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Merton Council

Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Date: 17 March 2021
Time: 7.15 pm
Venue: Committee Rooms CDE, Merton Civic Centre

AGENDA

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2	Declarations of pecuniary interest	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 6
4	BCU Commander - Crime and policing in Merton	7 - 16
5	Safer Merton update To follow	
6	Planning the Commission's work programme 21/22	17 - 28

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Overview and Scrutiny Commission membership

Councillors:

Peter Southgate (Chair)
Peter McCabe (Vice-Chair)
Ben Butler
Brenda Fraser
Edward Gretton
Paul Kohler
Nick McLean
Aidan Mundy
Geraldine Stanford
Billy Christie

Substitute Members:

John Dehaney
Joan Henry
Thomas Barlow
Edward Foley
Simon McGrath
David Williams MBE JP

Co-opted Representatives

Mansoor Ahmad, Parent Governor
Representative - Secondary and Special
Sectors
Roz Cordner

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.

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

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

Scrutiny's work falls into four broad areas:

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

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

For more information, please contact the Scrutiny Team on 020 8545 3864 or by e-mail on scrutiny@merton.gov.uk. Alternatively, visit www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny

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Agenda Item 3

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

17 FEBRUARY 2021

(7.15 pm - 10.00 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Southgate (in the Chair),
Councillor Peter McCabe, Councillor Ben Butler,
Councillor Brenda Fraser, Councillor Edward Gretton,
Councillor Paul Kohler, Councillor Nick McLean,
Councillor Aidan Mundy, Councillor Geraldine Stanford,
Councillor Billy Christie, Mansoor Ahmad and Roz Cordner

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors

Ged Curran (Chief Executive), Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Chris Lee (Director of Environment and Regeneration), Louise Round (Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership and Monitoring Officer) and Ben Stephens (Head of Parking Services)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

No apologies received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4 COVID 19 - VERBAL UPDATE FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Agenda Item 4)

The Chief Executive presented the Commission with an overview on how Merton has been reacting to the Covid-19 pandemic, including case numbers, community testing and how the Council is supporting those residents that are shielding.

Sadly there have been over 400 deaths in Merton, for which the Chief Executive gave his sincere condolences.

- Positive cases have fallen – Current figures show there are 150 cases per 100,000 tests, compared to 1000 cases per 100,000 at the peak.
- Everybody must continue with the measures - Hands, Face and Space.

In response to Commission Members questions, the Chief Executive further explained;

In light of the declining take up of lateral flow tests, alternative distribution models are being considered, such as direct posting of testing kits to homes, together with distribution hubs where people can collect their test and use it at home.

With regards to the mistaken inclusion of the CR4 postcode, details of the outbreak of a South African variant in Pollards Hill were received as part of national communications, which created an impression that in all of the test areas mentioned, the variant of concern was a more dangerous version. The information wasn't as clear as it could have been and was also picked up by national news and media including Public Health England. The Council also bears some responsibility for the confusion as for the first six hours, we referenced the CR4 site. Once the correct information was received, we replaced the incorrect previous information with a map that clearly defined that it was only the Pollards Hill area that was affected.

Data on the number of people in Merton that have received their first and second vaccination is held by Public Health colleagues and will be circulated once it is available.

Although we have received a large amount of funding from the government, in response to the 'spend what is necessary' adage, there is still a £7m imbalance due to costs we have not yet been reimbursed for. This includes things such as PPE supplies for care homes, additional cost of care and support through community contracts, providing food to those residents shielding at the beginning of the first lockdown, an increase in care packages and extra costs for enforcement and communication.

Another area of budget shortfall arises when we identify the losses the Council has incurred due to Covid (income forgone and the ability to implement certain changes that would have happened prior to the outbreak).

Presentation slides will be circulated to Commission Members after the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for his time tonight.

5 BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN 2021-25 (Agenda Item 5)

The Director of Corporate Services gave an introduction to the final savings report provided to the Commission.

The Commission looked at the proposed savings and capital programme relating to its remit. Members also discussed the references from the other scrutiny panels to inform discussion of its reference back to Cabinet.

The Commission RESOLVED to forward to Cabinet the comments and recommendations made by the overview and scrutiny panels (These are detailed in Item 6).

Councillor Nick Mclean raised a motion that recommended to Cabinet "The Overview and Scrutiny Commission supports the hard work of Merton Council staff during the pandemic, especially frontline staff working with our most vulnerable residents.

However, the current administration has chosen to spend £316,000 on an extra day off for staff members, when that money could have been used to support local businesses and aid Merton's economic recovery. Therefore, commission requests cabinet to look again at offering additional financial support to local businesses to the level of £316,000". This was seconded by Councillor Ed Gretton. There were three votes in favour and six against. Motion fell.

The Commission RESOLVED (eight votes for, two abstentions) to forward the following comments and recommendations to Cabinet:

1. "Commission Members welcome the opportunity to scrutinise the final Budget and Business Plan 2012-25, and recognise the exceptional difficulties officers have faced in finalising it while so much uncertainty remains around central government funding.
 2. Covid-19 has created unprecedented financial pressures on Merton's budget. As these are addressed in the coming months and the recovery programme gets underway, clarification of the issues may ease the financial pressure while revealing underlying socio-economic problems. Merton post-Covid will be a very different place.
 3. Resolution of two outstanding financial pressures would greatly improve the council's position:
 - Payment of the remaining tranches of compensation for lost income from sales, fees and charges
 - Settlement proposal for the deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (£27m)
 4. This would allow the reserves being used to balance the budget for 2021/22 (£6.6m) and for 2022/23 (£5.3m) to be repaid.
 5. Although the infection rate is falling, Covid-19 will leave a long term legacy for Merton:
 - Physical and mental damage to the most vulnerable members of the community, especially children who have lost schooling, those who are isolated, disabled or with mental health issues
 - Exacerbation of existing inequalities between the east and west of the borough
 6. The MTFs must expect to accommodate an increase in demand from the most vulnerable for a wide range of council services; it will not be "business as usual"
 7. The Commission endorses the LGA call for central government support to be maintained":
"It is vital that funding dedicated to Covid-19 in both the current financial year 2020/21 and in 2021/22 is kept under review to ensure councils are fully compensated for the financial impact of the pandemic"
- 6 SCRUTINY OF THE BUSINESS PLAN: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY PANELS (Agenda Item 6)

