supplementary questions and responses will be included in the 'public questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

6 COUNCILLORS' ORDINARY PRIORITY QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 6)

The responses to the written member ordinary priority questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of the members in turn to ask (if they wished) a further question to the Cabinet Member. A copy of the supplementary questions and responses will be included in the 'member ordinary priority questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

7a STRATEGIC THEME: COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 7a)

The responses to the written member strategic theme priority questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of the members in turn to ask (if they wished) a further question to the Cabinet Member. A copy of the supplementary questions and responses will be included in the 'member strategic theme priority questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

It was also noted that a copy of the remaining Member questions and responses will be published after the meeting, in line with Constitutional requirements.

7b STRATEGIC THEME: MAIN REPORT (Agenda Item 7b)

The Strategic Theme report on Sustainable Communities with a focus on Enforcement was moved by Councillor Irons and seconded by Councillor Akyigyina.

Councillors Andrew Howard, Fraser and Bokhari also spoke on the item.

The Liberal Democrat amendment was moved by Councillor Fairclough and seconded by Councillor Bailey.

The Liberal Democrat amendment was put to the vote and fell – votes in favour: 22, votes against: 32, absentions: 0.

The substantive report was then put to the vote and agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Theme report is agreed.

#### 7c STRATEGIC THEME: CONSERVATIVE MOTION (Agenda Item 7c)

The motion was moved by Councillor Holden and seconded by Councillor Dean.

The Labour amendment as set out in agenda item 25 was moved by Councillor Whelton and seconded by Councillor Byers.

Councillor Kohler spoke on the item.

The Labour amendment was put to a vote and was carried– votes in favour: 29, votes against: 19, abstentions: 6.

The substantive motion (as amended) was then put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 29, votes against: 16, abstentions: 9.

RESOLVED:

Council recognises the importance of good town planning and understands that local residents want planning applications that are approved to be adhered to and properly enforced.

Council notes that the building development control function has had an improvement programme underway since 2020, but while many of the improvements have been implemented, some have been delayed due to recruitment issues which the trade magazine UK Construction Excellence describes as a “long-predicted shortfall” in the building control sector across the UK. This in turn has had an impact on the capacity for planning enforcement with the latest statistics showing that the number of planning enforcement cases closed each month are at 46% of their target.

Residents demand and expect that all development in Merton is in accordance with sound planning principles and planning law, and Council notes that the government has failed to prepare for this long-predicted shortfall in the sector, or to fund councils so that they can provide services to the level that residents and councillors would want.

Therefore, council requests that the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate emergency in conjunction with the Director of Environment and Regeneration lobby the government to put in place measures to improve planning enforcement, to prioritise the rolling out of the improvement programme, and seek to tackle the backlog in cases, and report on progress to council in 6 months' time, and to one meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel in 3 months' time.

Council expects the following aspects to be included:

- The cost and viability of an online portal for planning enforcement cases which councillors and residents can see;
- Ways to improve reporting of planning breaches on the council website;
- Action plan to tackle the backlog in planning enforcement cases;
- Analysis of how well planning enforcement measures result in appropriate outcomes;
- Continued enforcement of existing planning laws against individuals and developers who break planning rules;
- Using public communications to highlight enforcement breaches (including a continued emphasis on those who fell trees in contravention of planning rules);
- Continuing to review the outcome of development following completion to ensure that greening measures have been implemented, including tree planting (in line with the council's Tree Strategy);
- Continued strong protection of existing trees via powers under Tree Protection Orders.
- The importance of good communication between the Planning Dept and the public and councillors;
- A full costing of all the above measures and an outline of the cuts that would have to be made to other services, and the impact of these, if the cost has to be borne in whole by the council rather than from direct additional grant.

8 REPORT OF THE RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM: 16 SEPTEMBER 2021 (Agenda Item 8)

Councillor Dean presented the report which was received by the Council.

9 REPORT OF THE WIMBLEDON COMMUNITY FORUM: 22 SEPTEMBER 2021 (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Holmes presented the report which was received by the Council.

10 REPORT OF THE MITCHAM COMMUNITY FORUM: 6 OCTOBER 2021 (Agenda Item 10)

Councillor Chung presented the report which was received by the Council.

11 REPORT OF THE MORDEN COMMUNITY FORUM: 13 OCTOBER 2021



(Agenda Item 11)

Councillor Draper presented the report which was received by the Council.

12 REPORT OF THE COLLIERS WOOD AND NE MITCHAM COMMUNITY FORUM: 20 OCTOBER 2021 (Agenda Item 12)

Councillor Dehaney presented the report which was received by the Council.

13 NOTICE OF MOTION: CROSS-PARTY MOTION (Agenda Item 13)

The motion was moved by Councillor Allison and seconded by Councillor McLean.

Councillor Fairclough spoke on the item.

The motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

Council notes the tragic and appalling murder of Sir David Amess MP that was carried out as he performed his public duties.

Council extends its condolences to the family and all Sir David's friends for their loss, and marks the enormous contribution that he has made to politics in this country.

Council calls on the authorities to take great care to protect the safety of public servants, and for everyone to respect the importance of civility in public life.

14 NOTICE OF MOTION: CONSERVATIVE MOTION (Agenda Item 14)

The motion was moved by Councillor McLean and seconded by Councillor Ormrod.

The Labour amendment as set out in agenda item 26 was moved by Councillor Whelton and seconded by Councillor Draper.

Councillor McGrath spoke on the item.

The Labour amendment was put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 29, votes against: 25, abstentions: 0.

The substantive motion (as amended) was put to the vote and carried – votes in favour: 29, votes against: 24, abstentions: 1.

RESOLVED:

Council notes that in September 2014 the Labour administration and Circle Housing Merton Priory (the predecessor of Clarion Housing) agreed the 'ten commitments' that would guide the future regeneration work. The 'ten commitments' are:

1. Circle Housing Merton Priory will consult with residents, consider their interests at all times, and address concerns fairly;
2. Current home owners will be entitled to at least the market value of their homes should they wish to take up the option to sell their homes to Circle Housing Merton Priory;
3. Current tenants will be entitled to be rehoused in a new home of appropriate size considering the number of people in the household;
4. Existing Circle Housing Merton Priory tenants will keep all their rights and have the same tenancy agreement, including rent levels, in the new neighbourhood as they do now;
5. All new properties will be more energy efficient and easier to heat than existing properties, helping to keep down residents' fuel bills;
6. Circle Housing Merton Priory will keep disruption to a minimum, and will do all it can to ensure that residents only move once if it is necessary to house residents temporarily while their new home is being built;
7. Circle Housing Merton Priory will offer extra help and support for older people and/or disabled residents throughout the renovation works;
8. Circle Housing Merton Priory will continue to maintain the homes of residents across the three neighbourhoods throughout the planning process until regeneration starts, including ensuring a high quality responsive repairs service;
9. Any growth in the number of homes will be in accordance with the council's own Development Plan so that it is considered, responsible and suitable for the area;
10. As a not for profit organization, Circle Housing Merton Priory will not profit from any regeneration and will use any surplus to provide more housing or improve existing neighbourhoods.

Council commends the Labour administration for signing up to these commitments and for ensuring that the pledges have been predominantly implemented, notes the recent concerns about Clarion's repair service and the administration's determination for Clarion to maintain homes effectively as well as undertaking regeneration. It calls upon the cabinet to declare its commitment to these principles in working with what is now Clarion Housing, alongside continuing engagement with residents of the estates to develop policies that local people can have confidence in.

Council also supports the determination of the administration and Clarion to regenerate the three estates despite the scheme being in deficit due to economic factors, and welcomes the proposal to use up to £72million by reinvesting money which would be due to the Council from private sales which will enable the estates to be rebuilt, provide additional social homes, and help deal with overcrowding issues.

#### 15 NOTICE OF MOTION: LABOUR MOTION (Agenda Item 15)

The motion was moved by Councillor Whelton and seconded by Councillor Lanning.

The Liberal Democrat amendment as set out in agenda item 27 was moved by Councillor McGrath and seconded by Councillor Gould.

The Liberal Democrat amendment was put to a vote and fell – votes in favour: 9, votes against: 29, abstentions: 16.

The Conservative amendment as set out in agenda item 27 was moved by Councillor Holden and seconded by Councillor Dean.

The Conservative amendment was put to a vote and fell – votes in favour: 16, votes against: 38, abstentions: 0.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and carried – votes in favour: 31, votes against: 16, abstentions: 7

RESOLVED:

Council notes that:

- Approximately 230 councils have declared a Climate Emergency, including Merton Council in July 2019. As part of our Climate Emergency declaration, we pledged to support Merton to become a carbon neutral council by 2030.
- Local government is an indispensable partner in achieving net zero, because of our insight into our communities and local circumstances, our service delivery and regulatory functions, and our ability to join up emissions reductions with other pressing priorities, from public health, to inequality to economic development.
- Without direct financial support from the Government and an acknowledgement of the pivotal role they play in tackling climate change, local authorities will struggle to achieve these vital targets Council welcomes: The actions Merton Council has already taken to tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis including, by way of example:
  - approving Merton's Climate Strategy and Action Plan, including the key actions required to become a carbon neutral council by 2030.
    - setting up and supporting the volunteers in the Climate Action Group to develop community-led projects to reduce everyone's emissions, recognising that joint efforts are more effective than individuals' or the Council's alone.
    - putting £2 million of reserves towards actions in the Climate Strategy and Action Plan so far
    - supporting Merton Garden Streets, a volunteer-led initiative to make our streets greener, and holding Car Free Day events.
      - installing 68 innovative Breathe London air quality and traffic sensors – more than any other London borough.
      - installing low-energy LED lighting in our buildings and investing £2m in LED streetlights.
    - putting in place over 50 PV panel systems on 44 Council buildings, generating 1,000,000 kWh every year, and 100% of the council's energy supply now coming from renewable sources.
    - introducing more School Streets than any other London borough per capita, to lower pollution outside schools
    - having over 200 electric vehicle charging points, 20 cycle hangars, 10 parklets, and 11 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.
    - Drafting a Local Plan that sets ambitious targets for new development so that new development is net-zero by 2050.

Council resolves:

- To continue to support Merton’s communities including the Climate Action Group in their lead and delivery of projects across the borough, recognising that 97% of carbon emissions in Merton are outside Merton Council’s control.
- To continue to work with employers in the borough, including businesses, the third sector, charities and the public sector to encourage them to take steps to reduce their carbon emissions and operate in a more sustainable way, and learn from any best practice that they have already put in place.
- To work with the third sector, charities, businesses, and residents across the borough to continue to meet targets set in the Climate Action Plan.
- That the Leader will write to Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Michael Gove MP to make the case for:
  - Acknowledging local government’s pivotal role in tackling climate change, and to share examples of the work already done by Merton Council.
  - To call on the government to agree to a national framework and strategy with local government and business, that provides certainty of funding to enable local government to leverage its unique role and influence and maximize its potential in tackling climate change in the UK.

#### 16 NOTICE OF MOTION: MERTON PARK WARD INDEPENDENT RESIDENTS MOTION (Agenda Item 16)

The motion was moved by Councillor Wilkinson making his maiden speech and seconded by Councillor Southgate.

Councillors Fairclough, Ward and Barlow spoke on the item.

The motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

#### RESOLVED:

This Council recognises that the best way for ideas to turn into action for the benefit of the residents is to table motions in council that refrain from political point scoring and instead are focussed on viable, cost-effective initiatives. For motions to be ‘business-like’ this Council suggests that they are to be based on SMART goals; thereby making them specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. In addition, despite the effort that does go into drafting motions and amendments, currently the Council lacks a mechanism to monitor the resulting outcomes. As a Council which prides itself on its transparency this Council believes in being openly held accountable for the decisions it makes on behalf of the residents we represent.

Therefore, this council resolves to:

- From this point forward, ask that parties endeavour only to submit motions and amendments which comply with SMART goal principles; and
- Agree to ask officers to table a report at the first business meeting after each Annual Council Meeting documenting the actions taken in response to the motions and amendments passed during the previous civic year.

#### 17 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2022/23 (Agenda Item 17)

The report was moved by Councillor Byers and seconded by Councillor Henry.

Councillors Adam Bush and Kohler spoke on the item.

The report was put to a vote and agreed.

RESOLVED:

1. That the uprating revisions for the 2022/23 council tax support scheme detailed in the report were agreed, in order to maintain low council tax charges for those on lower incomes and other vulnerable residents
2. That Council recommended the proposed revisions to the 2022/23 scheme.

18 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT 2005 (Agenda Item 18)

The report was moved by Councillor Draper and formally seconded by Councillor Allison.

Councillors Simpson and Kohler spoke on the item.

The report was put to the vote and agreed.

RESOLVED:

- A. That Council adopted the Council's Statement of Principles 2022-2025 as required under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 as approved by Members of the Licensing Committee on 14 October 2021 to come into effect on the 31st January 2022
- B. That Council resolved not to issue a Casino Premises Licence or allow operators to make application for premises licences for casinos, as approved by Members of the Licensing Committee on 14 October 2021, to come into effect on the 31st January 2022

19 ARRANGEMENTS FOR IN-PERSON COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS (Agenda Item 19)

The report was formally moved by Councillor Byers and formally seconded by Councillor Allison.

Councillor McLean spoke on the item.

The report was put to a vote and agreed.

RESOLVED:

- A. That Council agreed the retention of the meeting arrangements as described in this report for a further period of 6 months
- B. That Council agreed the amendment to the constitution of the Council procedure rules as listed within Appendix A

## 20 APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PERSON (Agenda Item 20)

The report was moved by Councillor McCabe and formally seconded by Councillor Allison.

Councillor McLean spoke on the item.

The report was put to the vote and agreed.

### RESOLVED:

- A. That Council agreed to appoint Clive Douglas for a further three year period as an Independent Person for the purposes of Chapter 7 of the Localism Act. The Independent Person will be invited to attend meetings of the Standards and General Purposes Committee in that capacity.
- B. That the appointment is made for a period of three years from 8 February 2022.

## 21 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND RELATED MATTERS (Agenda Item 21)

The report was formally moved by Councillor Allison and formally seconded by Councillor Stringer.

Councillor Barlow spoke on the item.

The report was put to a vote and was carried.

### RESOLVED:

That the Council:

1. Noted and endorsed the changes to the membership of Committees that were approved under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Council.
2. Noted and endorsed the appointment of councillors to the two substitute vacancies on the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

## 22 PETITIONS (Agenda Item 22)

The report was formally moved by Councillor Allison and formally seconded by Councillor Stringer.

### RESOLVED

That Council

1. Noted the update on the petition received at the last meeting,
2. Accepted the receipt of the Petition presented by Councillor Gould entitled Cannon Hill Lane Zebra Crossing to Joseph Hood Recreation Ground.

**23 BUSINESS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
(Agenda Item 23)**

That the Strategic Theme for the next ordinary meeting of the Council, being held on 2 February 2022, shall be Health and Wellbeing.

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## 6: Councillors Ordinary Priority Questions to Cabinet Members

### **From Councillor Ben Butler to the Cabinet Member for Children and Education**

What has been the cost to the Council of the government's failure to fully fund our SEND service since 2018?

### **From Cllr Thomas Barlow to the Leader of the Council:**

To ask the Leader if he has received legal advice on the covenant covering the sale of land from Wimbledon Golf Club to the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) and if he will share this in full with the residents of Merton?

### **From Councillor Billy Christie to the Cabinet Member for Local Environment and Green Spaces**

Can the Cabinet Member please update us on the rollout of the Fix My Streets app?

### **From Nigel Benbow to the Cabinet Member for Local Environment and Green Spaces:**

What is the cabinet member doing to maintain the waste service?

### **From Cllr Simon McGrath to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and Climate Emergency**

In light of the desperate shortage of affordable housing in the borough, why has the decision about the amount of affordable housing to be built on the Council-owned sites which are due to be sold, been left to an Officer of the Council to decide?

### **From Councillor Joan Henry to the Cabinet Member for Children and Education**

Can you please update us on the number of children in Merton living in poverty, and how this compares to the number before the pandemic began in March 2020?

### **From Cllr Daniel Holden to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency**

Is the cabinet member worried about future parking income not rebounding to the previous high point in 2019-20?

### **From Cllr David Simpson to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency**

The Your Merton consultation has drawn fresh attention to the areas of the borough that suffer from poor air quality. What steps does the Cabinet Member have planned to improve air quality in these areas?

### **Councillor John Dehaney to the Cabinet Member for the Leader of the Council**

Can the Leader please reassure us that during national lockdowns, enforced during the pandemic to slow down the spread of the virus, every effort was made in Council buildings to adhere to measures mandated by the Government?

## 6: Councillors Ordinary Priority Questions to Cabinet Members

### **From Cllr Omar Bush to the Cabinet Member for Children and Education:**

Please comment on how successful the council's efforts are to get care leavers into work and employment?

### **From Councillor Mary Curtin to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency**

How is the cabinet member progressing with retrofitting fuel-poor homes, a crucial measure councils can take in tackling the climate emergency?

## **Committee: Council**

**Date: 2 February 2022**

Wards: All

## **Subject: Strategic Theme Report Health and Wellbeing**

Lead officer: John Morgan, Interim Director of Community and Housing

Lead member: Councillor Rebecca Lanning, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health

Contact officer: Dr Dagmar Zeuner, Director of Public Health, Richard Ellis, Interim Head of Strategy and Partnerships, Clarissa Larsen, Health and Wellbeing Board Partnership Manager

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### **Recommendations:**

A. That the Council consider the content of this report

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### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

Council, at its meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021, approved the Business Plan 2020 - 2024. The Business Plan sets out five strategic priorities and each meeting of the council receives a report updating against one of the council's strategic themes.

The Business Plan sets out how the council will deliver the Community Strategy, which is grouped into five strategic themes:

- Sustainable communities,
- Safer and stronger communities,
- Healthier communities,
- Older people
- Children and young people.

Performance against these themes, plus an additional theme of corporate capacity, is monitored by Council. Each meeting of Council receives a report updating on progress against one of these strategic themes.

This report provides Council with an opportunity to consider progress against the priorities that are to be delivered under the theme of Healthier Communities.

The key outcomes set out in the Business Plan relating to this theme are those set out in Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-24. This report provides Council with an opportunity to consider progress against the priorities of the Strategy and gives an overview of health and wellbeing in Merton with a focus on healthy living for all.

### **Format and scope of the report**

This report sets out in brief:

Introduction and context – Your Merton and Health and Wellbeing	Section 1
How healthy people are in Merton	Section 2
Ongoing response to COVID-19	Section 3

Examples of continuing work on the key themes of Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy:	
Start well	Section 4
Live well	Section 5
Age well	Section 6
Healthy Place	Section 7
Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel contribution	Section 8

- The report includes both physical and mental wellbeing, social care, food, physical activity, alcohol and smoking, underpinned by social wellbeing and connectedness with a focus on equity.
- Rather than being comprehensive, the report gives a **range of examples** of relevant initiatives and their impact.
- Links and a contact officer are provided for each section for further information.
- Acute health service provision is outside the scope of this report.