References/Comments received from the scrutiny panels re; Business Plan 2021-25;

1. The **Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel** ask Cabinet to reconsider saving CH100 (Review of in-house day-care provision) for the following reasons:
 - The engagement process may cause some anxiety to vulnerable groups who are already facing mental health challenges during the pandemic.
 - Social distancing will make it difficult to conduct an effective engagement process
 - The Community and Housing Department is already managing significant workload pressures due to the pandemic.

2. The **Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel** commends Merton's Environment and Regeneration workers on their hard work, expertise and positive attitude during the Covid pandemic. Noting in particular that they have worked within current limited resources to deal with necessarily increased duties and expresses the hope they will be suitably rewarded as soon as conditions permit.

3. The **Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel** welcomes the department's efforts for digital innovation, particularly the use of a GIS system, and recommend, given increase in internet use, taking advantage of such innovation in full to support residents and service provision where resource and funding is available.

7 CALL IN: EMISSIONS BASED CHARGING (Agenda Item 7)

The Chair introduced the Conservatives call-in on Emissions Based Charging and reminded Commission Members to please conduct this investigation in a disciplined and professional manner. We must decide whether the matter should be referred back to Cabinet for consideration.

Councillor Daniel Holden was invited to speak in support of the call in and outlined the Conservatives' reasons for the call-in which are:

- Proportionality
- Respect for human rights and equalities
- A presumption in favour of openness;
- Clarity of aims and desired outcomes;
- Consideration and evaluation of alternatives

Councillor David Dean added further points:

- Pollution does not exceed legal limits in areas that are due to be the most expensive in the scheme.
- Commercial vehicles and large combustion engines need addressing but is not achieved through this policy.

- Residents in Wimbledon and Raynes Park have responded by ripping up their gardens, which will result in dramatically diminished greenery, which is the worst thing for air quality and climate change.

The Commission discussed the points raised and asked questions of clarification.

In response to a question on possible alternatives, Councillor Daniel Holden suggested that incentives to encourage behaviour such as a low mileage rebate, discounts on parking permits to those who make a switch to electric vehicles within a certain time period and cheaper visitor passes for the elderly have been suggested at scrutiny panels, but not taken up.

In response to points raised the Director of Environment and Regeneration replied with further information;

- Air pollution is top of the agenda nationally and across London and evidence suggests 4000 deaths a year are caused by toxic air/air pollution.
- There have been numerous opportunities for engagement over the year including scrutiny and consultations and adjustments have been made to the policy following recommendations to Cabinet.
- Policy is not geographically focused, it is vehicle focused. High polluting vehicles are owned across the borough.

Councillor Nick McLean raised a motion, seconded by Councillor Ed Gretton, which recommended to Cabinet “The Overview & Scrutiny Commission has heard the feedback of the call-in and is minded to refer back to Cabinet that the emissions-based-parking tax be cancelled”. There were three votes in favour and six against. Motion fell.

Councillor Nick McLean raised a second motion that recommended to Cabinet “The Overview & Scrutiny Commission refers back to the Cabinet that emissions-based-parking charges be postponed until at least May 2022 pending amendments to the policy to mitigate the negative impacts on the elderly, families and poorer residents. This was seconded by Councillor Ed Gretton. There were three votes in favour and six against. Motion fell.

Councillor Paul Kohler raised a motion to refer back to Cabinet to “consider the implementation of a low mileage/low use discount or rebate, on the basis that it is the driving of vehicles that reduces air quality and increases carbon emissions. This would encourage less driving, and would particularly mitigate the impact of higher parking costs for those on low/fixed incomes who can’t afford to switch to newer and more environmentally friendly vehicles”. This was seconded by Councillor Nick McLean. There were three votes in favour and six against. Motion fell.

The Head of Parking Services confirmed work is being undertaken on making the application process for a permit easier.

There was no agreement to refer the matter back to Cabinet for reconsideration.

8 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 8)

The work programme was agreed.

Merton Overview and Scrutiny Pack

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12	
TNO	TNO	927,141	745,486	-19.6%	72,703	86,017	7.8%	11.5%	●
	Total	927,141	745,486	-19.6%	72,703	86,017	7.8%	11.5%	●
Burglary	Total	79,774	56,385	-29.3%	3,706	3,468	4.6%	6.2%	●
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	2,895	2,136	-26.2%	331	285	11.4%	13.3%	●
	Robbery of Personal P..	37,661	21,602	-42.6%	1,966	1,969	5.2%	9.1%	●
	Total	40,556	23,738	-41.5%	2,297	2,254	5.7%	9.5%	●
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	12,739	7,135	-44.0%	714	699	5.6%	9.8%	●
Theft Person - Mobile Phone	Total	30,496	17,065	-44.0%	240	224	0.8%	1.3%	●
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	23,583	23,498	-0.4%	4,074	4,304	17.3%	18.3%	●
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	53,551	42,555	-20.5%	6,247	6,795	11.7%	16.0%	●
	Total	77,134	66,053	-14.4%	10,321	11,099	13.4%	16.8%	●
Domestic Abuse	Total	89,760	93,948	4.7%	11,855	13,525	13.2%	14.4%	●
Sexual Offences	Rape	7,976	7,175	-10.0%	267	334	3.6%	4.7%	●
	Other Sexual Offences	12,331	10,883	-11.7%	1,076	1,347	8.7%	12.4%	●
	Total	20,307	18,058	-11.1%	1,363	1,681	6.7%	9.3%	●
Total Gun Crime	Total	1,982	1,549	-21.8%	377	377	19.0%	24.3%	●
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	279	276	-1.1%	55	74	19.7%	26.8%	●
Total Knife Crime	Total	15,788	10,343	-34.5%	1,893	1,830	12.0%	17.7%	●
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	1,608	1,119	-30.4%	-	-	-	-	●
Covid-19 Flooded	Total	54	4,577	8375.9%	-	-	-	-	●
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	131,080	72,800	-44.5%	1,456	1,337	1.1%	1.8%	●
	Bicycle Theft	19,918	23,713	19.1%	209	309	1.0%	1.3%	●
	Shoplifting	46,888	31,545	-32.7%	4,705	3,681	10.0%	11.7%	●
	Theft from Person	55,309	25,509	-53.9%	602	402	1.1%	1.6%	●
	Total	253,195	153,567	-39.3%	6,972	5,729	2.8%	3.7%	●

I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	2/2,462	508,879	86.8%
ASB Repeat Callers	7,342	13,813	88.1%
I Calls In Target	83.7%	85.9%	
S Calls In Target	71.9%	72.8%	

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12
TNO	INO	67,644	59,106	-12.6%	5,270	6,024	7.8%	10.2%
	Total	67,644	59,106	-12.6%	5,270	6,024	7.8%	10.2%
Burglary	Total	6,816	5,004	-26.6%	403	307	5.9%	6.1%
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	204	172	-15.7%	40	24	19.6%	14.0%
	Robbery of Personal P..	1,878	1,358	-27.7%	129	108	6.9%	8.0%
	Total	2,082	1,530	-26.5%	169	132	8.1%	8.6%
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	502	384	-23.5%	65	41	12.9%	10.7%
Theft Personal - Mobile Phone	Total	742	605	-18.5%	2	5	0.3%	0.8%
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	1,826	1,923	5.3%	321	339	17.6%	17.6%
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	3,992	3,252	-18.5%	463	469	11.6%	14.4%
	Total	5,818	5,175	-11.1%	784	808	13.5%	15.6%
Domestic Abuse	Total	6,999	7,438	6.3%	947	1,091	13.5%	14.7%
Sexual Offences	Rape	623	566	-9.1%	14	31	2.2%	5.5%
	Other Sexual Offences	1,092	986	-9.7%	119	134	10.9%	13.6%
	Total	1,715	1,552	-9.5%	133	165	7.8%	10.6%
Total Gun Crime	Total	110	84	-23.6%	27	25	24.5%	29.8%
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	18	6	-66.7%	6	3	33.3%	50.0%
Total Knife Crime	Total	920	678	-26.3%	122	123	13.3%	18.1%
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	95	85	-10.5%	-	-	-	-
Covid-19 Flaaged	Total	3	372	12300.0%	-	-	-	-
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	7,911	5,313	-32.8%	113	99	1.4%	1.9%
	Bicycle Theft	2,493	2,891	16.0%	30	30	1.2%	1.0%
	Shoplifting	3,662	2,475	-32.4%	408	317	11.1%	12.8%
	Theft from Person	1,788	1,093	-38.9%	20	16	1.1%	1.5%
	Total	15,854	11,772	-25.7%	571	462	3.6%	3.9%

I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	19,049	41,741	119.1%
ASB Repeat Callers	411	934	127.3%
I Calls In Target	80.7%	84.2%	
S Calls In Target	64.2%	68.8%	

Offences & SDs

Crime Category	Sub Category	Offences Previous R12	Offences Current R12	Offences % Change	SDs Previous R12	SDs Current R12	SD Rate - Previous R12	SD Rate - Current R12
TNO	TNO	14,647	12,907	-11.9%	1,339	1,402	9.1%	10.9%
	Total	14,647	12,907	-11.9%	1,339	1,402	9.1%	10.9%
Burglary	Total	1,528	836	-45.3%	125	69	8.2%	8.3%
Robbery	Robbery of Business P..	55	43	-21.8%	2	10	3.6%	23.3%
	Robbery of Personal P..	371	348	-6.2%	28	25	7.5%	7.2%
	Total	426	391	-8.2%	30	35	7.0%	9.0%
Robbery - Mobile Phone	Total	91	97	6.6%	17	10	18.7%	10.3%
Theft Person - Mobile Phone	Total	125	83	-33.6%	1	-	0.8%	-
VWI	VWI - Domestic Abuse	489	518	5.9%	111	72	22.7%	13.9%
	VWI - Non Domestic A..	863	761	-11.8%	120	104	13.9%	13.7%
	Total	1,352	1,279	-5.4%	231	176	17.1%	13.8%
Domestic Abuse	Total	1,852	1,963	6.0%	277	296	15.0%	15.1%
Sexual Offences	Rape	123	99	-19.5%	2	8	1.6%	8.1%
	Other Sexual Offences	211	214	1.4%	49	36	23.2%	16.8%
	Total	334	313	-6.3%	51	44	15.3%	14.1%
Total Gun Crime	Total	32	20	-37.5%	10	5	31.3%	25.0%
Lethal-barrelled Gun Discharges	Total	7	4	-42.9%	6	2	85.7%	50.0%
Total Knife Crime	Total	219	182	-16.9%	35	31	16.0%	17.0%
Knife Injury Victims (U25 Non DA)	Total	29	23	-20.7%	-	-	-	-
Covid-19 Flaqqed	Total	0	89	-	-	-	-	-
Theft	Other Theft & Handling	1,684	1,083	-35.7%	33	18	2.0%	1.7%
	Bicycle Theft	317	340	7.3%	4	4	1.3%	1.2%
	Shoplifting	775	577	-25.5%	99	89	12.8%	15.4%
	Theft from Person	311	167	-46.3%	2	1	0.6%	0.6%
	Total	3,087	2,167	-29.8%	138	112	4.5%	5.2%

I & S Calls and ASB

	Previous R12	Current R12	Change %
ASB Calls	4,204	8,481	101.7%
ASB Repeat Callers	89	186	109.0%
I Calls In Target	79.3%	83.2%	
S Calls In Target	60.1%	63.6%	

Monthly I Calls and I Calls In Target

Reporting Period

- Current 12 Months
- Previous 12 Months

Comparison Period

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly

BCU or Borough?