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a huge impact on our health and wellbeing in Merton. Communities across the borough have experienced the pandemic in different ways and we are working collaboratively to respond to the latest challenges. At the same time, continuing to work towards recovery, building on the insights we have gained to date, including the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 for some of Merton's communities, especially in the East of the borough.

### ***Your Merton and Health and Wellbeing***

1.1 Recovery plans for the borough have been developed as part of [Your Merton](#), the Council's widest ever engagement programme. The aim is to develop 'a place-based vision' for Merton. This aligns closely with [Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) and the [Merton Local Health and Care Plan](#), both of which have equity of service access, provision and health outcomes at their heart, and are underpinned by other topic specific strategies.

1.2 *Your Merton* sees a place-based recovery, in which environment, green spaces and communities are highly valued, recognising that how we feel about our neighbourhood affects our wellbeing and sense of belonging. Like our Health and Wellbeing Strategy, it seeks to build a greener, healthier and fairer borough with a strong local economy, providing a healthy place with the physical and social conditions for all people to thrive

1.3 Previous research and engagement has highlighted inequalities across the borough and we have listened to people, to better understand the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on some of our more disadvantaged communities. Isolating and social distancing can affect people's wellbeing, including those who experience a lack of face to face social interaction which, for some, is compounded by digital exclusion that has made the pandemic particularly isolating.

1.4 Merton’s green spaces give people a chance to connect with nature, relax, meet others and feel connected to their community. Green spaces are also important for physical wellbeing providing places to exercise and participate in the activity and sport facilities they offer. There is opportunity for greater use of outdoor space in Merton and building the benefits that this asset can bring to people’s health and wellbeing.

## Health and Wellbeing Governance

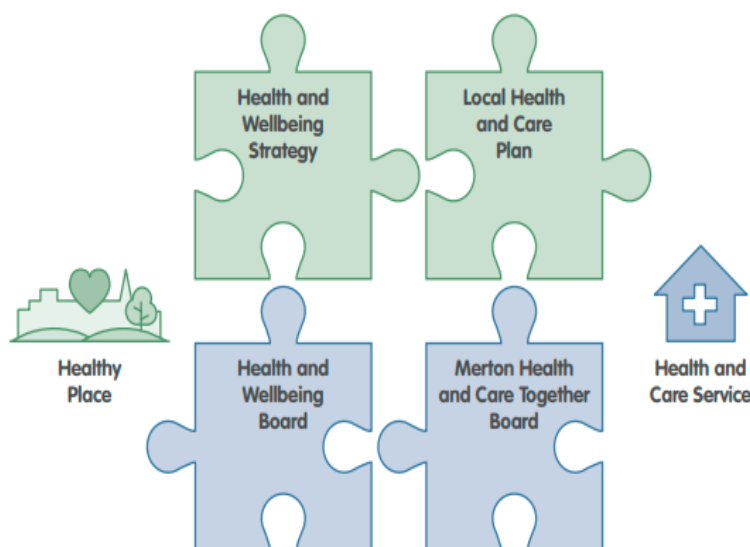
1.5 The last Strategic Theme Report to Council on Health and Wellbeing, November 2020, set out our initial response to COVID-19 and demonstrated the strength of partnerships across Merton.

In line with the Health and Care Bill 2021, changes in the way the NHS is structured locally are due to be introduced in 2022 with new regional Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) and, at borough level, Place Based Partnerships to be established.

The statutory guidance places a greater emphasis on collaboration and shared responsibility for the health of the local population with the flexibility to deliver commissioning activities differently. The changes offer potential opportunities for system partners, to work more collaboratively. Work is taking place with NHS colleagues and the voluntary sector to help deliver these new ways of working by building on existing partnership structures:

- Merton Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) is a statutory Board chaired by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, providing the overall vision, oversight and strategic direction for health and wellbeing as set out in [Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024](#).
- Merton Health and Care Together Board (MHCT) is a non-statutory partnership between the Council and the NHS, reporting to the HWBB. The recently refreshed draft [Merton Local Health and Care Plan 2022-24](#) focuses on holistic integrated health and care services and prevention.

Fig 1 – Relationship between Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Local Health and Care Plan



1.6 The new Merton Place Based Partnership, which will receive local delegated NHS budget, will link closely to both, and local governance structures will continue to evolve with potential to streamline. Statutory guidance makes a commitment to inclusive partnership working and tackling inequality. Initially planned to be in place from April 2022, new structures are now due from July 2022.

1.7 Alongside NHS reform, Public Health England has also been abolished with duties taken up by two new successor organisations:

- UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) combining the health protection capabilities of PHE and NHS Test and Trace
- Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), Department of Health and Social Care, ‘tackling health disparities across the UK and work to prevent health conditions before they develop’.

In addition, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) now cover services including immunisation and screening.

### Health and Wellbeing Strategy

1.8 Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024 was outlined to members in the last Strategic Theme Report on Health and Wellbeing, with its focus on the influence that the wider determinants – the air we breathe, our schools, workplaces, homes, food, transport and relationships with friends and family – have on our health and impact on health equity.

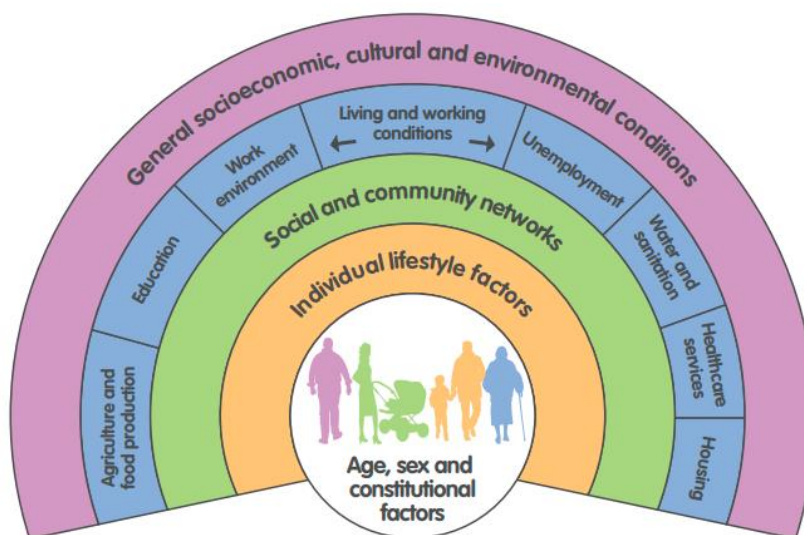
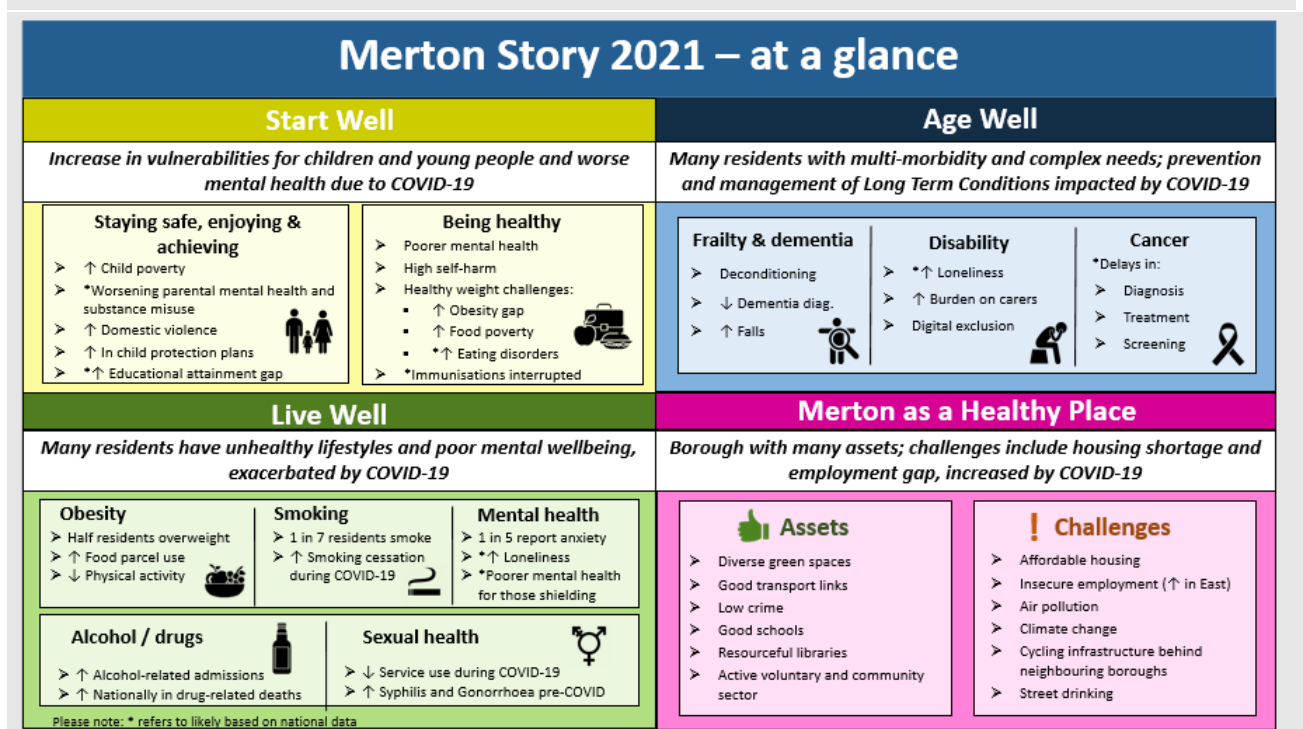
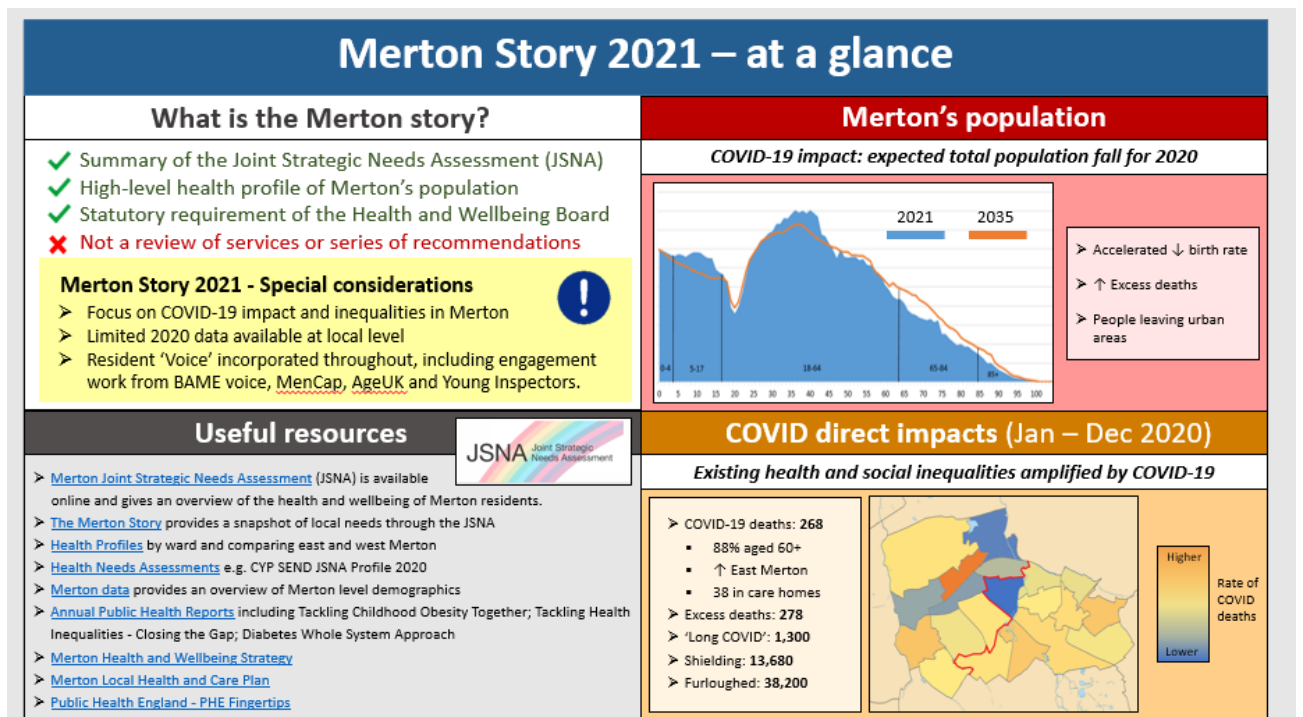


Diagram 1 – Wider determinants of health  
Source: Dahlgren & Whitehead, 1991

Both the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Local Health and Care Plan are based around a commitment for people to: Start Well, Live Well and Age Well in a Healthy Place and tackling inequality.

1.9 By healthy place, we mean the physical, social and economic factors that help people lead healthy lives linking to those of Your Merton. The principles build on the early work of the Council on Health (and health equity) in All Policies (HiAP), currently being developed as part of recovery. There is also a strong link to the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan, as a healthy place and healthy living for all are essential components of sustainability.

## 2. HOW HEALTHY ARE PEOPLE IN MERTON?



\* **USEFUL RESOURCES** - for live links please see the online versions here [PowerPoint Presentation \(merton.gov.uk\)](#).

COVID-19 is subject to ongoing regular surveillance with a public facing Situation Assessment Report (SAR) produced every two weeks and reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board [SAR to HWBB November 2021](#)

For further information please contact Samina Sheikh, Principal Public Health Intelligence Specialist [samina.sheikh@merton.gov.uk](mailto:samina.sheikh@merton.gov.uk)

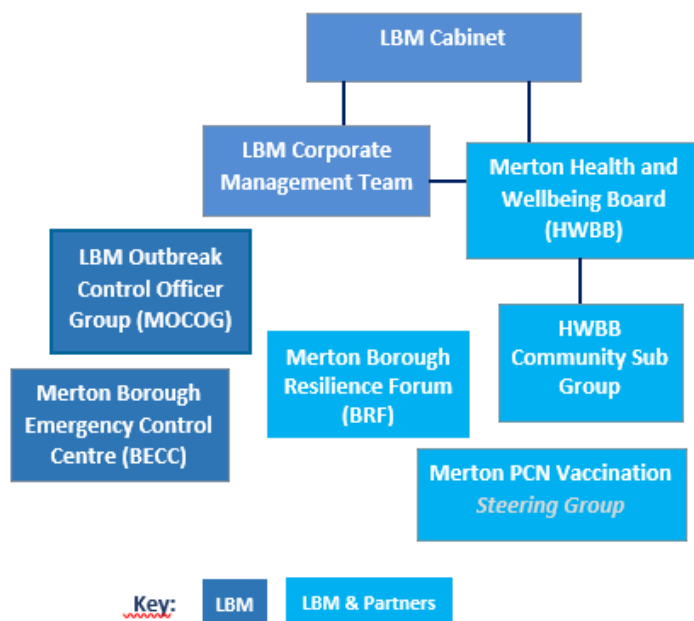
### 3. RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The Strategic Theme Report on Health and Wellbeing to Council in November 2020 set out in detail the Council and its partner’s initial response to COVID-19. Since then, work continues to respond to and mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.

#### Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP)

3.1 [Merton’s Local Outbreak Management Plan \(LOMP\)](#), published in April 2021, the LOMP provides an overarching plan for our response to COVID-19. It sets out how we work with our key partners at a local, regional and national level. Oversight is led by the Health and Wellbeing Board Community Subgroup, specifically set up to address the disproportionate impact of COVID on some of our communities with a particular focus on vaccine equity and Post COVID Syndrome (previously Long COVID). At officer level, delivery of the LOMP is managed by the Outbreak Control Officer Group.

Fig 2 – Governance structures relating to COVID Local Outbreak Management Plan





3.2 The LOMP aims to reduce inequalities and promote equity. It promotes infection prevention and control, testing, local contact tracing and vaccination and responds to COVID variants of concern. It seeks to develop effective targeted communication and engagement, data and insights and address compliance and enforcement, involving the community throughout as a key part of its approach.

### COVID response actions

3.3 Joint actions as part of the LOMP to date include:

- Commissioning voluntary and community organisations, including Merton Mencap and BAME Voice, to work with their networks to produce **research insight into the lived experience of COVID-19** to understand better the **disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on some of our communities**. Action on the learning includes a Phase 2 programme valued at over £200k for VCS organisations to deliver community led projects, co-create and share COVID-19 messaging and increase capacity for BAME organisations to be at the decision making table, ensuring authentic community voices are heard.
- Developing a **network of COVID-19 Resilience Leads**. The Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) team support managers of adult social care settings to strengthen capacity to manage and prevent outbreaks of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. There is also support for managers providing housing for hard to reach populations such as, rough sleepers, YMCA residents, asylum seekers, and travellers. Additionally, support for those working with children and young people supporting primary, secondary and special schools to improve infection prevention and control practices.
- **Setting up asymptomatic testing** programmes in a number of locations, including Centre Court Shopping Centre, the Wilson Hospital and 17 community pharmacies across Merton.
- **Local case tracing** has been in operation for 12 months, with a current Merton team of six full time equivalent posts, receiving cases that have not engaged with the digital journey, nor provided information to the national team. The team send emails, texts and call the COVID-19 cases to contact trace and to provide advice and signpost to further support.
- Comprehensive communications programme including **webinars, virtual meetings and community fora** - led by trusted clinicians and aimed at groups, including BAME communities, young people, parents, pregnant women and their partners, facilitating an ongoing dialogue with communities.
- Continuing to develop the **network of Community Champions and Young Adults Community Champions** (YACCs) - 166 active Champions including

councillors, front-line workers, clinicians and residents. The YACC have produced videos and posters targeted at under 18s. Most recently £485k of funding has been successfully secured to develop a further programme of **COVID-19 Vaccination Community Champions**.

- Analysing emerging data from national and regional sources to develop **surveillance and reporting** to inform action and oversight, with enhanced contact tracing and local intelligence, used to monitor areas of higher risk of COVID-19 transmission. Using this intelligence to monitor progress and target resources effectively, developing understanding of those with less confidence in the vaccine, shaping our response including active promotion of the 'evergreen' vaccination offer
- Supporting our NHS colleagues with the further refinement and roll out of the **service and support model for Post COVID Syndrome** (previously long COVID). The focus is again on equity, so that those who suffered most of the burden of COVID-19, and are now suffering from Post COVID Syndrome, have access to appropriate clinical services as well as community and self-management advice to support recovery and rehabilitation. Pro-active promotion around Post COVID Syndrome in the community, to complement the NHS approach to case finding, is also taking place.

*For further information on the Local Outbreak Control Plan and engagement programme please contact Barry Causer, Public Health Lead for COVID Resilience [barry.causer@merton.gov.uk](mailto:barry.causer@merton.gov.uk)*

### **3.4 Vaccination Programme**

- The Council has supported the NHS to deliver over **400,000 COVID-19 vaccinations** across the borough – most recently the mass booster campaign during December 2021 and going forward, new vaccine offer for high risk 5-11 year olds, second doses for 12-15 year olds and roll out of booster to 16-17 year olds.
- The vaccination programme is continually evolving, learning and developing from experience to date. In May 2021, the HWBB Community Subgroup agreed the [Vaccination Equity Plan](#), informed by insight work with communities. The plan is aimed at reducing barriers to access, promoting targeted communication and engagement, partnerships and governance and making best use of data and emerging information to ensure a strong focus on making sure no one is left behind.
- The vaccination programme has been rolled out at key sites across the borough: the Wilson Hospital, Nelson Health Centre, Morden Assembly Hall and Wimbledon Centre Court together with over **35 pop-up vaccination clinics** in areas of low vaccine uptake and other settings including the Civic

Centre, sports clubs, places of worship, local community centres, food banks and transport venues.

- As well as COVID, promoting **Flu vaccination has been a priority**, and there has been a wider offer from the NHS with free jabs for over 50's, school children aged 2 to 16 years and vulnerable groups. Messaging has included promoting winter 'double protection' widely. The council has also offered all LBM staff and teachers at maintained schools, not eligible for the NHS offer, the opportunity to get a jab at a local pharmacy and claim up to £15 reimbursement.
- Schools have been working tirelessly to keep their pupils staff safe during the COVID pandemic, at the same time ensuring the best possible access to education. Since the Autumn term, schools have: managed return-to-school Asymptomatic Testing; hosted vaccination clinics for 12 to 15 year olds; carefully followed COVID guidelines and managed outbreaks with the support of the Public Health Infection Prevention and Control team; introduced the use of CO2 monitors to identify and manage areas with poor ventilation; and, participated in COVID resilience training. Pupils have also signed up to be COVID Vaccine champions, led by Merton's Young Inspectors.

Staff shortages due to staff self-isolating has been a big challenge, and headteachers have been working in creative ways to manage school resources to keep classes open. To help schools deal with some COVID related funding issues, particularly those related to staff absences, the Government re-opened the COVID-19 workforce fund from 22nd November 2021. It is designed to provide financial support to settings with the greatest staffing and funding challenges, but not all staffing absences are covered and therefore most schools continue to incur additional costs.

*For further information on the vaccination programme please contact Julia Groom, Consultant in Public Health [Julia.groom@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Julia.groom@merton.gov.uk)*

#### **4. START WELL**

Giving children the best start in life is a key priority of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. COVID-19 has led to an increase in vulnerabilities for children and young people and worsening mental health. Work is underway and ongoing across the Council to help address this and throughout all areas of activity there has been close collaboration with partners, particularly with health and education.

#### **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)**

4.1 Fifteen percent (15%) of pupils attending Merton's state funded schools have their needs met through special learning programmes or plans, known as SEN support. SEN support is a range of interventions, develop with the school's SEN Co-

ordinator (SENCO), they can include children working in smaller groups, teachers providing extra help or an assistant helping to access classroom activities. Primary and community health services offer advice and support to schools to deliver SEN support.

Over the past year there has been a sustained focus on ensuring pupils and young people aged 0-25 years with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and their families receive the right support, at the right time, even during the pandemic which has impacted on delivery of services. There has been a focus on improving the quality of the professional advice received as part of the Education Health and Care Needs assessment process and improving compliance with issuing first EHCP's within the 20-week statutory timescale.

4.2 Training has been provided to education, health and care partners and the audit and quality assurance framework has shown that there has been an improvement in both timeliness of receipt of advice and quality. Positive and constructive feedback has been received from parents/carers highlighting effective communication, positive experiences and feeling involved in the process for the Integrated Complex Needs service. The local authority has significantly improved their compliance in issuing a first EHCP within 20 weeks, which in December 2021 were above the National Average.

4.3 Merton Health and Tripartite Panels were embedded to support prompt access to services for children and young people. Blended virtual/face-to-face support for families continued to be offered. In April 2021 the local authority recommissioned the Education Occupational Therapy provision for pupils with an EHCP. The new provider mobilised in September 2021 and feedback from the Merton maintained special schools is that this has improved their delivery of Occupational Therapy.

4.4 The local authority is in the process of expanding the Additionally Resourced Provisions for pupils in mainstream school with a diagnosis of autism. This will ensure that more pupils can remain within Merton schools, remain with their peer group and will not have to travel long distances to access their education. In addition Melrose Primary School successfully opened in September 2021 which has decreased the dependency on out of Borough maintained and independent Special Schools with further expansion of places planned.

4.5 A review of the Adult Social Care Transitions Team has taken place and an options paper has been written for consideration by Senior Leaders to agree the configuration of this team and to ensure that young people aged from 14 years receive the right advice to plan for adulthood at the right time. In addition, the new team will ensure that young people, where eligible, receive their Care Act Assessment prior to their 18th Birthday. A Transitions Protocol and Leaflet have been written so that parents, young people, and services are clear on what to expect for Transition to adulthood.

## Mental Health Support

4.6 Merton is adopting a new model of mental health support called 'I Thrive', which is jointly led by LB Merton and SWL CCG. Under this model we have expanded the services on offer at a 'Getting Help' stage. 'Off the Record' have been commissioned to provide a self-referral service. 'Kooth' as an online app for young people is available across south London. We have set up another school mental health cluster and the final cluster will be set up from January 2022 so that every school and further education provider in Merton can be in a schools mental health cluster and benefit from accessing a specialist team as well as working on a whole school model of support. These teams have been actively supporting children, parents and staff.

4.7 We know that many young people have struggled with their mental health as we have worked our way through the pandemic. At the Merton CAMHS Board we have monitored referral rates to CAMHS and Off the Record our preventative service. CAMHS referrals dropped in lockdowns but are now are pre pandemic levels - however they contain much higher complexity. We have seen this come through in referrals to our Merton Medical Education service where children's mental health means that they are struggling to access school at all. We are expanding this service and it will be moving to new improved premises in the new year to meet this demand. Off the Record take up is now above pre-pandemic levels.

4.8 We are also just completing a Youth Survey of 2000 young people and 200 more in focus groups. This work was led by Merton's young inspectors, these are young people trained to lead youth engagement and participation. One early finding is how many young people were struggling with their mental health in lockdowns - but were feeling more positive being back in school and in sports clubs.

As with CAMHS teams nationally, the Merton CAMHS team has been struggling with a higher level of referrals to the service. There has been a 20% increase in referrals between July-Sept 19/20 and July-Sept 20/21, as well as a significant increase in urgent referrals, which is a demonstration of the increase in complexity and risk presentation to the service following the pandemic lockdowns. The service is working to reduce this through additional investment to recruit more staff. They have also developed a comprehensive resource, a 'whilst you wait' pack as well as signposting to digital resource/support for waiters.

4.9 Merton's Young Person's Risk and Resilience Service, Catch22 reported in its Impact Report for 2020-2021 that the higher level of vulnerability and complexities among young people has again increased. Lockdowns across the year have impacted on the young people the service works with and practitioners have needed to work creatively to engage young people and support them through difficult periods especially where there is conflict within the family home. Increasingly the service has seen a significant rise in referrals for targeted interventions and counselling for emotional health, many were using substances that are just below the threshold for a specialist Public Health England National Treatment Agency psychosocial

intervention. This year 56% of the referrals into the service were for a targeted substance misuse intervention.

*For more details on Risk and Resilience Service, contact Rob Carrick, Commissioning Manager, [Robert.carrick@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Robert.carrick@merton.gov.uk)*

## **Healthy Weight**

4.10 The pandemic has had a negative impact on children's healthy weight with increases in obesity and eating disorders, together with significant food poverty, all underpinned by the associated impact on emotional and mental health. Obesity in childhood is a significant risk factor for poor physical and mental health in childhood and is a significant risk factor for diabetes and other health conditions into adulthood. National and London data for 2020/21 shows the highest annual rise in obesity levels since measurement began in 2006/07.

Local data for 2020/21(unpublished) indicates that rates of overweight and obesity in Merton are similar to London, where 15 % of 4-5 year olds and 30% of 10-11 year olds are obese, and 45% of 10-11 year olds either overweight or obese. Childhood obesity is a major health inequalities issue, with children living in the most deprived areas more than twice as likely to be obese than those living in the least deprived areas.

Evidence is emerging that restrictions during the pandemic, including that stay-at-home guidance, the move to online education and closures of leisure facilities, has disrupted children's routines leading to negative impacts on sleep, nutrition and physical activity levels. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has seen an increase in food poverty and impacted families' ability to maintain healthy weight through accessing and being able to afford healthier food options.

Since the pandemic, poorer mental health and wellbeing has been reported in children and young people, particularly those in care or disadvantaged financially. Poor mental health has a marked effect on obesity. There have been increases nationally in referrals to child and adolescent mental health and eating disorder services during the pandemic. Obesity stigma can be particularly severe for children and young people and can also lead to disordered eating, avoidance of physical activity and avoidance of support.

4.11 Obesity is a complex problem and there is no single solution, with evidence indicating that a comprehensive programme focusing on the physical, food and cultural environment is most likely to be successful, and cost effective. Merton's Child Healthy Weight Action Plan (CHWAP) is currently being refreshed alongside the Diabetes action plan, with three key themes of:

- Making childhood healthy weight everyone's business
- Supporting children, young people and their families
- Healthy place - shaping the places we live, learn, work and play and influencing choices on the food we eat.

- 4.12 Successes from the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan to date include:
- Merton's Local Plan adopted mechanisms to **manage new takeaway restaurants within 400 metres of schools.**
  - **Installation of water fountains** in Mitcham, Colliers Wood, Morden and Raynes Park and Wimbledon.
  - 49 schools in Merton registered for **Healthy Schools London**
  - 29 primary schools in Merton participated in the **Daily/Active Mile**
  - 12 organisations in Merton are signed up to **Sugar Smart**, an initiative aiming to help organisations reduce sugar consumption.
  - A new **school meals contract** has been developed with public health and nutrition outcomes included in the service specification
  - A refreshed **Communication and Engagement Strategy** for child healthy weight has been developed to support a co-ordinated approach across partner organisations

*For more details on child healthy weight, contact Hilina Asrress, Senior Public Health Principal, [hilina.asrress@merton.gov.uk](mailto:hilina.asrress@merton.gov.uk)*

### **Children and Young People's Social Prescribing**

4.13 In response to the impact of COVID on obesity and emotional health and well-being, a Children and Young People Social Prescribing Pilot is being developed in Merton. Social prescribing is a way of linking patients in primary care with sources of support within the community. It provides GPs, and other referrers, with a non-medical referral option that links general practice to community, voluntary, and local authority services to improve health and wellbeing. The Social Prescribing Link Worker will support the family/young person to navigate and access appropriate support.

4.14 A local provider will work with partners and stakeholders, including our Young Inspectors, to develop the model for children and young people and their families taking a holistic approach to support, learning from Merton's experience with adult social prescribing, evidence and best practice. The development and implementation of the pilot is planned to start in early 2022 and will be focused in the east of the borough where we know childhood obesity levels are much higher and will be independently evaluated.

*For more details on CYP Social Prescribing, contact Hilina Asrress, Senior Public Health Principal, [hilina.asrress@merton.gov.uk](mailto:hilina.asrress@merton.gov.uk)*



## 5. LIVE WELL

### Health on the High Street

5.1 Health on the High Street is an approach to help change how people access health and wellbeing services, piloting health and wellbeing hubs on the high street and in community venues across Merton. Working jointly with the RB Kingston upon Thames, the pilot aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of community health on the high street by:

- Bringing services (COVID-19 vaccination and testing, holistic health and care, prevention and welfare) to where people live their lives e.g. the high street,
- Providing support in an integrated way rather than expecting people to attend numerous different services,
- Reviving the high street.

5.2 Health on the High Street is still in development but is likely to utilise a model that will have a number of fixed locations, possibly the network of community libraries. Learning from the successes of the COVID-19 vaccination programmes, a number of pop-ups sites are also being identified in partnership with Merton Primary Care Networks. A Project Manager has been recruited and activity is due to start in January/February 2022.

5.3 It is important to state that Health on the High Street will complement and enhance access, rather than replace the need for direct access to primary care. Access to primary care will be the subject of a report to the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2022. This will consider both access to GPs and to wider services, including local access hubs, and will build on the report on [Access to Primary Care](#) made to the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel in November 2021.

*For more information on the Health on the High Streets project, please contact Barry Causer, Public Health Lead for COVID-19 Resilience [barry.causer@merton.gov.uk](mailto:barry.causer@merton.gov.uk)*

### Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

5.4 Progress has been made in meeting the objectives of Merton's [Suicide Prevention Framework 2018 -2023](#) including reducing risk in high-risk groups, suicide awareness with good mental health for all and support for those bereaved by suicide.

5.5 Work has taken place to raise awareness of suicide risk amongst high risk groups including those working with middle aged men, young people and those experiencing drug or alcohol dependence. Working in collaboration with South West London CCG we have promoted suicide prevention champions in Merton, focusing on risk amongst middle aged men, the largest group in the population who die by suicide. Short one hour awareness training sessions around suicide prevention are also taking place as part of the South West London initiative focused on middle aged



men as well as young people. In 2022 we are also funding a 'men's shed' project aimed at getting middle aged and older men engaged in activity and making friends, helping to address issues of isolation and loneliness.

5.6 Other work includes promoting suicide awareness and the London Mayor's commitment to making London a zero suicide city. Work has just started with SW London CCG including 2 Merton GP practices on 'Project Hope', a training programme for GP staff on awareness of risk factors around suicide and young people.

5.7 The Council and SW London CCG have also continued to run bespoke suicide prevention training courses in Merton focusing on those who work with at risk groups but open to all. These will continue into 2022. Working with Children Schools and Families, SW London CCG and local schools we are promoting specialist half day suicide prevention training to school staff in Merton and across South West London.

5.8 The Council is continuing to work with SW London CCG on a bereavement support service, supporting those bereaved by suicide to engage with specialist suicide counselling and support services.

*For more details on Suicide Prevention in Merton, contact Dan Butler at [daniel.butler@merton.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.butler@merton.gov.uk)*

## **Substance misuse**

5.9 Westminster Drugs Project (WDP) is Merton's specialist integrated drug and alcohol treatment service for adults. Operating in the borough since April 2018. WDP has shown itself to be a co-productive and responsive partner to both the borough and its partners.

5.10 The service consistently performs in top quartile nationally in terms of key outcomes for adults who experience drug or alcohol dependence and works to enhance its offer. Examples include recruitment of Polish and Tamil speaking workers in response to increasing numbers of adults from these communities presenting to the service and developing new partnerships with other community organisations.

5.11 In 2021 the service was asked to recruit several new posts funded by the rough sleeper's initiative and the Government's commitment to increase capacity for drug treatment. WDP responded creatively, and Merton was at capacity far quicker than neighbouring boroughs.

5.12 Through the course of the pandemic WDP adjusted its model of provision to ensure that those who needed the service could access it safely. This included a switch to digital contact for some whilst ensuring face to face contact to those most vulnerable and at risk. In 2019 the CQC awarded the service an overall rating of 'good', with its response to community 'outstanding'. Merton's own review echoed the CQC conclusions and commended the service's value for money

5.13 Following a recent national review by Dame Carole Black and the publication of the Government's ten year plan "From harm to hope", the Substance Misuse Partnership Board will work to address the current challenges and opportunities for improved prevention and treatment in Merton. In 2022 Merton is working with its strategic partners to refresh its substance misuse needs assessment to inform the Substance Misuse Partnerships Board.

*For more information on the substance misuse service please contact Martyn Penfold (Health Improvement Officer, substance misuse and mental health) [Martyn.Penfold@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Martyn.Penfold@merton.gov.uk)*

## **One You Merton**

5.14 The One You Merton service continues to provide improved outcomes to promote the health and wellbeing of our residents through a range of programmes information and advice - to eat well, move more, stop smoking and drink less. For example, One You Merton supported a significantly higher number of residents to stop smoking through the pandemic.

5.15 Between April 2020 and March 2021, 1,052 people have been supported to successfully quit smoking compared to 434 people for the same time period for 2019/20. This is including a high number of BAME residents (206). Merton is continuing to build on these services through commissioning more activity based programmes.

*For further information contact Una O'Brien, [Una.Obrien@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Una.Obrien@merton.gov.uk) and [www.oneyoumerton.org](http://www.oneyoumerton.org)*

## **Workforce wellbeing**

5.16 Dedicated staff were appointed in April 2021 to support Mental Health and Wellbeing resulting in approximately 1,300 participants being trained and 15 new courses commissioned directly as a result of COVID-19. Mental Health Awareness training was also run for Councillors. In addition to formal training, Wellness Policy, Procedures and Guidance have been developed and informal programmes, designed to alleviate stress have included:

Healthy Workplace Market days; Advice on managing Zoom fatigue; Support to the Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Forum delivering a programme of anti-racism training; Kindness Week (May 2020) programme of activities; Wellbeing Wednesday lunchtimes sessions; Singing from Home; and, Financial Fridays providing financial support on a range of topics.

5.17 In the last year over 30 staff were trained as fully accredited Mental Health First Aiders. In February 2021, CMT agreed to appoint an Executive Sponsor for Mental Health and to provide accredited Mental Health Awareness training to all managers. In July 2021, Mental Health Mondays were introduced, with a focus on a different wellbeing topic every first Monday of the month

5.18 Plans for the future include a Big Team step walking challenge, eLearning including a module on Taking Care of Yourself and development of the new Workforce Strategy including the theme of My Health and Wellbeing

*For further information please contact Liz Hammond, Interim Head of HR Liz Hammond [liz.hammond@merton.gov.uk](mailto:liz.hammond@merton.gov.uk)*

## **6. AGE WELL**

The Council and partners are committed to older people being able to lead healthy, active and fulfilling lives and to age in a way that promotes as much independence as possible. COVID-19 has impacted older people's ability to do this and we are working to understand this impact and respond to it.

### **Community Dementia Services Engagement**

6.1 This year the Council undertook engagement work on a proposed community dementia services model. This model continues to provide dementia services at the Dementia Hub in Mitcham as well as across the borough - nearer to people's homes and communities.

6.2 The community dementia services engagement was comprised of two focus groups attended by approximately 30 people and an online survey which had 106 respondents. Paper surveys were also sent to people living with dementia. Findings were collated and analysed together to form recommendations which were incorporated into the contract specification with the Alzheimer's Society.