Borough ⌵

BCU \ Borough

Merton ⌵

Urgency

- I
- S

[Click here for 52-weeks \ FYTD view](#)



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	01 Mar 2020	01 Apr 2020	01 May 2020	01 Jun 2020	01 Jul 2020	01 Aug 2020	01 Sep 2020	01 Oct 2020	01 Nov 2020	01 Dec 2020	01 Jan 2021	01 Feb 2021	Total
Total Calls	588	563	547	571	690	641	585	554	631	559	538	509	6,976
Total Calls Previous Year	512	452	516	505	596	645	529	519	500	479	470	409	6,132
Calls In Target Current Year	490	487	442	460	559	504	443	422	478	432	432	381	5,530
Calls In Target Previous Year	426	405	446	422	493	502	414	423	424	397	390	360	5,102
% Calls In Target Previous Year	83.3%	86.5%	80.8%	80.6%	81.0%	78.6%	75.7%	76.2%	75.8%	77.3%	80.3%	74.9%	79.3%
% Calls In Target Current Year	83.2%	89.6%	86.4%	83.6%	82.7%	77.8%	78.3%	81.5%	84.8%	82.9%	83.0%	88.0%	83.2%
% Difference	-0.1%	3.1%	5.6%	3.0%	1.7%	-0.8%	2.5%	5.3%	9.0%	5.6%	2.7%	13.2%	3.9%

Point of merge



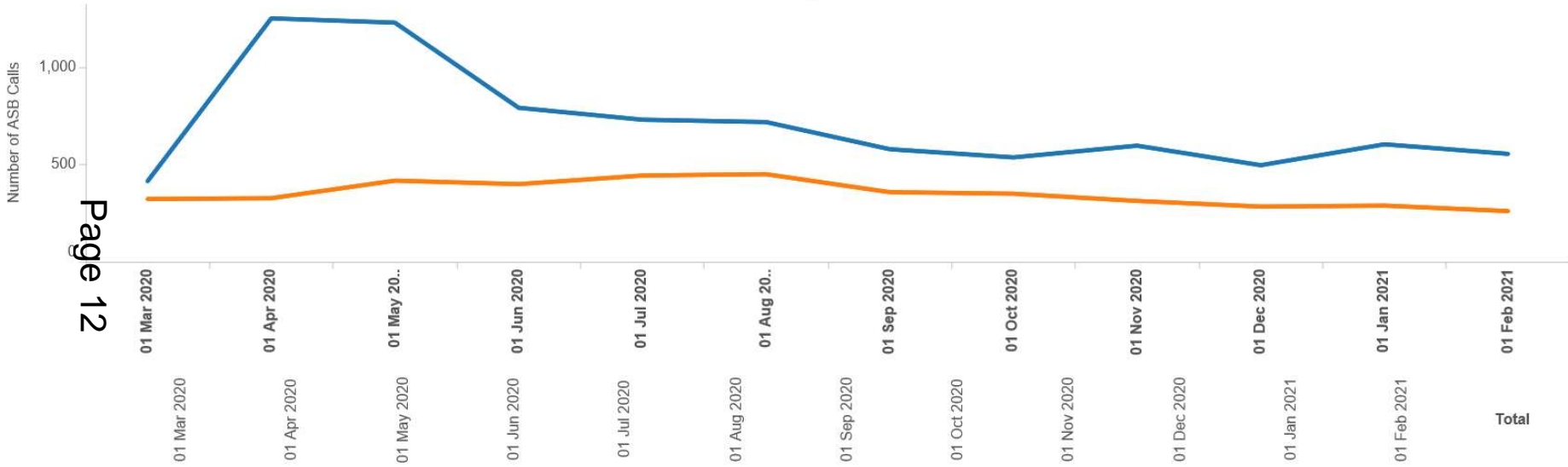
Monthly ASB Calls

Reporting Period
 Current 12 Months
 Previous 12 Months

Comparison Period
 Daily
 Weekly
 Monthly

BCU or Borough?
 Borough

BCU \ Borough
 Merton



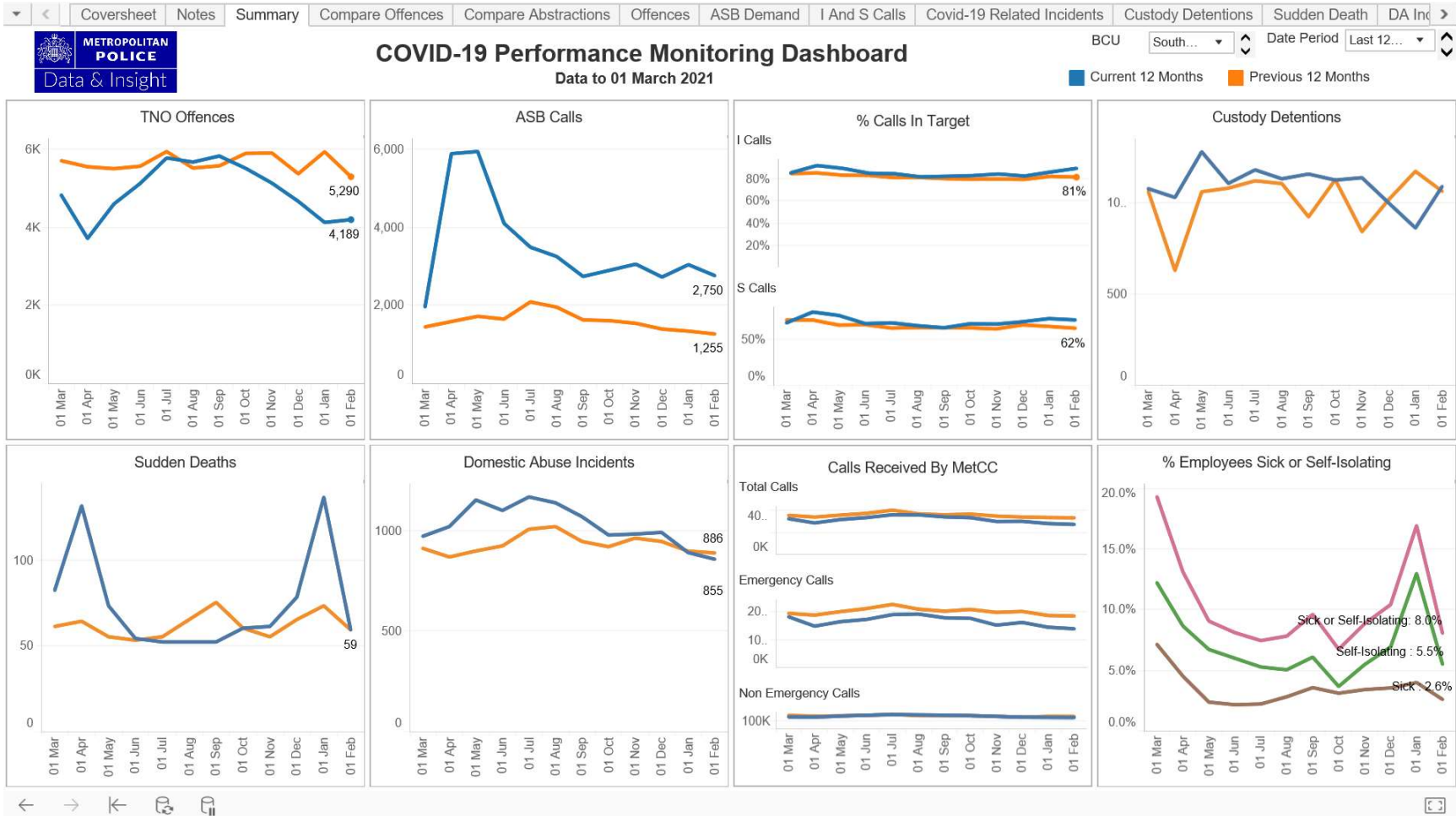
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	01 Mar 2020	01 Apr 2020	01 May 2020	01 Jun 2020	01 Jul 2020	01 Aug 2020	01 Sep 2020	01 Oct 2020	01 Nov 2020	01 Dec 2020	01 Jan 2021	01 Feb 2021	Total
ASB Calls Previous Year	322	326	416	398	442	449	357	349	312	283	288	260	4,202
ASB Calls Current Year	413	1,247	1,225	789	728	716	577	535	595	495	602	553	8,475
Difference	91	921	809	391	286	267	220	186	283	212	314	293	4,273
% Difference	28.3%	282.5%	194.5%	98.2%	64.7%	59.5%	61.6%	53.3%	90.7%	74.9%	109.0%	112.7%	101.7%

[Click here for 52-weeks \ FYTD view](#)