6.3 Recommendations included proceeding with the development and provision of the six community dementia services model areas: information, advice and education, wellbeing support services, peer support groups, volunteer support services, Dementia Friendly Communities and community-based activities. Further recommendations included: strengthening partnership working in the borough, an awareness campaign to promote existing services in the borough, inclusive services and access to face-to-face services throughout a person's dementia journey.

6.4 The engagement ensured that our new service model incorporated the views of people living with dementia, carers, the voluntary and community sector as well as health partners. Merton Council will continue to work with Alzheimer's Society to help guide the service model changes over the next two years and to help improve the lives of people living with dementia and their carers. This links to [Merton Carers Strategy 2021 - 2026](#) which involved substantial consultation with carers including a survey and focus groups to inform our understanding of the issues carers face.

### **Dementia Action Alliance**

6.5 Merton's commitment to make Merton a 'Dementia Friendly Community' continues and our Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) met in May 2021 to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on people living with dementia. DAA members researched this issue locally with survey work carried out by the Alzheimer's Society. Other partners

including Age UK Merton, Wimbledon Guild and Carers Support Merton who provided case studies.

6.6 This information informed the Health and Wellbeing Board Community Subgroup, who were looking at the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on different groups. Always focused on action, the evidence also informed the DAA meeting which highlighted action that organisations were taking to address issues raised such as loneliness/isolation as well as digital exclusion – and what we need to continue to focus on as the current situation with COVID-19 continues.

### **Addressing Frailty**

6.7 Public Health England reported that fewer older adults undertook physical activity during the pandemic that resulted in increased deconditioning and increased risk of falls – an event that can have profound physical, mental and emotional impacts on an individual’s life as well as significant financial and operational burden on health and social care services. In Merton, voluntary sector providers have reported that many service users have noticed their increased frailty and want to do something about it.

6.8 To address the increased deconditioning among older adults, public health have commissioned services that address frailty. This has included funding a ‘Merton Moves’ project with Wimbledon Guild; an Engagement Co-ordinator assists individuals in choosing the right activities for their ability and interests, offering coaching support to help individuals back into exercise. Activities include Yoga, Pilates and Zumba and are held in-person and online.

6.9 Most recently, the Council is commissioning a frailty service that will target the areas in the borough with the highest proportion of GP registered patients with mild and moderate frailty – Morden and East Merton primary care networks. Providing quality, evidence-based strength and balancing training and wider physical activities for older people, this service will commence in February 2021 and run for 17 months

*For more details on Older Peoples services in Merton, contact Dan Butler at [daniel.butler@merton.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.butler@merton.gov.uk)*

## **7. HEALTHY PLACE**

The local environment is a key shaper of people’s health and wellbeing. Across the Council and with partners we are working to create a healthy place in Merton as a particular focus of our recovery programme. This work links closely to the ongoing delivery of the Merton Climate Strategy and Action Plan as healthy living is beneficial for the health of people and the planet.

## **Libraries as Health and Wellbeing Hubs**

7.1 Merton's libraries play an important and visible role as the 'High Street presence' of the Council and play a vital role in supporting and signposting residents towards obtaining appropriate information and accessing Council services.

Our seven libraries already host a range of groups and services that support our communities, including health and wellbeing services including healthy eating, sexual health, diabetes, mindfulness and smoking cessation, as a year round approach to promoting healthier lifestyles.

7.2 Tuned In is a project that aims to combat loneliness by facilitating 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, targeting men, particularly those aged 50 plus, where loneliness is at its highest, but open to all, and participants have reported impressive results.

7.3 Launched during the pandemic the Library Service provides an equipment loaning scheme for vulnerable and/or isolated residents who do not have access to IT equipment in the home. The scheme not only provides good quality IT equipment such as laptops and tablets but advice, guidance and training on how to get the equipment set up and how to get online in a safe way. Library staff and volunteers support residents by providing training either in person or via the telephone. Participants are also linked into a range of free IT learning courses provided by Merton Adult Learning and other providers. So far just under 200 residents have joined the scheme with 100% of residents reporting improvements in their IT skills.

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

7.5 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 150 resident members with a community digital platform recently launched. Building on the success of Wimbletech, we will be rolling out the Workary at Mitcham Library from February 2022. Mitcham library will also shortly be hosting Barclay's new community banking service to help remedy the loss of banking services from branch closures. This provision will also be available at Colliers Wood and Pollards Hill libraries and will operate on an appointment basis.

7.6 Another project to be rolled out across all libraries is Mind Space that will develop libraries as digital, education and wellbeing hubs – a place to engage and enhance your mind in new ways. Through external funding we will make adaptations to create a multi-sensory experience that enhances resident's digital, education and health outcomes. The renovations will enhance residents' educational experiences

with events centred on adult learning provision and study space enhanced to enable learning in high quality conditions.

*For more details on libraries, please contact Anthony Hopkins (Head of Library, Heritage and Adult education services) [Anthony.Hopkins@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Anthony.Hopkins@merton.gov.uk)*

## **Air Quality**

7.7 Air quality is a fundamental determinant of health with many acute and chronic diseases and premature deaths linked to air pollution and often the least well off suffering most while polluting least. That is why air quality is one of the priorities identified in Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is a key part of Merton's climate strategy and action plan.

7.8 Covid-19 has affected the progress of a number of projects within the borough's Air Quality Action Plan. However, successes include the Borough's **School Streets Programme** that now covers 29 schools, the highest number of any London borough. Other work includes **anti-idling initiatives**, wide spread **air quality monitoring**, and promotion of **active travel**. Partnership working with the NHS on air quality and sustainability has increased significantly since the NHS has embraced an ambition to become carbon neutral and requires all NHS organisations to produce 'Green Plans'. An example are five GP practices in the East of the borough that are working towards achieving accreditation with the Active Practice Charter and aim to become active transport beacons to tackle health inequalities.

*For more details on air quality, please contact Jason Andrews [Jason.Andrews@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Jason.Andrews@merton.gov.uk), for more information about the Climate change strategy please contact Dominique Hill, [Dominique.Hill@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Dominique.Hill@merton.gov.uk)*

## **Health in All Policies**

7.9 Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-24 continues the commitment to embed health in all policies and tackle health inequalities, empower communities and to experiment and learn. Merton has a longstanding commitment to Health in All Policies (HiAP). As the first London Borough to take part in the Local Government Association's Health in All Policies (HiAP) Programme, the council has worked across a wide range of activities to improve wellbeing including:

- Merton won the award for the Most Improved Borough for the work on bringing partners to develop **Merton's first Food Poverty Action Plan** and implementation of actions which showed progress
- **Workforce wellbeing initiatives**, ad set out above (5.16 – 5.18) including an ongoing programme of training, events and activities to support employees physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Ongoing innovative projects – for example around air quality. Merton's Regulatory Services Partnership is delivering the world's first **Low Emission**



**Zone for Construction** on behalf of London boroughs and The Mayor of London, work which won an LGC award 2020

7.10 With the challenges of COVID-19 and climate change, it is time for the borough to refresh its health in all policies action plan, to make sure that everything we do going forward improves wellbeing while ensuring that the borough is more inclusive, fair and sustainable. We are also reviewing how we use evidence and data across the organisation, to ensure we can track our progress and make decisions based on evidence to achieve our goals across the council.

*For more details on Health in All Policies, please contact Yannish Naik (Consultant in Public Health) [Yannish.naik@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Yannish.naik@merton.gov.uk)*

## **8 Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

8.1 Throughout the pandemic, the Director of Public Health provided updates at every meeting on the latest COVID-19 data. Recommendations and action from the Panel on COVID-19 included:

- The Director was asked to work with NHS colleagues to ensure clear and consistent messages to residents regarding localised COVID-19 outbreaks.
- The Panel received an update from South West London Mental Health Trust, South West London Clinical Commissioning Group, Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust and St George's NHS Trust on their approach and key challenges during the pandemic.
- The Panel considered a report on services for those suffering from Post COVID Syndrome (Long-COVID). There was particular concern to ensure the community are aware that this service is available.
- A report on the impact of the pandemic on maternity services (from the CCG), and on care homes will be considered in March 2022.
- The Panel has also asked for further analysis and the key lessons learned from those who died of COVID-19 in their own homes.

8.2 Other key areas of review included; Integrated Care Systems, the Panel reviewed the plans with a specific focus on the budget implications for Merton. Future meetings will continue to review this programme as it develops. Access to GP services is reviewed on an annual basis. Panel Members were informed that six access hubs had been opened across the borough. There was some concern that more provision was needed in East Merton to address the issue of health inequalities. Further updates on the rollout of this programme will be presented to the Panel in due course.

## **9. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

A wide programme of consultation and engagement on the impacts of COVID-19 on Merton's communities has taken place as set out in this report.

## **10. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **11. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

The Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory partnership. There are no direct legal implications of this report.

## **12. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

Health equity is a key focus of Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy and is integral to the work set out in this report.

## **13. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

None for the purposes of this report.

## **14. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

None for the purposes of this report.

## **15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024](#)

[Merton Local Health and Care Plan summary 2022-24](#)

[Merton Story 2021](#)



## Wimbledon Community Forum 1 December 2021 Chair's Report

The meeting was held via Zoom, and chaired by Councillor James Holmes. 7 residents and 6 councillors attended on Zoom with 45 additional views on YouTube. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would work.

### **London Assembly Update**

Leonie Cooper, Assembly Member for Merton and Wandsworth gave an update on activities at the London Assembly but a poor connection meant this update was shorter than planned.

Leonie said the main things that have been coming up locally were:

- The AELTC has submitted a planning application for a new 8,000 seater court and development in Wimbledon Park crossing both Merton and Wandsworth. Leonie has submitted questions to the Mayor on behalf of local residents and has met with local organisations to hear their concerns
- The Met Police has launched an [Action plan on tackling violence towards women and girls](#). There are two investigations in the police and their practice, one by Louise Casey
- The ULEZ expansion to the South Circular launched in November
- There is still no long term deal for TfL, with the current 6 month deals restricting planning. No other area in the UK has had such a protracted negotiation with central government. London no longer receives any money being returned from Vehicle Excise Duty.

### **Your Merton**

Kris Witherington, Engagement and Consultation Manager for Merton Council gave a presentation on the results from the Your Merton engagement exercise. The presentation is attached to this report.

The engagement exercise had included a large telephone survey of a random sample of residents, a website where residents were free to comment and targeted focus groups. Residents highlighted that green spaces and the sense of community were major assets in Merton whilst traffic and litter were major frustrations. The pandemic had caused problems with isolation but had also brought out an increased sense of community spirit. Future ambitions for the borough included making high streets community hubs and maximising the benefits of local green spaces.

The emerging priorities and a set of ambitions for the borough will be considered by Cabinet early in 2022.

### **Open Forum**

Cllr David Williams said that officers working with residents groups to improve greenery on Wimbledon Hill Road. They are using Community Infrastructure Levy funding to make improvements but if anyone has ideas they can contact Cllr Williams or Paul McGarry at Future Merton.

David Hall from Wimbledon Community Association said that they are celebrating their 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with stories being posted on their [website](#). Anyone is welcome to contribute.

Cllr Holmes discussed the future of Community Forums. The Forums play an important role in holding local elected officials to account but COVID has presented a particular challenge and reduced the numbers of attendees. Cllr Holmes said he would welcome any ideas for fresh ways of keeping Community Forums relevant.

- Cllr Gretton suggested ward updates, for example Haydon Road regeneration. Cllr Holmes said this would be best come from residents.
- Cllr Kohler said there was a lot of power in Community Forums through motions, but relatively small numbers attending meant it was not really exploited
- A resident suggested including dates in communications from Merton Council.
- A resident suggested using local residents groups to share the messages and encourage involvement.

Councillor Holmes thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

**Date of next meeting:**

Future meetings:

7.15pm Wednesday 23 March 2022 venue to be confirmed



# *ENGAGING MERTON*

Key reflections





## ***Engaging residents in building a vision***

To shape this long term vision, Merton Council wanted to understand the views, experiences and ambitions of local people - that includes residents and also those who work and study in the borough. Merton Council commissioned Traverse to run their largest ever engagement exercise to understand three key things:

- **Experiences of living, working and studying in the borough:** Merton wanted to know how people felt about living and working in the borough – what they liked as well as what they found frustrating.
- **Experiences of the pandemic:** Merton wanted to understand how the pandemic had impacted different communities in Merton – what they found most challenging, as well as any aspects of life they wanted to maintain as the local area moved into recovery.
- **Priorities for the future:** Merton wanted to know what residents wanted the Council to prioritise in the recovery – what did they want their local area to look and feel like in the immediate and long-term future?





## **Engaging residents in building a vision**

Traverse undertook **four separate engagement activities** to involve local people in different ways:

- A **representative survey** of the borough gathered the views of 1,000 residents reflective of the population.
- Around 500 residents contributed via an **open access engagement website**.

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**Focus groups run through 13 local community organisations** enabled us to take discussions into different parts of the community, including amongst those more seldom heard (e.g. people from minority ethnic communities, disabled people, those less likely to engage online and others more likely to be disproportionately impacted by the pandemic).

- A two-stage **deliberative workshop with 25 residents** from across the borough, grouped by locality, enabled us to explore themes from the survey and engagement website in more depth.







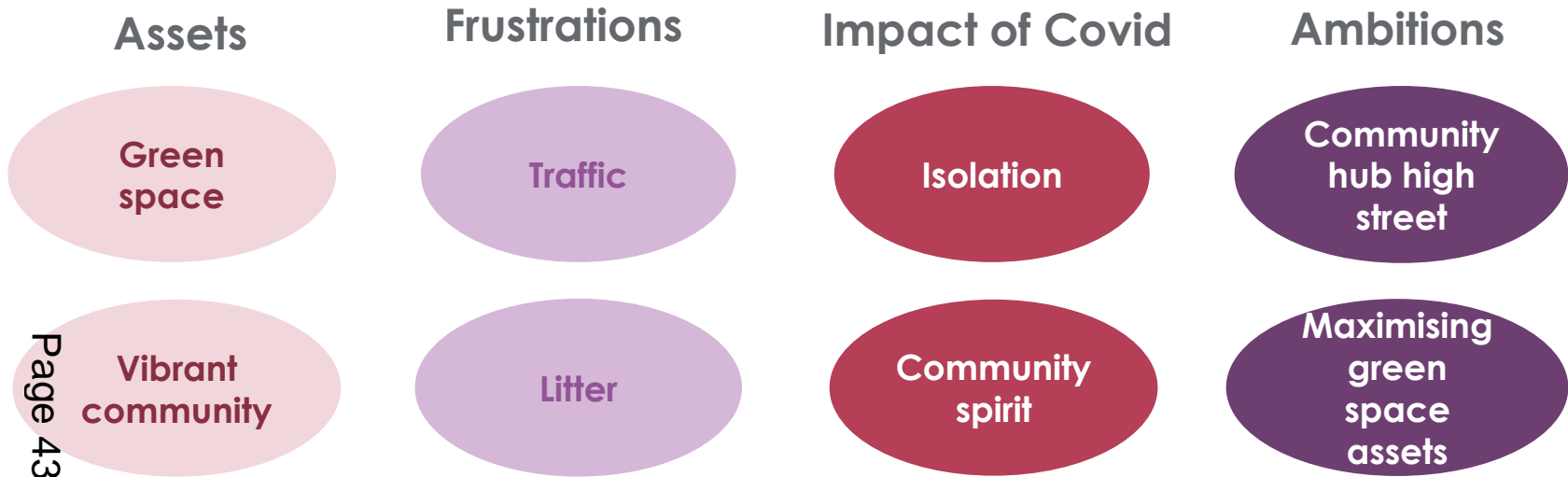
Merton Community groups	
Age UK Merton	Operating within the national Age UK network providing services for older adults in Merton.
Association for the Polish Family	Provides advice and support for Eastern European residents.
Avanti	Offers services for individuals and groups with mental health needs.
Commonside Community Development Trust	Runs a community centre, community events and a number of community development programmes.
Philanthropy	Uses media to work with organisations, groups and individuals that make a positive social impact.
Inner Strength Network	Supports women and girls and their families to overcome difficult moments in their lives.
Mencap Merton	Provides support and services for children, young people and adults with a learning disability and/or autism.
Merton Centre for Independent Living	Deaf and Disabled people's organisation working to address the marginalisation of Deaf and Disabled people.
Merton Vision	Provides services to visually impaired children and adults.
Off the Record	Provide counselling and support services to young people.
South London Tamil Welfare Group	Supports the Tamil community and other ethnic communities.
South Mitcham Community Centre	Organises community events and groups.
WIFFA – West Indies Friends and Family Association	Support and social organisation for the Caribbean community.

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## Common themes around assets, frustrations, experiences and ambitions



These themes stand out from across the different strands of the research and engagement activity

- People were **most positive and proud about Merton's green spaces and vibrant community**. They were continually frustrated by traffic and litter.
- Covid brought challenges of isolation, but also an **appreciation of community spirit** that residents wanted to maintain.
- This led to shared ambitions of a **regenerated high street that acts as a distinctive place and community hub** and an ambition to **make the most of Merton's varied green spaces**.





## *Green space and sense of community were key assets to strengthen*

**Green space and a supportive, vibrant sense of community were the things that residents most liked about their local area. Residents grew to appreciate these more during the pandemic, and wanted the vision for the borough to be built upon them.**

- **Green space** and parks in Merton were important spaces that helped residents maintain their physical and mental wellbeing.
- They were also at the heart of **Merton's identity as a 'leafy' borough** – residents felt the parks marked Merton out as distinct to neighbouring boroughs.
- **Page 44** Residents reported an increased appreciation for their local parks during the pandemic. **Maintaining parks as clean, inclusive spaces was a priority for residents in the future.**
- **Community** was also important to residents but more difficult to define. In the survey residents reported an increased appreciation for their community during the pandemic. In Commonplace this was described at a **hyper local level** – the support offered through mutual aid groups and neighbours. It led residents to want the **vision to maintain and foster this sense of 'community spirit'**.
- Volunteering and community action was another theme. Communities of interest respondents highlighted the positive support they accessed during the pandemic from volunteers, and expressed a desire for increased community activities. This was also present on Commonplace and in the deliberative workshops where residents wanted **community action and ownership to be part of the future.**
- Finally, it was clear throughout the engagement that **'sense of community' was felt by residents in the built environment** – through accessible, vibrant high streets, clean parks and attractive housing developments.







## *Litter and traffic were key frustrations to be acknowledged and addressed*

Litter and traffic congestion were the most common frustrations for residents. Anti-social behaviour was an additional issue in some parts of the borough. All these frustrations reduced the strength of Merton's assets – reducing the quality of green space and putting strain on a sense of community.