South West COVID Summary – 12 months

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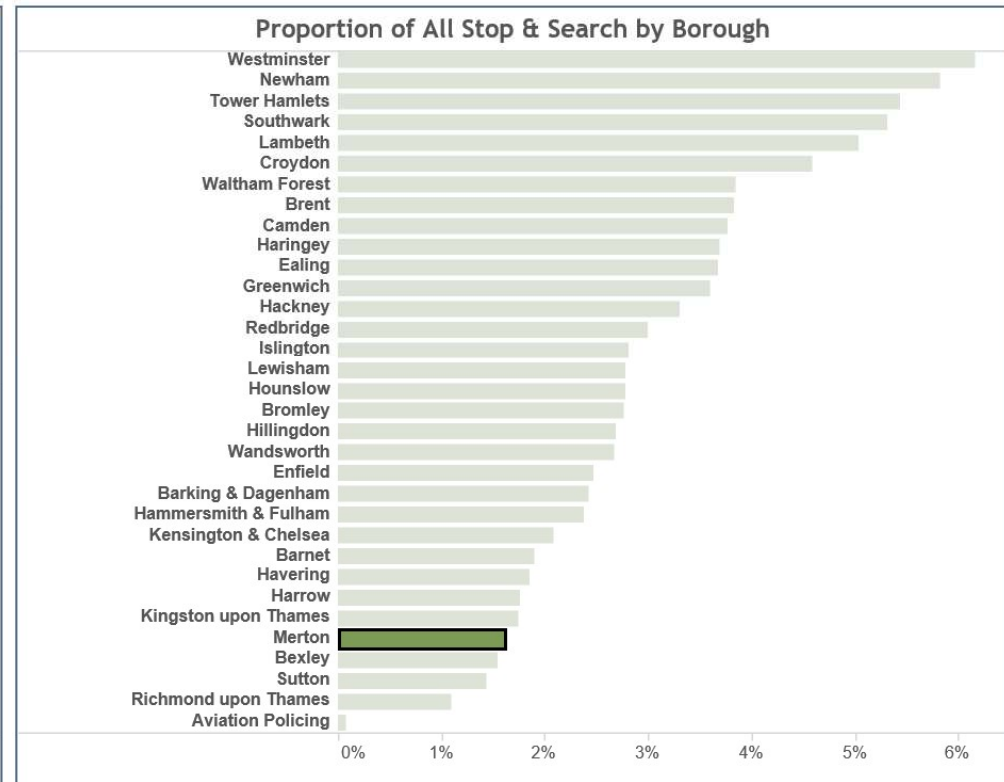
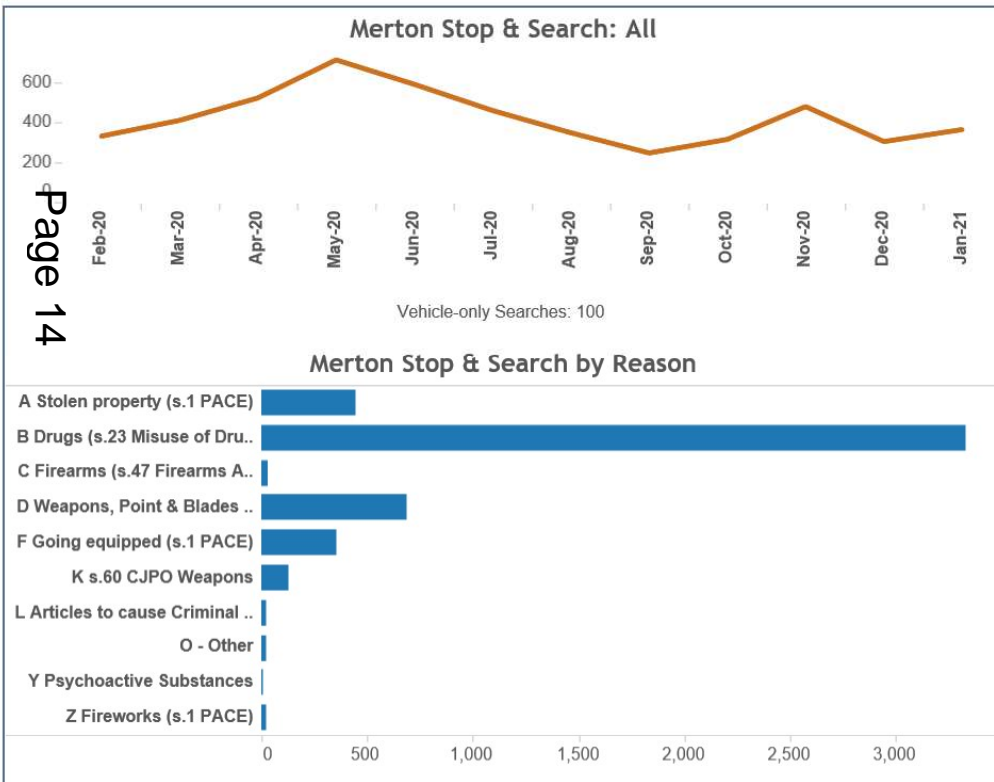
Merton Search Volume – Jan 2020-Jan 2021