- **Litter** was a key concern for residents. It negatively impacted the way they felt about living in the borough – it made them **feel like fellow residents and the Council didn't take pride in the area**. They wanted a vision that addressed this problem.
- Many felt that **current Council services were not maintaining good quality public space**. Communities of interest highlighted that pavements and road provision did not support them to easily navigate local streets.
- For **Merton and Mitcham residents anti-social behaviour and safety** were higher concerns in public space. They often cited public alcohol consumption as an issue.
- **Traffic congestion** was a frustration for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. No one was happy with the status quo.
- The **reduction of traffic during the pandemic highlighted to many residents the benefit of less congestion** to their daily life – making their local area a more pleasant place to walk and cycle.
- **Car users expressed frustration with current initiatives to manage traffic flow** (such as low traffic neighbourhoods). The provision for residential and high street parking was also viewed negatively in the survey and Commonplace.
- Residents on Commonplace and in the deliberative workshops wanted a **vision that encouraged more active travel initiatives and a reduction in local traffic**. This involved cycle lane provision and the pedestrianisation of town centres.





## *Experiences of the pandemic*

Residents highlighted the impact of isolating and social distancing on their wellbeing, which was particularly challenging for communities of interest. Health, education, finance and work were also concerns for some residents. Accessing support from the local community was the main positive aspect that residents wanted to build upon in recovery.

- **The negative impact of not seeing friends and family:** Across Commonplace and the survey the restrictions on seeing friends and family had the largest negative impact on residents alongside fear of catching the virus.
- **Increased isolation for communities of interest:** Focus groups with communities of interest highlighted the increased isolation experienced by these members of society. The lack of face to face community meetings combined with digital exclusion made the pandemic particularly isolating.
- **Education and work concerns:** The children and young person survey showed that education was a very significant concern for young people in the borough. For adults finance and job security was a concern for a some, but not a theme that emerged on Commonplace.
- **A 'community-led' recovery:** The increased appreciation of the local community during the pandemic, alongside the change in people's lifestyles to being more local contributed to residents desire to maintain 'community spirit' in the pandemic recovery.

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## *Shared ambition for a regenerated high street at the heart of the community*

**High street regeneration was a shared ambition for residents across the borough. When we spoke to residents in more depth to understand what regeneration meant to them, they emphasised a high street that delivered a community hub and a sense of pride.**

- **Revitalised high street:** Across Commonplace and the survey residents were negative about their local high street's shopping provision, and saw high street regeneration as a key priority for the future.
- **A community hub high street:** In the deliberation, residents explored what type of high street they wanted in the future. Residents across the borough prioritised high streets that provided space for residents to socialise and connect with each other.
- **Pride and identity:** Residents also spoke about the potential source of pride and identity that comes from a vibrant high street. In the deliberation, possible futures that did not support this were rejected. On Commonplace, frustrations with the high street often stemmed from a feeling that local high streets used to be places residents could take pride in.
- **Accessible and traffic free:** In the deliberation workshops, residents preferred high street futures that prioritised pedestrian and cycle access over car access, provided this helped to establish a high street that was 'worth it' – i.e. an attractive community hub with a strong offer and its own identity.





## *Shared ambition to maximise Merton's green assets*

**As Merton's perceived main asset, residents wanted well-maintained parks and green space to be central to the future vision. They wanted parks to support individual wellbeing, foster a sense of community, generate income and help tackle climate change.**

- **Maintaining parks as safe and accessible:** Across all the engagement it was clear the green space and parks were sources of pride for all residents, and many expressed frustration that they were not always well maintained. Underpinning all ambitions for the future of parks was the importance of maintaining them as safe, clean and accessible shared space.
- **Shared spaces for community activity:** Parks were important for residents during the pandemic partly because they provided local space to connect with residents. In the deliberation residents wanted this trend continued in recovery – to maximise the community events when residents connect with each other.
- **Attracting visitors and generating income:** In the deliberation residents also thought parks could be used to generate more income for the borough.
- **Protecting the environment and tackling climate change:** Finally residents wanted their green spaces protected to provide access to nature. This was partly for individual wellbeing – to provide tranquil space to relax in the borough, and partly to support the Borough's commitment to tackling climate change.



# What we already know – a snapshot

- **Disproportionate financial and health impacts of the pandemic**
  - Higher rate of COVID-19 deaths in the East (131.1 per 100,000), than those in the West (120.7 per 100,000) over 2020
  - Claimant rate as a proportion of the working age population is currently 5.8% - over double the pre-pandemic level with significant ward level differences
- **Pressures on low income households**
  - 317% increase in emergency food provision during the pandemic - mostly provided to households in the East of the borough
  - Low levels of affordable housing in the borough – high housing costs, overcrowding
- **Impact on local businesses and our high streets**
  - £55m in financial support paid to businesses through rates relief and grants.
  - Merton had highest level of Self Employment Support among neighbouring boroughs
  - Street inspections show doubled vacancy rate – highest in Mitcham ,Raynes Park and Wimbledon

# Facing the challenges ahead in recovery

- Increasing living costs – food, energy, fuel...
- Impact on local businesses and economy still to be fully seen
- Risk of deepening health inequalities
- Impact on children's education, wellbeing and development

**....but there are also opportunities ahead**

# Emerging priorities from Your Merton

1. Maintaining excellent **education and skills** for all ages and needs
2. Promote a dynamic, connected, and inclusive **community and economy** with safe, vibrant high streets and jobs for our residents
3. **Support and care for residents in need** and promote the safety and wellbeing of all our communities
4. Ensure a **clean and environmentally sustainable borough**, with inclusive outdoor spaces, that is home to a variety of natural life
5. Work to make Merton a **fairer, more equal borough** and support those on lower income by tackling poverty and fighting for affordable quality housing

Any questions



## Raynes Park Community Forum 2 December 2021 Chair's Report

The meeting was held via Zoom, and chaired by Councillor Carl Quilliam with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association (RPA). 26 residents and two councillors attended on Zoom with 67 additional views on YouTube. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would work.

### **Open Forum**

A resident had raised concern about changes in access to the library. A response from the Library Manager had been provided and was shared with the meeting:

*From Monday 15 November we have started piloting new door access technology at Raynes Park, Colliers Wood, West Barnes and Pollards Hill libraries. The door access technology is in place from 9:30am – 1pm on weekdays and we are undertaking the pilot to ensure that we raise awareness amongst customers of the new technology as from next April in order to deliver agreed MTFS savings we will be reducing our security guard presence at these libraries and it will mean that customers will need to have a library card (or the library app) and their PIN number to access the building at certain times. There are no other changes to services proposed and we are piloting it now to ensure that the technology is fully working and to also have staff outside the library to assist customers into using the technology and to get them signed up as library members should they not be members.*

*The benefits of the new technology mean that we be able to extend opening hours but will need to balance this with the reduced security guard presence. We want to ensure that the new technology works well and is supported before we make the changes and extend our opening hours in April.*

*No reductions to library staff are proposed and it is only a reduction in the security service provision, which has been bolstered by the new technology in place. No other changes to service provision are proposed and the full service offering, including our events and activities programme, will remain in place.*

Chris Larkman raised concern about staffing levels and that the toilets function as public toilets not just for library users. With a barrier to entry there was concern about future of service. Cllr Quilliam suggested someone from Libraries could come to a future meeting to update following the pilot.

A number of residents had raised issues about trees and the response from Council officers had confirmed that Rose Stepanek is the Tree officer, that the New Local plan includes a section on trees and that a new Tree Strategy is being developed.

A resident raised concerns about safety in the new Parklet and they felt there was a need for CCTV in the area. Cllr Crowe said he would ask the Safer Neighbourhood Team to see if they can increase patrols.

## **Introduction from the Raynes Park Champion**

Jacquie Denton, from Merton Council introduced herself to the Forum. Jacquie works in Property Services and has taken the role of Raynes Park Champion. Jacquie is happy to take up on queries on behalf of the forum and work closely with the RPA.

## **Station, Street Management & RP Improvements**

Chris Larkman and Tony Edwards gave an update on local issues.

Mural on south side of Skew Arch and parklet: Chris was please that people have been using the space and hopefully coffee outlets are keen to set up. Still want to make the space larger so use of the space helps demonstrate the need for expansion. Paul McGarry had agreed these improvements would be welcome and feasible but is not sure what funding would be available.

Merton Council is still in negotiation with Network Rail to take on the land on south side of station.

Chris is still pursuing Workspace to enforce the parking restrictions on the six spaces in the Kiss and Ride area next to the station.

## **COVID Update**

Barry Causer Public Health Lead for COVID Resilience, gave a presentation on the latest situation with COVID in Merton. The presentation is attached to this report and covered the latest statistics, and key updates.

The numbers of new infections is on an upward trend with 140 new cases per day in Merton. Merton is in the middle of the pack of South West London boroughs, and we need to remain cautious. There are higher numbers of young people, especially primary school age getting COVID, but there have been breakthrough infections into those people who have been double vaccinated, due to waning immunity levels.

There has been a limited impact of these infections on NHS Indicators, which is different to earlier stages of the pandemic e.g. admissions look stable and the death rate remains low, due to the success of the vaccination programme. Omicron is a new variation of concern, first sequenced in South Africa. The concerns are about transmission, severity and evading the vaccines. There are only small numbers in the UK so far but this will increase.

The COVID vaccination programme is our front line of defence and has four strands:

- Evergreen – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> dose vaccinations for those who have not had a vaccine yet
- Boosters – for those most vulnerable e.g. care home residents, those over 50, front-line health and care staff and those with underlying health conditions
- Third dose – for those immunosuppressed residents
- Single dose for 12-15 year olds in schools

Regular asymptomatic testing remains vital and Lateral Flow Tests are available from assisted test sites in Merton (Wilson Hospital and Centre Court shopping centre) and can be collected from libraries, and community pharmacists for home use. We are still providing webinars to help promote vaccinations and testing.

Better Health Merton is an overarching brand for services that support residents to improve their overall health. To find out more you can sign-up for the [Council COVID newsletter](#), and if you would like to be more involved in supporting your community you can still join the [COVID Champions](#). There is also financial support available to local community groups through [Merton Giving](#).

A resident asked about enforcing use of masks in shops, as shops are reluctant to enforce their use is Merton Council able support them. Barry said that the Business engagement team is working with local shops to give them advice and there is a COVID marshals team to help support enforcement. These are intelligence led so happy to take messages on where there are issues.

A resident asked about policing of masks on public transport. Barry said we work with TfL to highlight any issues. Merton is also working with Young Adult Community Champions to promote mask wearing.

A resident asked if the rise in cases could be just more testing and that numbers in hospital are more important. Barry said that as well as testing figures there are surveys that are part of national surveillance that are used to track the nature of the pandemic. Other important indicators used are from the NHS, for example numbers of admissions, numbers of people in ICU and the number of COVID-19 deaths.

### **Assembly Member Update**

Leonie Cooper, Assembly Member for Merton and Wandsworth gave an update on the work of the London Assembly and City Hall. Moving out of current City Hall and moving to Newham docklands. The move has been disruptive but will hopefully be settled in early 2022.

Today was a police plenary so members could quiz MOL and Commissioner. There is a draft [Police and Crime plan](#) out for consultation which includes four main priorities:

- reducing and preventing violence
- better supporting victims
- increasing trust and confidence
- protecting people from being exploited or harmed

London Fire Brigade is changing its structure and changing how it plans responses and kit for use on tall buildings following the Grenfell review.

Transport for London now relies on fare income for its budget as it no longer receives a central government operational grant. London is the only area that pays Vehicle Excise Duty but does not receive anything back. Fare income still at only 70% of pre-pandemic. TfL still does not have a secure funding agreement from central government as the offer has just been for six months. Current deal runs out on 11 Dec and there still no idea of what government will offer. If there is no support from central government there will need to be some quite profound reductions in services. Crossrail still expected to start in 2022 but there is no prospect of Crossrail 2 progressing in the next decade.

A resident asked what is happening to the current city hall. Leonie replied that it is not listed and difficult to see what else it might be used for, so it is possible the owner may wish to knock it down and replace it.

A resident said that Crossrail 2 has left RP with a station that needs work and land is still being safeguarded. Raynes Park needs step-free access but this won't happen until CR2 is dropped. Leonie said that there is still the need for CR2 to relieve congestion on Northern line. Once Crossrail opens then perhaps people will see the benefit and that might give CR2 more impetus. Leonie would like them to reduce the number of safeguarded sites. Getting TfL and National Rail to cooperate can be challenging. NR tends to focus on current operational issues rather than planning for future. One of the casualties of the short term funding arrangements has been the station improvement programme. The train company will be responsible so pressure can be put on them and there can be innovative solutions to improve access.

A resident asked about the future of Wimbledon Police station. Leonie said the future of the station is secure due to the increase in police numbers, as both Mayor and central government have committed to more officers.

A resident said that they would like TfL to reduce the number of bus stands in Raynes Park but this was blocked due to a small increase in fuel costs for the buses. Leonie asked if the resident could please email her the details so she can raise this.

[Leonie.cooper@london.gov.uk](mailto:Leonie.cooper@london.gov.uk)

Cllr Quilliam thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting

**Date of next meeting:**

Future meeting:

Tuesday 22 March 2022 at 7.15pm in Raynes Park Library, subject to COVID-19 restrictions:

Any issues or questions can be emailed to [getinvolved@merton.gov.uk](mailto:getinvolved@merton.gov.uk)

# COVID-19 update

## Raynes Park Community Forum

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Barry Causer  
Public Health Lead for COVID Resilience

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021



# COVID-19 UPDATE

- **7 day case rate** (all ages) 480.5 cases per 100,000 (up from 387), compared to 368.1 (up from 319.8) cases per 100,000 for London (20th November – 27<sup>th</sup> November)
- **Autumn and Winter Plan** has been published, which aims to avoid rise in hospitalisations which puts unsustainable pressure on the NHS
  - Plan A – Vaccinations, Test Trace & Isolate, clear comms and manage risk at the borders
  - Plan B – Clear comms of change of risk, vaccination only COVID Pass, mandated face coverings in some settings and working at home
- **Vaccination** continues to be our first line of defense; access by calling 119, booking at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or attending a drop-in clinic
  - COVID-19. Evergreen, booster dose, clinically vulnerable residents and a universal offer to 12 to 17 year olds .
  - Flu. Free for 50+, certain health conditions, are pregnant, carers allowance or main carer and front-line health and social care workers. Others available for c£10 from Pharmacies.
- Coronavirus remains a **serious health risk**. Everybody needs to stay cautious and help protect themselves and others
  - ✓ Any COVID-19 symptoms, stay at home and take a PCR test
  - ✓ Take part in asymptomatic testing, - those who work/visit vulnerable people to test 2 x week, others before periods of higher risk e.g. crowded or enclosed spaces, public transport, spending time with a more vulnerable person; if in doubt – test.
  - ✓ If you are not well, try to stay at home
  - ✓ Meet up outside or if you're indoors open windows or doors
  - ✓ Wear face-coverings in crowded places to help protect others & mandated in shops and on public transport
  - ✓ Check in with the NHS COVID-19 app when you are out
  - ✓ Wash your hands regularly and for a least 20 seconds with soap
  - ✓ Fully vaccinated contacts don't need to isolate (exc omicron contacts), but be cautious and get a PCR test
- Better Health Merton – be a healthy weight, move more, stop smoking, reduce alcohol use, get a flu jab, manage LTCs and look after your mental wellbeing. [Better Health Merton: kick-start your health](#)

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# COVID-19 Vaccination Programmes – Updated 30/11/2021

## *Clinically Vulnerable:*

- **Young people 12-15 at high risk:** Eligible for first and second dose. Interval between doses is 8 weeks. Can book on national NHS booking system.
- **People 16+ at high risk:** Eligible for first, second and booster dose. Interval between primary doses is 8 weeks and minimum 3 months interval between second dose and booster. Can book on national NHS booking system.
- **People 12+ who are Immunosuppressed:** Eligible for a third primary dose delivered at 8 weeks from second dose. Then offered a booster dose 3 months from the third dose. Can book into hospital hubs or eligible walk-in centres.
- **People aged over 16 living with someone immunosuppressed:** Eligible for first dose, second dose and booster vaccination.

## *Healthy children and young people:*

- **12-17 year olds:** Eligible for a first dose or second dose. Second dose offered 12 weeks from the first dose or 12 weeks after positive COVID test, whichever is later. Currently not eligible for booster programme.

## *Adults:*

- **People 18-39 year olds:** Eligible for first and second dose. Interval between primary doses is 8 weeks. Eligible for booster dose but will be offered in order of descending age groups.
- **People 40+:** Eligible for first and second dose. Interval between primary doses is 8 weeks. Booster given 3 months after second dose. Priority for care home residents and housebound.

## *Workforce:*

- **Care home staff and front line workers:** Eligible for first and second dose and booster vaccinations. From 11th November 2021, anyone working or volunteering in a care home has to be fully vaccinated, unless they are exempt.
- **Healthcare workers:** Eligible for first and second dose and booster vaccinations. By 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 Health and social care workers, including volunteers who have face-to-face contact with service users, will need to be fully vaccinated in order to be deployed, unless they are exempt.

**Evergreen offer:** continuing to promote vaccination to all eligible cohorts who have not taken up offer – open access. Focus on targeted communications and community engagement to support health & wellbeing and build trust.



**Better  
Health**

**LET'S  
DO THIS**



**NHS**

**South West London  
Clinical Commissioning Group**

# **BETTER HEALTH MERTON**

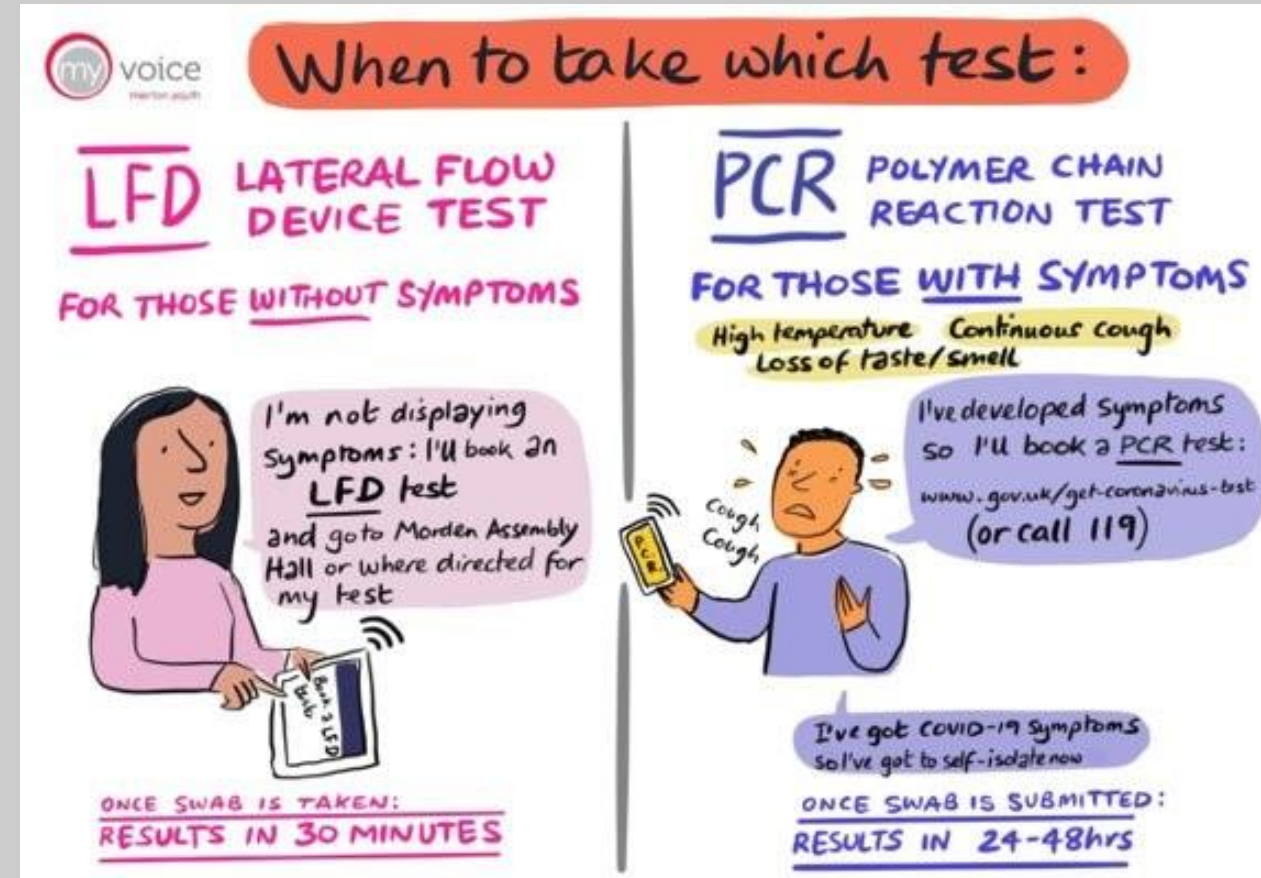
[merton.gov.uk/publichealth](http://merton.gov.uk/publichealth)





# OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

- Join our network of **170** COVID-19 Community Champions or our YACC; a key part of our approach to preventing and managing outbreaks in Merton.
- Vaccination Q&A for parents/carers of 12 to 15 year olds - <https://www.merton.gov.uk/coronavirus/residents#titleCol20>
- Vaccination & booster webinars (dates – TBC)
- CEV Shielding Forum – 13<sup>th</sup> December 11.30am or 6pm
- Merton Giving grants, 6th December deadline- [Current Fund - Merton Giving](#)
- Sign up for the Merton COVID-19 newsletter – [www.merton.gov.uk/newsletter](http://www.merton.gov.uk/newsletter)



For more information contact [public.health@merton.gov.uk](mailto:public.health@merton.gov.uk)

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

## COUNCIL MEETING – 2 FEBRUARY 2022 NOTICE OF MOTION

### **All England Lawn Tennis Club – restrictive covenants**

Council Notes:

The assurances given by the AELTC and Merton Council when the Freehold of the land occupied by the Wimbledon Golf Club was sold to the AELTC by Merton Council

The statement in the Wimbledon Informer on 24 September 1993 by the Leader of Merton Council that:

“The golf course land will be retained as open space. The whole stretch has been designated Metropolitan Open Land. We have declared it a conservation area and placed strong covenants on the sale.”

The statement in the Wimbledon Informer on 24 September 1993 by the Chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis Club that:

“We completely understand and support everyone’s determination to keep the land open and we have purchased the land on that basis.

Council therefore requests Cabinet to inform the AELTC that regardless of the results of the AELTC Planning Application 21/P2900 and any future similar applications, that it intends to enforce its covenants over this land

Cllr Simon McGrath

Cllr Anthony Fairclough

Cllr Paul Kohler

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## COUNCIL MEETING – 2 FEBRUARY 2022 NOTICE OF MOTION

### **Compliance with Covid rules**

Council Notes:

The sacrifices made by Merton residents to comply with the rules during the pandemic and help make everyone safer.

That in order to be effective, there needs to be a feeling that the rules – and penalties for breaking them – will be applied fairly.

Council believes

- Government at all levels, local and national, needs to provide leadership.
- That in Merton councillors and officers have worked together to help make our Borough safer.
- That the recent reported potential breaches of the rules undermine public confidence, especially when not investigated properly.
- That the breaking of the rules should be investigated by the Police.

Therefore Council calls on the Leader to write to the Borough's two MPs to ask them if they agree with this, and to the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police asking her to investigate recent widely reported breaches of the rules

Cllr Simon McGrath

Cllr Paul Kohler

Cllr Anthony Fairclough

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## COUNCIL MEETING – 2 FEBRUARY 2022 NOTICE OF MOTION

### **Road charging non-strategic theme motion**

Council recognises that since 2018 the Labour administration has introduced new parking taxes that:

1. Impose new charges on residents in wards where there are no Labour councillors;
2. Do not work, as taxing parking cars does not reduce pollution;
3. Has hit those on low incomes the hardest;
4. Has had a negative impact on families, the elderly and those who need care;
5. Has not led to a significant reduction in emission levels in Merton.

Council is therefore deeply concerned about new proposals from the Mayor of London to:

1. Expand the ULEZ to all of Greater London;
2. Introduce a compulsory daily clean air charge for all petrol and diesel vehicles in Greater London;
3. Introduce a new boundary charge on vehicles travelling into Greater London.

Council recognises that the new proposals from the Mayor of London will:

- Hit the residents with the lowest incomes the hardest;
- Threaten Merton's economic recovery from the pandemic by unnecessarily harming businesses;
- Do nothing to tackle the pollution crisis which has gone unaddressed by the Mayor of London and the Labour administration.

Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to write to the Mayor of London to request that he abandons his damaging new proposals to unnecessarily tax Merton residents and harm the borough's economic recovery.

Cllr Nick McLean

Cllr Daniel Holden

Cllr Thomas Barlow

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## COUNCIL MEETING – 2 FEBRUARY 2022 NOTICE OF MOTION

### **Lavender Nursery Motion**

Council recognises that ever since the Outturn report of 2017/18 the overspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant has been growing out of control and is set to reach £56 million by 2026/27.

The failure to control the overspend has led to:

- Millions of pounds being held in reserves to balance the overspend, money that could be used for other priorities;
- The Labour administration making unnecessary cuts to local services, as well as deeply damaging cuts to important educational and sporting programs such as Deen City Farm, Little Leagues, Merton Music Foundation, and many other worthy organisations that provide huge benefits to Merton residents.

Council also recognises that the decision to repurpose Lavender Nursery was the correct one, albeit a decision that was made too late, and that the decision of the Labour group to vote down a Conservative motion in 2019 to keep the Whatley Avenue site for educational provision was a missed opportunity to increase in-borough educational provision.

However, council notes with dismay that the repurposing of Lavender Nursey was opposed by a vocal minority of residents led by the Member of Parliament for Mitcham and Morden. This delay not only cost the council significant sums of money but has also prevented children with special educational needs being offered the standards of care and tuition that they deserve.

Council further notes:

- That increased in-borough education provision for children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) is still needed;
- That the influence of the Member of Parliament for Mitcham and Morden over the Labour group is undemocratic and is damaging to the borough;
- That future campaigns led by a sitting MP cannot, and must not, be allowed to hinder the life chances of children with special educational needs in Merton again.

Therefore, council resolves to request:

- The Cabinet Member for Children and Education to expedite plans for increasing the level of in-borough educational provision for children with EHCPs;
- The Leader of the Council to write to the Member of Parliament for Mitcham and Morden to demand that she cease her campaign against improved care and educational provision for children with special educational needs.

Cllr Nick McLean

Cllr Hayley Ormrod

Cllr James Holmes

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## Council

**Date: 02 February 2022**

## **Subject: Compulsory Purchase Orders**

Lead officer: Chris Lee Director of Environment and Regeneration

Lead member: Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency.

Contact officer: James McGinlay, Assistant Director, Sustainable Communities

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### **Recommendations:**

- A. To note that the decision whether to make compulsory purchase orders in respect of properties on the Ravensbury, Eastfields and High Path Estates, support of the Merton Estates Regeneration Programme, will, in accordance with the statutory framework, be taken by the Cabinet; and
  - B. To note that no report will be brought to Council prior to such a decision being made.
- 

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

- 1.1. In February 2018, full Council considered a report from the Cabinet setting out proposals to support Clarion Housing Group's (Clarion) estates regeneration programme by agreeing in principle to make compulsory purchase orders ('CPOs') in respect of those properties where vacant possession would be required and this could not be secured voluntarily.
- 1.2. Although the Council did not expressly resolve that the final decision on making CPOs should be made by full Council, there was an indication in the report that a further report would be brought to full Council seeking such a decision once a number of conditions had been fulfilled.
- 1.3. After further consideration of the statutory framework governing the making of CPOs under section 226 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990, it has become clear that making a CPO is an executive function and therefore the decision to make it rests with the Cabinet.
- 1.4. The preconditions set out in the 2018 report have now been met and officers are in the process of preparing a report for Cabinet on 21 March 2022 recommending that the Director of Environment and Regeneration be authorised to make and serve CPOs on the basis of a detailed statement of reasons which will be appended to that report.

## **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. The report of 7 February 2018 set out the rationale for seeking an in principle agreement to the making of compulsory orders in respect of

interests in properties on the Ravensbury, Eastfields and High Path estates (the Estates), should it not be possible to acquire the relevant interests voluntarily. Since that time, significant progress has been made and the conditions outlined in the February report for making a final decision have been fulfilled.

- 2.2. Outline planning consent has been granted for regeneration of all three Estates. Ravensbury estate has full planning permission with all reserved matters approved; Phase 1 has been built and is occupied and demolition work is currently underway prior to construction of Phase 2. At High Path, Phase 1 is finishing construction and partly occupied. Reserved matters have also been approved for High Path Phase 2 and Ravensbury Phases 3 and 4. Reserved matters for Eastfields Phase 1 were submitted on 13 December 2021 and reserved matters for High Path Phase 3 are due to be submitted in the summer of 2022.
- 2.3. Those residents and owners who will be affected by the making of CPOs are aware that they (i.e. the CPOs) are due to be made, as such people have already been approached over some years by Clarion with a view to voluntary acquisition of their interests. Clarion has acquired many properties by negotiation and is continuing negotiations. In the last few weeks, remaining owners (on the estate and remote landlords) have been formally served with notices under section 16 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1986 asking them to provide details of all those people who may have an interest in the properties. This will assist in ensuring that contact is made with all such people.
- 2.4. Although in February 2018 a view was taken that it would be prudent to seek formal agreement from full Council to the 'in principle' making of CPOs, such agreement is not legally required. The power to make CPOs in these circumstances is contained in section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, supplemented by procedural requirements set out in the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. These provisions have to be read in conjunction with the legislation governing local government decision making, which in the case of councils operating executive arrangements, such as Merton, is contained in the Local Government Act 2000 ('the 2000 Act'). Section 9D of that Act states that, subject to any provision to the contrary in legislation passed after the 2000 Act, any function of the local authority "*is to be the responsibility of an executive of the authority under executive arrangements*". In other words, there is a presumption that all local authority powers are vested in the executive in the absence of an express provision which says they are not.
- 2.5. There is nothing in the Town and Country Planning Act or the Acquisition of Land Act (which in any event predate the 2000 Act) stipulating that the function of making a compulsory order is not to be an executive function. Regulations have been made under section 9D(3) of the 2000 Act setting out which functions may not be functions of the executive and those which may, but aren't required, to be. The latter are known as local choice functions. Schedule 1 of The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000 lists a number of functions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which are not to be executive functions. They relate

mainly to the granting of planning applications and do not include the making of CPOs under section 226. Neither are CPOs included in the list of local choice functions included in schedule 4 to those regulations.

- 2.6. Accordingly, despite the report to full Council in 2018, the actual legal responsibility for deciding whether to proceed to make a CPO rests with the Cabinet. There is no requirement for full Council to approve this decision. Any decision made by the Cabinet in March will be subject to call in and that is the appropriate mechanism by which non- executive members may scrutinise the decision.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. Given the statutory scheme described above, it is not possible for full Council to be the final decision making body in relation to the making of a CPO.

### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. This report has been discussed with group leaders. As this is only a procedural report, there is no requirement for public consultation although clearly the substantive question of the redevelopment of the Estates has been and will continue to be the subject of extensive consultation with residents.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

- 5.1. It is currently proposed that a full report setting out the rationale for making CPOs will be considered by the Cabinet on 21 March 2022.

### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report; the report to Cabinet will include detailed financial implications.

### **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The legal implications are set out in the body of the report. Although there was no formal resolution to bring the final decision back to full Council and, as explained above, the decision to make a CPO is not a function of full Council, given the wording in the body of the February 2018 report the advice of Leading Counsel jointly instructed by the Council and Clarion. is that it would be prudent for full Council to note and endorse the revised position.

### **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. None specifically arising from this report. There are extensive implications arising from the making of a CPO which will be addressed in detail in the full Cabinet report.

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. None

## **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. As set out in the body of this report.

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

- None

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- [Council 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 – Delivery of Clarion’s Estate Regeneration project](#)
- [Council 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 – adoption of Merton’s Estates Local Plan](#)
- [Minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 council meeting](#)

## **Committee: Council**

**Date: 2 February 2022**

Wards: All

## **Subject: Approval of the pay policy statement and of the Members' allowances scheme**

Lead officers: Liz Hammond, Interim Head of HR; Louise Round, Managing Director of the South London Legal Partnership

Lead member: Councillor Owen Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Finance

Contact officers: Peter Andrews, Employee Relations, Pay and

Rewards Manager; Andrew Robertson, Head of Democracy and Electoral Services

### **Recommendations:**

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1. That Council approves publication of the Pay Policy Statement attached as Appendix A for 2022/23 and authorises the Monitoring Officer to make any consequential changes needed to the Constitution;
  2. That Council approves the Members' Allowance Scheme attached as Appendix D for 2022/23, noting that this does not currently include an increase in allowances in 22/23 ; and
  3. That Council notes that London Councils has published the Independent Remuneration Panel's report on the Remuneration of Councillors and asks the Standards and General Purposes Committee to consider that report at its first meeting in the next municipal year.
- 

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

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to agree and publish a pay policy statement each year.
- 1.2 The existing pay policy statement for 2021/22 was approved by Council on 3 February 2021. The only amendments from the last year's version are updates to the pay ratios to reflect the current position and to reflect the fact that the regulations governing exit payments were withdrawn during the course of last year.
- 1.3 The report also recommends re-adopting the existing Members' Allowances Scheme and schedule of rates, with no annual uplift in those rates recommended at this stage but noting that London Councils has published the Independent Remuneration Panel's report on the Remuneration of Councillors. Councils are obliged to have regard to the Panel's recommendations when reviewing its own members allowance scheme and so it is proposed that the Standards and General Purposes Committee consider the report at its first meeting in the new municipal year with a view to making recommendations to full Council later in the year.

## **2. DETAILS – PAY POLICY**

- 2.1 The pay policy statement for the year 2021/2022, approved by Council, is currently published on the Council's website.
- 2.2 Council is required to re-approve the pay policy statement each year.
- 2.3 There has been no substantive change in the council's pay policy although the pay ratios and statutory gender pay gap information have been updated to reflect the current position.
- 2.4 The pay policy statement was changed last year to require all severance packages over £95,000 to be approved by full Council, falling into line with the Exit Pay Regulations. These regulations have since been withdrawn and therefore it is proposed to revert to the previous threshold of £100,000 for severance packages to be approved by full Council.
- 2.5 Salary packages in excess of £100,000 will, in line with Government Guidance continue to require the approval of full Council before an offer of appointment is made although the updated statement gives the Chief Executive the authority to make temporary arrangements without the need for recourse to full Council.
- 2.6 The A draft Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 is attached at Appendix A, along with the publication figures for 2020/21 at Appendices B and C.

### **3. DETAILS – MEMBER ALLOWANCES**

- 3.1 In relation to the Members' Allowances Scheme the Council is required further to the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to re-adopt its scheme of members allowances for the year 2022/23 and in doing so give due regard to the recommendations made by the report of the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London. The current scheme took into account the report published in 2018. The 2022 report was made available on 12 January this year and there has not been opportunity properly to consider its recommendations. Accordingly it is proposed that the existing scheme is approved, with no uplifts in the 20/21 rates but that the Standards and General Purposes Committee give full consideration to its recommendations with a view to reporting to full Council next municipal year with any recommendations for changes to the current scheme which, if Council agrees, can be backdated until May .

### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Publication of a Pay Policy Statement and member allowances are statutory requirements.



- 4.2 The Council could seek to change its Member Allowances scheme now but it would seem prudent to give full and proper consideration to the Independent Remuneration Panel's report. was made.

## **5. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 5.1 As there are no significant changes proposed, no consultation is required at this stage.

## **6. TIMETABLE**

- 6.1 The Pay Policy Statement must be approved by Council for publication from 1 April 2022 on the Council's website.

## **7. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There has been no change in the council's pay policy, and the council is currently awaiting the outcome of national negotiation. The only amendments from last year's version are to update the pay ratios to reflect the current position or where indicated earlier in the report.
- 7.2 There is provision in the draft MTFS for 2022-26 for an increase in the budgeted cost of salaries and Members' Allowances. These provisions will be kept under review each year. They may be need to be revisited, depending on any recommendations arising from consideration of the Independent Remuneration Panel's Report.
- 7.3 The London living wage is currently set at £11.05 and will be the new rate for dependent carer allowances

## **8. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Publication of the Pay Policy Statement and annual re-approval by a meeting of the full council is a statutory requirement under the Localism Act 2011.
- 8.2 Guidance was issued to authorities in 2011 to accompany the Localism Act, and revised 'final supplementary guidance' was issued by the then DCLG in late February 2013. .
- 8.3 Regulation 10 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 requires re-adoption of the scheme on an annual basis. Before making or amending its allowances scheme, the Council is required, by Regulation 19, to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel.

**9. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The intention of the pay policy measures in the Localism Act is to improve transparency of decision making, particularly in relation to top earners in the organisation.