Jan 2020 Jan 2021

Search Volumes for Reporting Period: February 2020 to end January 2021

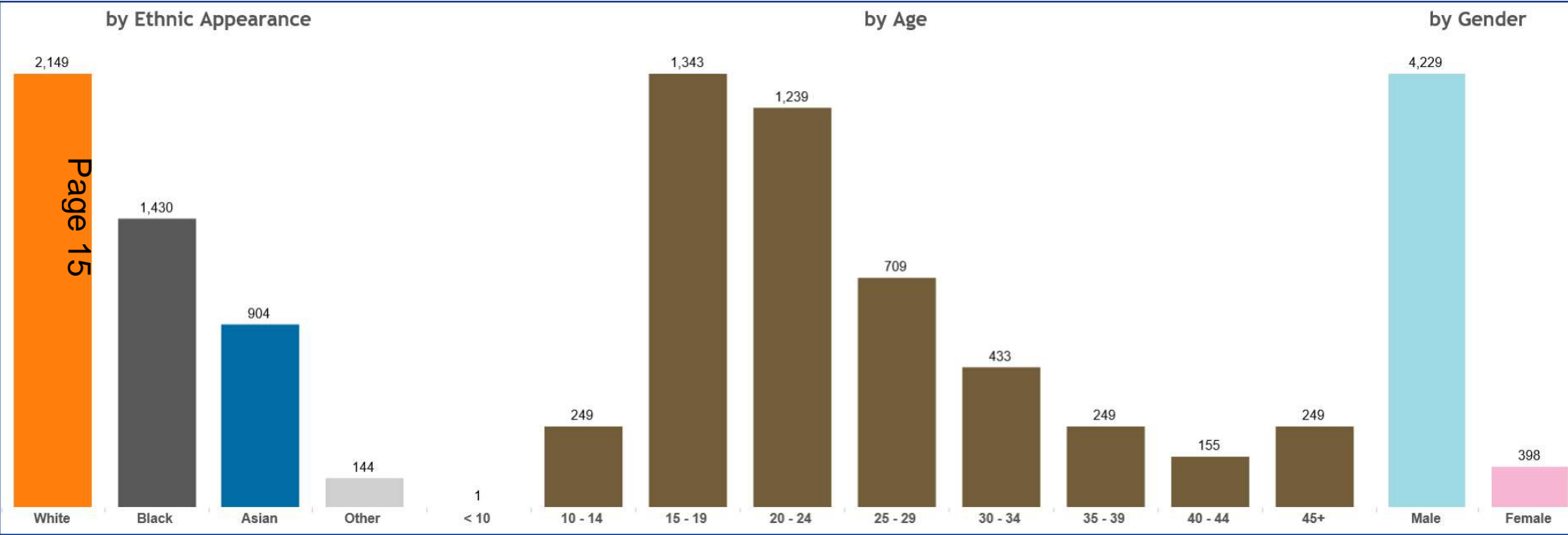
BCU or Borough

Borough ⬇



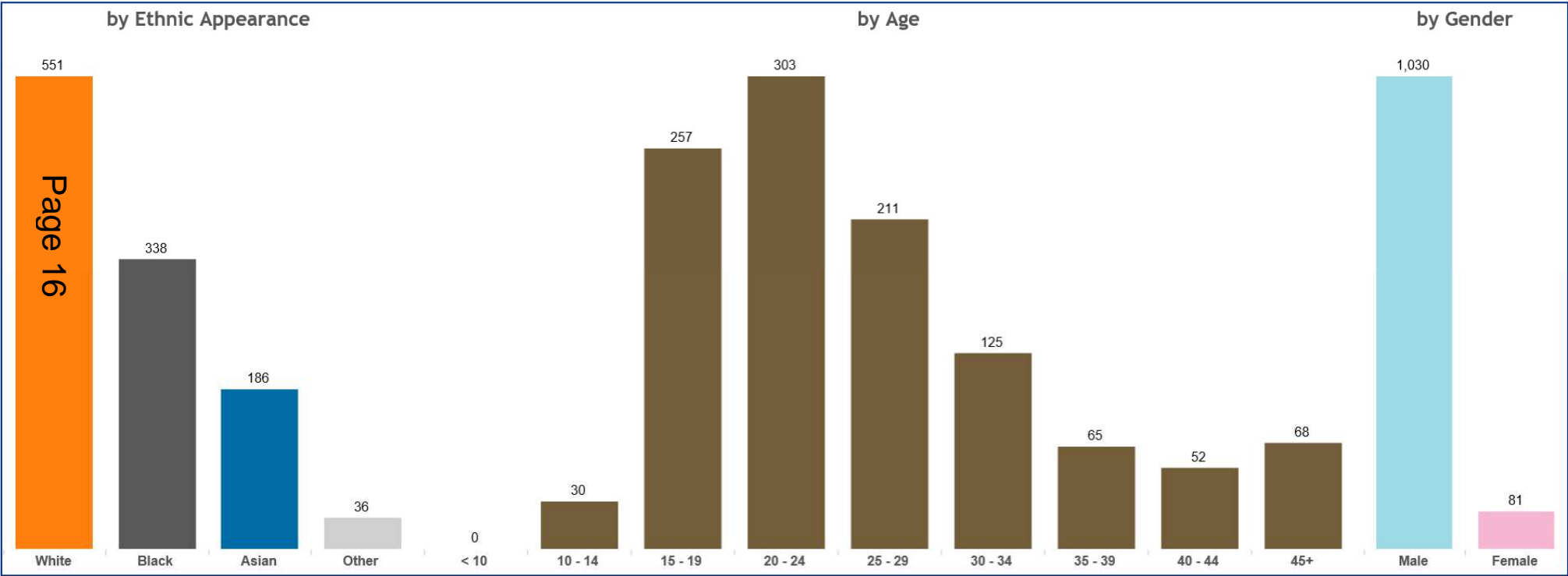
Merton Search Volume by demographic

Search Volumes for the 12 Months: March 2020 to end January 2021



Merton Positive Outcome by demographic

Search Volumes for the 12 Months: March 2020 to end January 2021



Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 17 March 2021

Subject: Planning the Commission's 2021/22 work programme

Lead officer: Rosie Mckeever, Scrutiny Officer

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

Contact officer: Rosie Mckeever; Rosie.Mckeever@merton.gov.uk; 020 8545 4035

Recommendations:

- A. That the Commission reviews its 2020/21 work programme (set out in the appendix), identifying what worked well, what worked less well and what the Commission would like to do differently next year;
- B. That the Commission suggests items for inclusion in the 2021/22 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics;
- C. That the Commission re-establishes the financial monitoring task group and makes recommendations regarding its work programme;
- D. That the Commission advises on agenda items for its meeting on 14 July 2021.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

2 DETAILS

The scrutiny officers are currently gathering suggestions for issues to scrutinise, either as Commission agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions are being sought from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the Police, NHS and Merton Voluntary Service Council. The council's departmental management teams have been consulted in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the Commission could contribute to the policymaking process.

The Commission is therefore invited to suggest items for inclusion in the 2019/20 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics.

All the suggestions received will be discussed at the Commission's topic workshop in June.

A note of the workshop discussion and draft work programme will be reported to the first meeting of the Commission in the new municipal year. The Commission will be requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.

In previous years the Commission has established a financial monitoring task group to lead on the scrutiny of financial monitoring information on behalf of the Commission, with the following terms of reference:

The task group has met four times a year to enable the financial monitoring information to be examined on a quarterly basis. The meetings are held in private.

If the Commission agrees to re-establish the task group for 2021/22, Members can be appointed at its meeting on 14 July 2021.

The Commission is asked to advise on any other items that it would be helpful to include on the agenda for its 14 July meeting.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission can select topics for scrutiny review and for other scrutiny work as it sees fit, taking into account views and suggestions from officers, partner organisations and the public

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

Scrutiny topic suggestions are being sought from members of the public, councillors, council officers and partner organisations including the police, NHS and Merton Voluntary Service Council.

5 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

None for the purposes of this report.

6 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

There are none specific to this report.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engaging with local partners in scrutiny reviews. Furthermore, the outcomes of reviews are intended to benefit all sections of the local community.

8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

The Police and Justice Act 2006 requires every Council to have a scrutiny committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken by the Council and the other responsible authorities in the exercise of their crime and disorder functions. The other responsible authorities are the police, the police authority (Metropolitan Police Authority), the fire and rescue authority and the NHS (Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and local NHS Trusts).

In Merton the responsible committee is the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

Under the 2006 Act, the responsible committee is required to “meet to review or scrutinise decisions made, or action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions, no less than once every twelve months”. In doing so, it may

require the attendance of officers from the Council, the police and co-operating authorities.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None relating to this report

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

- Appendix 1 – 2020/21 work programme

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2020/21



This table sets out the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's Work Programme for 2020/21 that was agreed by the Commission at its meeting on 24 June 2020.

This slimmed down work programme has been designed so that it can be regularly reviewed and adjusted during the pandemic. It will be considered at every meeting of the Commission to enable it to respond to issues of concern or to request new pre-decision items ahead of their consideration by Cabinet/Council.

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

The last page provides information on items on the Council's Forward Plan that relate to the portfolio of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission so that these can be added to the work programme should the Commission wish to.

Scrutiny Support

For further information on the work programme of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel please contact: -
Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer
Tel: 020 8545 4035; Email: rosie.mckeever@merton.gov.uk

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

Meeting date: 15 July 2020 (**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 7 July 2020)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Merton's Public Space Protection Order	Report	Kiran Vagarwal, Community Safety Manager	Pre-decision scrutiny prior to consideration by Cabinet
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Identify questions for the BCU Commander	Discussion	Cllr Peter Southgate, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Commission Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	Plan lines of questioning for meeting on 9 September
Performance management	Scrutiny improvement plan	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Commission Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	Discuss and approve action plan for improvement of scrutiny function
Performance management	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Commission Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To approve and forward to Council

Meeting date: 9 September 2020 (~~Deadline for papers: 12pm, 28 August 2020~~)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton	Report and in-depth discussion	BCU Commander	To hold BCU Commander to account on crime and disorder
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Safer Merton Update	Report	Kiran Vagarwal, Community Safety Manager	Progress report to focus on community resilience and domestic violence
Holding the executive to account	Covid 19 Update – to include information on communications	Report or verbal update	Matt Burrows, Interim Head of Customer Experience & Communications	To discuss and comment on the council’s communication on Covid 19 to residents, businesses and voluntary sector
Holding the executive to account	Covid 19 Transport Plan	Report	Cllr Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport Chris Lee, Director of Environment and Regeneration	To scrutinise the transport plan once the outcome of the TfL funding bid is known

Meeting date: 11 November 2020 (**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 2 November 2020)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Voluntary sector capacity	Report and discussion Invite CE of MVSC to speak at meeting	John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships	To provide information on the financial impact of the pandemic on voluntary sector organisations
Holding the executive to account	Covid 19 update – to include information on impact on budget	Report	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To understand impact of pandemic and to set context for budget scrutiny
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan 2021/25 -information pertaining to round one of budget scrutiny	Report	Cllr Mark Allison Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To send comments to Cabinet budget meeting 7 December
Scrutiny Review	Recommendation from the Financial Monitoring Task Group	Report	Cllr Stephen Crowe, Chair of FMTG	

Meeting date: 20 January 2021 (**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 12 January 2021)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan Update 2021/25	Report – common pack for Panels and Commission	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
Budget scrutiny	Scrutiny of the Business Plan 2021-2025: comments and recommendations from the overview and scrutiny panels	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Scrutiny Officer lead tbc	To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
Holding the executive to account	Covid 19 update – only take this if there is urgent business	Verbal	Ged Curran	
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Identify questions for the Borough Commander	Discussion	Cllr Peter Southgate	Plan line of questioning for meeting on 17 March
Setting the work programme	Work programme 2020/21	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	To agree the work programme.

***Additional* Meeting date:** 17 February 2021 (**~~Deadline for papers:~~** 12pm, 9 February 2021)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan Update 2021/25	Report	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To report to Cabinet on any additional savings
Holding the executive to account	Covid 19 update	Verbal	Ged Curran	
Call in	Emissions Based Charging	Report	Cathryn James, Ben Stephens	
Setting the work programme	Work programme 2020/21	Written report	Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer	To agree the work programme.

Meeting date: 17 March 2021 (**Deadline for papers: 12pm, 8 March 2021**)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton	Report and in-depth discussion	BCU Commander	To hold BCU Commander to account on crime and disorder
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Safer Merton Update	Report	Kiran Vagarwal, Community Safety Manager	Progress report to focus on ASB and serious violence
Holding the executive to account	Customer contact strategy <u>DEFERRED</u> <i>This work is part of the larger recovery and modernisation programme and will therefore need to be considered later in the year.</i>	Report	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To include information on the customer contact strategy and customer experience of accessing services through the council's website.
Performance management	Planning the Commission's 2021/22 work programme	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Scrutiny Officer	To suggest topics for review and agree priorities for 2021/22. To agree agenda for first meeting of OSC on 14 July 2021.

Meeting date: 28 April 2021 (**Deadline for papers:** 12pm, 20 April 2021) (CANCELLED)

Scrutiny category	Item/issue	How	Lead member and/or lead officer	Intended outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Universal Credit	Report Invite the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Trussell Trust to speak at the meeting.	David Keppler, Head of Revenues and Benefits	To achieve a deeper understanding of the impact of Universal Credit on Merton residents.
Holding the executive to account	Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-20	Report	Evereth Willis, Equality and Community Cohesion Officer	To comment on progress made with action plan. Pre-decision scrutiny of the next plan, using learning from scrutinising Covid 19 and other items
Holding the executive to account	Demographic profile of councillors and senior council managers	Report	Liz Hammond, Interim Head of HR	Update to monitor changes since report last received in January 2020
Performance management	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To approve and forward to Council
Performance management	Member Survey Results (if available)	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Scrutiny Officer lead tbc	To discuss results and agree action plan
Performance management	Planning the Commission's 2021/22 work programme	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Scrutiny Officer lead tbc	To review 2020/21 and agree priorities for 2021/22