**10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None

**11. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None

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

- Appendix A – draft pay policy statement for 2021/22.
- Appendix B – statutory gender pay gap publication figures for 2018/19
- Appendix C – statutory BAME pay gap publication figures for 2018/19
- Appendix D – Members' Allowances Scheme and Schedule of Rates

**13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1.1 None

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON  
2022/23  
Pay Policy Statement

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is committed to transparency of pay, and best value for money to residents in terms of the pay bill to the workforce and quality of services provided to residents. This statement is required under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.2 We monitor the Council's benchmark position regularly in London utilising data sets from London Councils, and in particular the annual chief officers' salary survey. This information is used when reviewing pay and grading structures, in combination with data on turnover, recruitment and retention.
- 1.3 This pay policy statement sets out: the Council's current position in the labour market and pay benchmarking, pay ratios, the current pay structure and arrangements, dealing with data transparency and senior officer termination payments.
- 1.4 For the purposes of statement, "chief officers" includes statutory and non-statutory chief officers and deputy chief officers as defined by section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

## 2. Pay benchmarking

- 2.1 In terms of the senior pay benchmarks derived from the London Councils database we know the Council is positioned in the lower quartiles for senior pay for the 32 boroughs. Our overall pay rates below chief officer-level broadly mirror the median for Outer London Local Authorities.
- 2.2 The pay benchmarks are reviewed annually to ensure the Council continues to provide good value for money and that senior managers are not paid in excess of local, regional and national labour markets, as appropriate to the job.

## 3. Pay ratios and Fair Pay in the Public Sector

- 3.1 The Council has a pay ratio of 1:9 (1:10 last year) between the lowest and highest paid employees, conforming to CIPD research evidence that the average ratio in Local Government in England is 1:10. It should be noted this is well within the ratio level of 1:20 that was established for the Hutton Fair Pay Review (March 2011) to consider.
- 3.2 The Council uses job evaluation to determine an employee's grade and the rates within the grade are determined through national and London-level pay bargaining. The minimum rate of pay for NJC employees from 1 April 2020 of £21,030 per annum (a pay award from 1 April 2021 is pending) is based on the nationally determined minimum spine point rate. Apprentices receive the

London Living Wage. At the time of preparing the pay award from 1 April 2021 has not yet been settled. The Council operates a London Living Wage guarantee, which ensures staff on our pay scales receive at least the London Living Wage from 1 April each year, the only exception is for 6 month placements under the government's Kickstart scheme where the national minimum wage applies. The minimum NJC rate of pay at 1 April 2020 exceeded the London Living Wage. See paragraph 4.1 below for more detail on how we determine grades.

- 3.3 Senior managers are required to demonstrate they are performing to appraisal objectives in order to qualify for incremental pay increases and this pay policy system conforms with the recommendations from the Hutton Fair Pay Review that senior managers' pay includes an element of 'earn back'.
- 3.4 As well as comparing with the lowest paid we also make comparison with the median (recommended in the Government's transparency guidelines). The ratio of the Chief Executive's pay to median employee salary is 1:6. The Hutton report suggested the ratio for the FTSE top 250 private sector companies was 1:38.
- 3.5 The average (median) full-time basic salary for males employed by the Council is £35,751 a year, and the average full-time basic salary for females is £33,324 a year. The basic pay gap between male and female pay is £2,427 i.e. males earn on average more than females a slight reduction on last year.
- 3.6 A number of factors have caused this gap in basic pay, notably the TUPE transfer of staff both in and out of the organisation had an impact on the basic gender pay gap. In March 2017, 185 mainly male relatively lower paid staff transferred out with Street Scene and Waste. In February 2017, 62 were transferred from Sustainable Communities. Meanwhile, 65 Regulatory Services employees transferred to Merton from LB Wandsworth in November 2017. These mainly higher paid staff who were employed by Wandsworth include a large number of men. Different variations on service delivery models can make it difficult to meaningfully benchmark against other councils.
- 3.7 The statutory gender pay gap figures for 2019/20 were published, as required by legislation, by 31 March 2021. The pay gap figures for 2020/21 will be published with this Pay Statement and are attached as Appendix A. It should be noted that 2020/21 was an atypical year with some services impacted by the pandemic, and some recruitment decisions being delayed.
- 3.8 The figures, which include allowances and bonuses, show a similar gap to that for basic pay with men earning more than women both in terms of mean and of median earnings. There was a reduction in the mean gap compared to March 2020 with the gap reducing from a mean of 7.9% to 7.1%, however the median gap increased from 4.3% to 5.9%. Men also receive higher bonuses on average (mean), this being mainly due to a high proportion of pay consisting of bonuses in the small mainly male Bailiffs service, whilst median

salaries for women were higher. Bailiffs are the only staff group who earn true bonuses which make up a large proportion of their pay, and where the amount earned is based upon performance and not on gender or ethnicity, which was impacted by the pandemic.

- 3.9 Pending any introduction of statutory pay gap monitoring by ethnicity, the pay gap between White and BAME employees has been established and is shown as Appendix B. There was a wider pay gap than for gender, due to the much higher proportion of BAME employees in lower graded roles. The mean gap reduced from 21.1% to 11.4% between March 2020 and March 2021, whilst the median gap increased from 11.2% to 11.9%. The bonus gap in favour of BAME employees is due to a relatively high proportion of BAME Bailiffs. It should be noted that declaration of ethnicity is optional and the figures will therefore only cover those employees where they have declared their ethnicity.

#### 4. Current pay structures and arrangements

- 4.1 The Council operates:
- The Joint National Council (JNC) for LA Chief Executives, and the JNC for LA Chief Officers pay agreement arrangements &
  - The National Joint Council (NJC) Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) Outer London pay agreement for most posts below Management Grade (MG), and applies the GLPC job evaluation scheme for jobs up to grade ME16. Job evaluation objectively establishes the relative size/value of posts whereas the pay/grade relationship ('price tag') is agreed by the Council with reference to GLPC benchmark guidance. The pay and grading structure below chief officers and Management Grade (see 4.3 below) currently allows for time-served incremental progression on an annual basis up to the grade maxima.
- 4.2 Some other employees are paid on nationally determined pay scales such as: Soulbury, Youth & Community, Teachers, Craft Workers and local conditions.
- 4.3 Senior managers, on grades MGA to chief executive grade are placed on grades with incremental progression on a biannual basis. Progression through the grade is dependent upon satisfactory performance. Job evaluation for chief officers and managers above ME16 is conducted using the Hay job evaluation scheme.
- 4.4 Senior staff do not receive bonuses. They contribute from 8.5% up to 12.5% of their salary to the local government pension scheme and Merton's employer contribution to the pension fund for all contributing members is 17.06% from April 2021. In some years the Chief Executive in her capacity as Acting Returning Officer, Returning Officer, or Local Returning Officer will also receive election expenses when general or local elections occur. Annual cost of living increases are determined nationally.
- 4.5 All matters relating to Chief Officer pay, including the chief executive's appraisal setting and assessment are dealt with by the Council's

Appointments Committee Salary packages over £100,000 are also reported to full Council for approval prior to any offer of appointment being made to the relevant post.

- 4.6 The Council applies the NJC and Chief Officers pay awards. No national agreement has been reached at the time of writing for 1 April 2021, with any national discussions with the trade unions likely to commence in early 2022.
- 4.7 Any proposed changes to the pay and grading structure are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the changes.

## 5. Transparency arrangements

### 5.1 The Council via its Internet site:

- publishes all senior employee salaries with: names (where not withheld below £100k), title, salary band and information including job descriptions that will cover span of control and managerial responsibilities.
- publishes on an annual basis via its website a schedule of all council employees earning £50,000, or more, in accordance with the recommended code of practice for data transparency.
- publishes structure charts on the Council's website as recommended by the government code of practice for data transparency.
- publishes this policy via the Council's website

- 5.1 In the event that there is a permanent increase (including the addition of or increase in any market supplement but not including any annual cost of living increase) in an existing employee's salary to more than £100k this must be considered by the Appointments Committee and approved by full Council. The Chief Executive shall have authority to agree temporary increases in salary for periods of up to one year.

- 5.2 The Chief Executive's remuneration, that of the Directors, and any officer earning over £100k, is already the subject of a published statement (Senior Employee's Salaries) on the Council's website. Other salary and budget information is published in the annual statement of accounts, also available from the Council's website.

- 5.3 For any new appointment where the salary is more than £100k per annum approval should be obtained from full Council prior to the appointment being made (in practical terms the agreement would be sought at the start of the recruitment process but this is not an absolute requirement so long as the remuneration package is agreed before the offer of employment is made.).

## 6. Termination payments

- 6.1 For Chief Officers, termination payments are reported to the Standards and General Purposes Committee for information on a regular basis. Payments

which are in excess of a chief officer's contractual or statutory entitlement shall require the approval of the Appointments Committee. In any event, all termination payments over £100,000 shall be reported to full Council for approval.

- 6.2 We will continue to review and publish our policy on the exercise of discretions under local authority regulations covering compensation for early termination of employment, redundancy and pension enhancements.

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**MERTON GENDER PAY GAP FOR PUBLICATION AS AT 31/03/2021**

**Hourly Rate**

Women's hourly rate is

7.1 % lower	5.9 % lower
(mean)	(median)

**Pay quartiles**

How many men and women are in each quarter of the employer's payroll

Top quartile

35% men	65% women
---------	-----------

Upper quartile

37% men	63% women
---------	-----------

Lower middle quartile

29% men	71% women
---------	-----------

Lower quartile

27% men	73% women
---------	-----------

**Bonus Pay**

Women's bonus pay is

83.1% lower*	150.0% higher
(mean)	(median)

*\* Caused in Merton by a few mainly male bailiffs amongst a small data set earning high levels of bonus*

Who received bonus pay

9.7%*	7.0%*
of men	of women

*\* Noting bonus includes retention payments, merit pay, and long service awards.*

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**MERTON GENDER PAY GAP FOR PUBLICATION AS AT 31/03/2021**

**Hourly Rate**

BAME employee's hourly rate is

11.4 % lower (mean)	8.5 % lower (median)
------------------------	-------------------------

**Pay quartiles**

How many BAME and White employees are in each quarter of the employer's payroll

Top quartile

73% White	27% BAME
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Upper quartile

67% White	33% BAME
-----------	----------

Lower middle quartile

65% White	35% BAME
-----------	----------

Lower quartile

52% White	48% BAME
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**Bonus Pay**

BAME employee's bonus pay is

125.0% higher* (mean)	650.0% higher* (median)
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*\* Caused in Merton by a number of BAME bailiffs amongst a small data set earning high levels of bonus*

Who received bonus pay

9.7%* of White employees	5.3%* of BAME employees
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*\* Noting bonus includes retention payments, merit pay, and long service awards.*

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## **PART 6 ADDENDUM**

### **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE – CURRENT RATES**

#### **1 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – CURRENT RATES**

1.1 The following allowances will be paid to members in pursuant to the scheme set out in accordance with Part 6 of the Constitution

1.2 Basic Allowance

- £8694

1.3 Special responsibility allowances (February 2022)

- Executive Leader £34776
- Deputy Leader £17388
- Leader of the Opposition £17388
- Leader of Minority Group £5737
- Cabinet Member £8694
- Chair, Scrutiny Commission £8694
- Chair, Planning Committee £8694
- Chair, Licensing Committee £8694
- Chair, General Purposes Committee £2868
- Scrutiny Panel Chairs £2868
- Assistant Cabinet Members £2868
- Adoption & Fostering Panel £2172
- Licensing sub-committee chairs £246 per meeting attended

1.4 Special responsibility allowances are not cumulative. If more than one position attracting an SRA is held only the highest applicable allowance will be paid.

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## **Committee: Council**

**Date: 2 February 2022**

## **Subject: Calendar of Meetings 2022/23**

Lead officer: Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services

Lead member: Cllr Owen Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Recovery and the Local Economy

Contact officer: Amy Dumitrescu, Democracy Services Manager

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### **Recommendations:**

- A. That Council approves the Calendar of Meetings at Appendix A
  - B. That Council notes the dates for Overview and Scrutiny topic workshops within Appendix A
  - C. That Council approves the dates of Council meetings for 2022-2026 in Appendix B
- 

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

- 1.1. To propose a calendar of meetings for Council bodies for 2022-23 and for the meetings of Council for 2022-2026.

### **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. The details are set out at Appendix A and B.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. The Council can make whatever arrangements it sees fit in respect of the calendar within the legal constraints set out below. The Council should also have regard to audit and accounting requirements in respect of submission of the Annual Governance Statement by the end of June in each year and the approval of the Final Accounts by the end of September in each year.

### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. The Leader has been consulted in respect of the Cabinet meeting schedule. Group offices and leaders have been consulted and their comments taken into account where possible.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

- 5.1. The calendar covers the period from immediately after the 2022 Annual meeting up to and including the Annual meeting 2023; and meetings of the Council between May 2022 and 2026.

### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

### **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. In borough election years the Council must hold its annual meeting between 12 and 25 days after the election. In other years the annual meeting must be held in March, April or May.

7.2. The Council must hold a meeting to agree its budget by 11 March in each year.

## **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. Publishing a calendar of meetings in advance is important in giving people information about when the Council proposes to do its business and take decisions which affect the community and individuals.

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None.

## **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. It is important for the proper discharge of the Council's duties that a proper framework for decision making is established including the scheduling of meetings in advance to allow for business reports to be properly prepared for decision making bodies.

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

- Appendix A – Calendar of meetings
- Appendix B – Council meetings for the period 2022 - 2026

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. None.



2022-23	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
<b>COUNCIL</b>													
Annual (2)	25												17
Ordinary (5)			6		14		16			1		19	
Council budget (1)											1		
Special (to award Honorary Alderman/Woman status)			20										
<b>EXECUTIVE (inc LSG)</b>													
Cabinet (11)	25	27	18		19	10	7	5	16	20	20		17
LSG (9)		13	4	22	5 & 22	24	21		4	6	6		
<b>SCRUTINY</b>													
Overview and Scrutiny Commission (6)			13		7		9		18&25		15		
Healthier Communities and Older People OSP (6)		20			6		1		10	7	14		
Children and Young People OSP (6)		22			29		2		11	8	13		
Sustainable Communities OSP (6)		29			1		3		19	23	8		
Overview and Scrutiny Topic Workshops		7 & 9											
<b>NON-EXEC &amp; ADVISORY</b>													
Standards and General Purposes Committee (4)			21		21		8				9		
Borough Plan Advisory Committee (4)		9			8		17				23		
Licensing Committee (3)		28				12				2			
Planning Applications Committee (12) Thurs		16	14	18	22	20	23	8	17	9	16	26	
Pensions Committee (4)		30			15			1			30		
<b>OTHER</b>													
Wimbledon Forum (4)		15			21		30				22		
Raynes Park Forum (4)		30			20			7				25	
Morden Forum (2)						19				22			
Mitcham Forum (2)						6				21			
Colliers Wood Forum (1)						11							
JCC (4)		14			13			6			21		
<b>JOINT COMMITTEES</b>													
Health and Well-Being Board (5) (6.15pm) Tues		21			20		29		24		28		
South London Waste Partnership Joint Committee 6.30pm* (4)		8			tbc			tbc				tbc	
North East Surrey Crematorium Board** (10.00am) (4)													
Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery Board 2.00pm***		21								21			
<b>Final budget round meetings in bold</b>													

\* TBC with joint Boroughs

\*\*TBC with Sutton and LBW

\*\*\* TBC with Sutton

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2021-2022	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22
<b>COUNCIL</b>												
Annual (1)	19											
Ordinary (4)			14		15		17			2		
Council budget (1)											2	

2022-2023	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23
<b>COUNCIL</b>												
Annual (1)	25											
Ordinary (5)			6		14		16			1		5
Council budget (1)											1	

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2023-2024	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
<b>COUNCIL</b>												
Annual (1)	17											
Ordinary (5)			14		15		17			2		
Council budget (1)											2	

2024-2025	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
<b>COUNCIL</b>												
Annual (1)	19											
Ordinary (5)			14		15		17			2		
Council budget (1)											2	

2025-2026	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
<b>COUNCIL</b>													
Annual (1)	19												24
Ordinary (5)			14		15		17			2			
Council budget (1)											2		

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## Committee: Council

Date: 2 February 2022

## Subject: Changes to Membership of Committees and related matters

Lead officer: Hannah Doody, Chief Executive

Contact officer: Amy Dumitrescu, Democracy Services Manager

Democratic Services 020 8545 3357 - [democratic.services@merton.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@merton.gov.uk)

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### Recommendations:

That the Council:

1. Notes the changes to the membership of Committees that were approved under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Council.
  2. Agrees the appointment of members to seats on Committees and sub-committees in Appendix A
  3. Agrees the appointment of members to seats on Committees and sub-committees in Appendix B
  4. Agrees the appointment of members to seats on Committees and sub-committees in Appendix C
  5. Notes the revised Cabinet portfolios at Appendix D
- 

### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report seeks Council's approval for appointments to committee places and asks Council to note the changes made to committee membership under delegated authority since the publication of the agenda for the last ordinary Council meeting on 17 November 2021.

### 2 DETAILS

- 2.1. It is noted that following the resignation of Councillor Tobin Byers, his Cabinet position will now be undertaken by Councillor Owen Pritchard as detailed in the revised portfolios within Appendix D.
- 2.2. The following membership changes have been made by the Chief Executive under their delegated authority in accordance with section 1.4 of part 3F of the Constitution:
- 2.3.

Committee	Member resigning	Replaced by	Date
Planning Applications Committee	Cllr John Dehaney – substitute	Cllr Ben Butler – substitute	3 December 2021

### 3 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 3.1 None for the purposes of this report.

### 4 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None for the purposes of this report.

## **5 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. The information regarding membership changes in this report complies with legal and statutory requirements. Council is required to accept nominations made by political groups.
- 5.2. The Housing and Local Government Act 1989 contains provisions relating to the political balance on committees, the duty to allocate seats to political groups and the duty to give effect to allocations.
- 5.3. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that a political balance is secured on council committees so as to reflect the overall political composition of the council.
- 5.4. The requirement to allocate seats must be made in accordance with the following statutory principles:
  - a) All of the seats are not to be allocated to the same political group.
  - b) The majority of the seats must be allocated to the political group with a majority on the Council.
  - c) Subject to the two principles listed above, the number of seats on the total of all the ordinary committees of the Council allocated to each political group must bear the same proportion to that on full Council.
  - d) Subject to the above three principles, the number of seats on each ordinary committee of the Council allocated to each political group must bear the same proportion to their proportion on the full Council.

## **6 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

## **7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. None for the purposes of this report.

## **8 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. N/A

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

- 9.1 None.

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Documents from the authorised officer confirming approval of the membership changes agreed under delegated authority.

## COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND SCRUTINY BODIES

COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION (10 seats + 4 voting Co-opted Members) Substitutes allowed	Cllr Peter McCabe (Vice-Chair) (HCOP) Cllr Sally Kenny (CYP) Cllr Aidan Mundy (SCS) Cllr Billy Christie Cllr Ben Butler Cllr John Dehaney  Substitutes: Cllr Joan Henry Cllr Nick Draper	Cllr Nicholas McLean  Cllr Thomas Barlow  Substitutes: Cllr David Williams Cllr Omar Bush	Cllr Paul Kohler  Substitute: Cllr Simon McGrath	Cllr Peter Southgate (Chair)  Substitute: Cllr Edward Foley
HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (8 seats) Substitutes allowed	Cllr Peter McCabe (Chair) Cllr Pauline Cowper Cllr Mary Curtin Cllr Linda Kirby Cllr Helena Dollimore  Substitutes: Cllr Laxmi Attawar Cllr David Chung	Cllr Janice Howard (Vice Chair)  Cllr Nigel Benbow  Substitutes:  Cllr Andrew Howard  Cllr Oonagh Moulton	Cllr Jenifer Gould  Substitute:  Cllr Hina Bokhari	

COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (10 seats) Substitutes allowed	Cllr Sally Kenny (Chair) Cllr Russell Makin Cllr Dennis Pearce Cllr Joan Henry Cllr Stan Anderson Cllr Nick Draper  Substitutes:  Cllr Carl Quilliam	Cllr Hayley Ormrod Vice Chair  Cllr James Holmes Cllr Omar Bush  Substitutes:  Cllr Thomas Barlow Cllr Andrew Howard		Cllr Edward Foley   Substitute: Cllr Dickie Wilkinson
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (8 seats) Substitutes allowed	Cllr Aidan Mundy (Chair) Cllr Geraldine Stanford Cllr Nick Draper Cllr Laxmi Attawar Cllr Dave Ward  Substitutes:  Cllr Pauline Cowper Cllr Ben Butler	Cllr Daniel Holden Vice Chair  Cllr David Dean  Substitutes:  Cllr Edward Gretton Cllr Nigel Benbow	Cllr Anthony Fairclough   Substitute  Cllr Eloise Bailey	
BOROUGH PLAN ADVISORY PANEL (6 seats) Substitutes allowed, no Cabinet members	Cllr Carl Quilliam (Chair) Cllr Geraldine Stanford Cllr Dennis Pearce Cllr Ben Butler  Substitute:  Cllr Helena Dollimore	Cllr Daniel Holden   Substitute:  Cllr Stephen Crowe	Cllr Anthony Fairclough   Substitute:  Cllr Simon McGrath	



COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (10 seats) No substitutes	Cllr Mark Allison (Chair) Cllr Eleanor Stringer Cllr Martin Whelton Tbc Cllr Owen Pritchard Cllr Marsie Skeete	Cllr Nicholas McLean Cllr Oonagh Moulton Cllr David Simpson	Cllr Anthony Fairclough	
HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD (3 seats plus officers, statutory and non-statutory representatives) Proportionality does not apply	Cllr Rebecca Lanning (Chair) Cllr Eleanor Stringer	Cllr Oonagh Moulton		

COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
<p>STANDARDS AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (12 seats plus 2 Independent Persons)</p> <p>Substitutes allowed</p>	<p>Cllr Peter McCabe (Chair) Cllr John Dehaney Cllr Brenda Fraser Cllr Ben Butler Cllr Nick Draper Cllr Mary Curtin Cllr Martin Whelton</p> <p>Substitutes: Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah Cllr Edith Macauley</p>	<p>Cllr Adam Bush Vice Chair</p> <p>Cllr David Williams Cllr Andrew Howard</p> <p>Substitute</p> <p>Cllr Nicholas McLean Cllr Omar Bush</p>	<p>Cllr Hina Bokhari</p> <p>Substitute:  Cllr Jenifer Gould</p>	<p>Cllr Dickie Wilkinson</p> <p>Substitute:  Cllr Edward Foley</p>
<b>JOINT HEALTH COMMITTEES</b>				
<p><b>SOUTH WEST LONDON AND SURREY JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (JHOSC) (2 seat)</b></p> <p>Substitutes allowed</p>	<p>Cllr Peter McCabe  Cllr Brenda Fraser</p>	<p>Cllr Janice Howard Substitute: Cllr Andrew Howard</p>		
<b>REGULATORY AND QUASI JUDICIAL BODIES</b>				
<p>APPEALS COMMITTEE (6 seats)</p>	<p>Cllr Mark Allison (Chair) Cllr Brenda Fraser Cllr Joan Henry Cllr Owen Pritchard</p>	<p>Cllr Oonagh Moulton</p>	<p>Cllr Simon McGrath</p>	

COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
LICENSING COMMITTEE (Licensing Act and Gambling Act purposes) (12 seats) No substitutes	Cllr Nick Draper (Chair) Cllr Stan Anderson Cllr Pauline Cowper Cllr Mary Curtin Cllr Russell Makin Cllr Stephen Alambritis Cllr John Dehaney	Cllr David Simpson (Vice Chair)  Cllr Janice Howard Cllr Nigel Benbow Cllr Oonagh Moulton	Cllr Paul Kohler	
LICENSING COMMITTEE (Miscellaneous) (12 Seats) No substitutes	Membership as for Licensing Committee			
LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE ( <del>10</del> above committee) ( <del>3</del> seats) <del>0</del>	Any 3 members of the Licensing Committee			
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE (10 seats plus 1 Independent non-voting co-opted member to be appointed by the Planning Committee) Substitutes allowed	Cllr Dave Ward (Chair) Cllr Joan Henry Cllr Stephen Alambritis Cllr Carl Quilliam Cllr Nick Draper Cllr Billy Christie  Substitutes:  Cllr Dennis Pearce Cllr Ben Butler	Cllr Stephen Crowe Vice Chair  Cllr David Dean  Substitutes Cllr Najeeb Latif  Cllr Ed Gretton	Cllr Simon McGrath   Substitute:  Cllr Eloise Bailey	Cllr Peter Southgate   Substitute:  Cllr Edward Foley



**APPENDIX B**

**CONSTITUTION OF CONSULTATIVE FORUMS AND OTHER BODIES AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO GROUPS**

COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
<b>COMMUNITY FORUMS – appointment of Chair</b>				
COLLIERS WOOD COMMUNITY FORUM	Cllr John Dehaney (Chair)			
MITCHAM COMMUNITY FORUM	Cllr David Chung (Chair)			
MORDEN COMMUNITY FORUM	Cllr Nick Draper (Chair)			
RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM NB. local arrangements in respect of this forum put in place additional meetings with the Chair rotated and drawn from the four wards covered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
WIMBLEDON COMMUNITY FORUM	N/A	Cllr James Holmes (Chair)		
CORPORATE PARENTING STEERING GROUP (2 seats Cabinet Member for Young People & Opposition member on CYP Scrutiny) No substitutes	Cllr Eleanor Stringer	Cllr Hayley Ormrod		

COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE WITH ETHNIC MINORITY ORGANISATIONS (5 seats plus representatives of Merton's ethnic minority organisations) Substitutes allowed	Cllr Marsie Skeete (Chair) Cllr Joan Henry Cllr Agatha Akyigyina  Substitute: Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah	Cllr Omar Bush  Substitute: Cllr Adam Bush	Cllr Eloise Bailey  Substitute: Cllr Hina Bokhari	
MEMBERS' SCHOOL STANDARDS PANEL (3 seats + 1 substitute)	Cllr Dennis Pearce (Chair) Cllr Sally Kenny  Substitute: Cllr Dave Ward	Cllr James Holmes		
PENSIONS COMMITTEE (3 seats)	Cllr Laxmi Attawar (Chair) Cllr Owen Pritchard	Cllr Adam Bush (Vice Chair)		

COMMITTEE	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (3 seats plus representatives of Christian and other denominations and teacher associations) No substitutes	Note – SACRE elects its own chair  Cllr Laxmi Attawar Tbc	Cllr Hayley Ormrod		

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**CONSTITUTION OF CONSULTATIVE FORUMS AND OTHER BODIES AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO GROUPS**

ORGANISATION	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
Compact Working Group (2 seats)	Cllr Agatha Akyigyina	Cllr Oonagh Moulton		
Newable Limited (formerly Greater London Enterprise) (1 seat)	Cllr Mark Allison			
Local Government Association (4 Seats)	Cllr Martin Whelton Cllr Stephen Alambritis	Cllr Nicholas McLean	Cllr Anthony Fairclough	
LGA Urban Commission (1 Seat)	Cllr Carl Quilliam			
LGIU – Local Government Information Unit (To be appointed by the Executive Leader of the Council)	Cllr Mark Allison			
London Councils – Greater London Employment forum (1 Seat) (To be appointed by the Executive Leader of the Council)	Cllr Brenda Fraser  Substitute: Cllr Marsie Skeete			
London Councils Leaders’ Committee (1 Seat) (To be appointed by the Executive Leader of the Council)	Cllr Mark Allison Substitute : Cllr Owen Pritchard/Cllr Eleanor Stringer			

ORGANISATION	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
London Councils Transport and Environment Committee (1 Seat) (To be appointed by the Executive Leader of the Council)	Cllr Martin Whelton  Substitute: Cllr Natasha Irons			
London Councils Grants Committee (1 Seat) (To be appointed by the Executive Leader of the Council)	Cllr Marsie Skeete  Substitute: Cllr Brenda Fraser			
London Councils Pensions CIV (Common Investment Vehicle) (Sectoral) Joint Committee (1 seat and 2 substitutes)	Cllr Laxmi Attawar  Substitutes: Cllr Owen Pritchard			
London Road Safety Council (2 seats plus accident prevention officer)	Cllr Agatha Akyigyina	Cllr Daniel Holden		
London Youth Games (1 seat)	Cllr Joan Henry			

ORGANISATION	LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	MERTON PARK IR
Merton Community Panel (Clarion Housing) (2 seats)  (2 Seats )	Cllr Carl Quilliam  Substitute: Cllr Russell Makin	Cllr Nigel Benbow		
Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery Board (5 Seats)	Cllr Nick Draper Cllr Agatha Akyigyina Cllr Stephen Alambritis	Cllr David Williams	Cllr Hina Bokhari	
Mitcham Common Conservators (4 Seats )	Cllr Nick Draper Cllr Joan Henry Cllr Russell Makin	Cllr David Dean		
North East Surrey Crematorium Board (3 Seats)	Cllr Nick Draper Cllr Stephen Alambritis	Cllr Nigel Benbow		
Pollards Hill Community Committee (3 Seats)	Cllr Joan Henry Cllr Martin Whelton Cllr Aidan Mundy (Sub)			

Safer Merton	Cllr Agatha Akyigyina	Cllr David Simpson		
SW London Joint Waste Management Committee 2 seats (cabinet members)	Cllr Natasha Irons Cllr Owen Pritchard  Substitutes: Cllr Martin Whelton Cllr Mark Allison			

## **Leader of the Council – Mark Allison**

- Chair of Cabinet
- Leader of the Council

## **Joint Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Education – Eleanor Stringer**

- Joint Deputy Leader of the Council
- Overarching management of education
- Leading on the planning, development and expansion of the schools estate
- Raising standards at each key stage in schools, especially GCSE KS4, and minimising the impact of austerity on educational outcomes
- Championing fair access and leading on strategic schools' issues
- Responsibility for Smart Centre (PRU) and exclusions and improving transitions into mainstream education, work and training.
- Governor training and support
- Leading across the 14-19 agenda including skills
- Covering the full statutory role as lead member for Children
- Development of the Children's Trust
- Children's care services and disabled children, including SEND
- Early years and childcare, extended schools and children's centres
- Leading on improvement in youth services. Responsible for youth justice, and engaging young people in the life of the community eg Youth Parliament
- Corporate parenting and ensuring our looked after children succeed
- Strong safeguarding through Local Safeguarding Children's Board partnership.
- Supporting families to stay together wherever appropriate, and promoting security and stability when children do come into our care
- Joint responsibility for Merton's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy

## **Joint Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Recovery and the Local Economy – Owen Pritchard**

- Joint Deputy Leader of the Council.
- Leading on the Council's recovery agenda.
- Leading on performance monitoring and Service Planning.
- Member Lead on the Your Merton, a place-based vision for the borough's recovery from Covid-19
- Responsible for effective communication with residents.
- Responsible for implementation and roll out of CRM project.
- Lead Member on Strategic infrastructure development in the borough.
- Leading on efforts to boost trade and the local economy in town centres, supporting small businesses, markets and Business Improvement Districts.
- Leading on the budget, including the development of revenue, capital and debt management strategies
- Responsible for corporate finance, IT and audit, human resources, civic and legal services, and risk management
- Lead on asset management, driving improvements in council performance and leading budget and finance performance review meetings
- Leading on the change management agenda with responsibility for driving through value for money and efficiency within the council

- Overseeing the Council Commissioning strategy
- Monitoring progress of council wide strategic approach to customer services and community support and access.
- Monitoring the implications of Brexit on Merton Council, working alongside the Cabinet Member for Women and Equalities

### **Cabinet Member for Local Environment and Green Spaces – Natasha Irons**

- Increasing recycling rates and overseeing the council's waste strategy and street cleaning services.
- Ensuring contracts uphold best possible outcomes in effective management of waste and street cleansing.
- Focus on streetscene improvement, including initiatives around HMOs/flats above shops.
  - Promoting campaigns against environmental crimes (fly-tipping, litter).
  - Leading on parks and use of the borough's greenspaces.
  - Ensuring management of contracts for parks and open spaces.
  - Encouraging sustainable activity by local community groups in parks and open spaces.
  - Responsibility for allotments and cemeteries

### **Cabinet Member for Women and Equalities – Marsie Skeete**

- Ensuring all equalities strands (sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, religion/belief, age, marriage and civil partnerships) are embedded throughout council performance and the impact on these groups of austerity is minimised
- Oversight of the Council's Equality Strategy and Equality Impact Assessments and drawing up an Equalities Charter
- Chair of the Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minorities
- Assessing the needs of the borough's EU citizens as the UK exits the EU
- Supporting the Merton Council staff BAME Forum
- Joint responsibility for Merton's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy
- Support and development of the LGBT+ forum
- Support and development of the Faith and Belief Forum
- Overseeing community engagement, including Community Plan, increased participation in local decision making and increasing social capital
- Overseeing the council's community partnerships, including specific focus on the voluntary sector.
- Leading on the management of grants to community groups and decisions of Grants Committee
- Chair of the Merton Compact Board.
- Overseeing voluntary sector organisations applying to become Refugee Community Sponsors.

### **Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency – Martin Whelton**

- Council lead on the Climate emergency
- Chair of Climate Change Implementation Committee

- Responsible for building links with residents, businesses and community groups to reduce carbon.
- Leading on regeneration and neighbourhood renewal initiatives.
- Overall responsibility for planning policy.
- Leading on the development of the Local Plan.
- Responsible for housing strategy, developing relations with Housing Associations and promoting the needs of tenants and leaseholders.
- Ensuring delivery of promises by Clarion Housing.
- Overseeing monitoring and enforcement of HMOs and rogue landlords
- Overseeing major projects in town centres.
- Building a vision in conjunction with local residents for the future of our neighbourhoods.
- Overall responsibility for development and building control and spatial policy.
- Transport planning including Crossrail 2, and liaison with Transport for London.
- Leading on traffic and highways.

### **Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health – Rebecca Lanning**

- Community care services, including relationships with the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Primary Care Network (PCN), Integrated Care System (ICS), wider health organisations including the voluntary sector in addition to protecting local health services.
- Social services for adults and services for adults with learning disabilities.
- Lead on dementia and mental health services.
- Leading on personalisation and choice issues.
- Older people's services including support for carers, day care for the elderly and meals on wheels, working alongside the National Health Service.
- Lead on Public Health and healthy living schemes.
- Lead member for Air Quality and sustainable transport, including school streets, cycling and LTNs, and for parking services and overseeing the council's parking management strategy.
- Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Lead member for addressing food poverty.

### **Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Skills – Brenda Fraser**

- Leading on libraries including maximising use of library buildings
- Overseeing leisure operations and development
- Liaising with businesses and cultural organisations to embed culture in regeneration plans
- Leading on apprenticeships and training.
- Leading on the adult education service.
- Business opportunities in heritage and tourism
- Leading on trading standards and commercial environmental health
- Working with organisations in the borough's thriving arts and cultural Communities

### **Cabinet Member for Partnerships, Public Safety and Tackling Crime – Agatha Akyigyina**

- Reducing the threat of crime and anti-social behaviour in Merton and working closely with Police and Community Safety partnerships
- Leading on a knife crime strategy for the borough
- Point of contact with Borough Command Unit and Deputy Mayor for Crime and Safety
- Overseeing CCTV operations
- Joint responsibility for Merton's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy
- Oversight of the Council's Preventing Violent Extremism strategy
- Support and development of Merton's Armed Forces Community Covenant

**Note: All Cabinet Members are also responsible as Corporate Parents for children in the care of the Council.**



**Committee: Council**

**Date: 2 February 2022**

**Subject: Petitions**

Lead officer: Louise Round, Managing Director South London Legal Partnership

Lead member: Leader of the Council, Councillor Mark Allison

Contact officer: Democratic Services, democratic.services@merton.gov.uk

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**Recommendation:**

1. That Council receive petitions (if any) in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution.
  2. That Council notes the responses provided to the petitions submitted at the meeting held on 17 November 2021.
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**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report invites Council to receive petitions in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution.

**2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. At the meeting held on 17 November 2021, the petitions listed below were submitted and the responses are set out below. Any petitions received by Council are referred to respective departments with responsible officers asked to advise the presenting member in each case of the way in which the petition is to be progressed.

A petition was submitted by Councillor Gould entitled Cannon Hill Lane Zebra Crossing to Joseph Hood Recreation Ground. The petition requested the installation of a zebra crossing on Cannon Hill Lane to and from Joseph Hood recreation ground. The officer response is copied below:

Officer Response

*We do take safety extremely seriously and under normal circumstances we have a robust programme in dealing with accessibility and road safety issues. Regrettably due to the high level of demand for intervention throughout the borough and lack of funding, the Council must prioritise. Additionally there are a number of factors such as low footfall; plenty of gaps between traffic flow; no reported accidents (apart from the hit and run which would not have been prevented by a zebra crossing); physical constraints such as the number of crossovers, the bus stop and the bridge structure, which would mean that the zebra crossing would not be within the desired line, makes it difficult to give priority to this request at this time.*

- 2.6 Members are invited to present petitions at this meeting, and a response will be provided to the next ordinary Council meeting in July 2022.

**3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

**4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

**5 TIMETABLE**

5.1. None for the purpose of this report.

## **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. None for the purpose of this report.

## **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. None for the purpose of this report.

## **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. None for the purpose of this report.

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None for the purpose of this report.

## **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

## **11 APPENDICES**

11.1. None

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. None.