

Merton Council

Overview and Scrutiny Commission Agenda

Membership

Councillors:

Peter Southgate (Chair)
Peter McCabe (Vice-Chair)
John Dehaney
Sally Kenny
Paul Kohler
Owen Pritchard
Nick McLean
Edward Gretton
Joan Henry
Natasha Irons
Mansoor Ahmad (Co-opted member, voting)
Emma Lemon (Co-opted member, voting)
Colin Powell (Co-opted member, voting)

Date: Wednesday 24 June 2020

Time: 7.15 pm

Venue: This meeting will be a virtual meeting and therefore will not take place in a physical location, in accordance with s78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

This is a public meeting and can be viewed by following this link
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MertonCouncil>.

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For more information about the agenda please contact scrutiny@merton.gov.uk or telephone [020 8545 3864](tel:02085453864).

All Press contacts: communications@merton.gov.uk, 020 8545 3181

Overview and Scrutiny Commission Agenda

24 June 2020

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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. If members consider they should not participate because of a non-pecuniary interest which may give rise to a perception of bias, they should declare this, withdraw and not participate in consideration of the item. For further advice please speak with the Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership.

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Agenda Item 3

All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the committee/panel. To find out the date of the next meeting please check the calendar of events at your local library or online at www.merton.gov.uk/committee.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

20 MAY 2020

(7.15 pm - 9.20 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Southgate (in the Chair), Peter McCabe, John Dehaney, Sally Kenny, Paul Kohler, Owen Pritchard, Nick McLean, Edward Gretton, Joan Henry and Natasha Irons

Co-opted Member Mansoor Ahmad

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Stephen Alambritis (Leader of the Council)
Councillors Thomas Barlow, David Dean, Anthony Fairclough , Jenifer Gould, Daniel Holden, Oonagh Moulton and Hayley Ormrod

Ged Curran (Chief Executive), Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Stella Akintan (Democratic Services Officer) and Julia Regan (Head of Democracy Services)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from co-opted members Emma Lemon and Colin Powell.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, subject to the deletion of the first sentence of the second paragraph of the reference to Cabinet – “There was no seconder for this proposal.” **ACTION:** Head of Democracy Services.

4 MERTON COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC (Agenda Item 4)

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis, and the Chief Executive, Ged Curran, expressed sadness at the number of people that had died during the pandemic and gave their deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who had passed. They also paid tribute to the key workers, council staff, voluntary organisations, police, members of the public and many others who have provided assistance to those in need.

Councillor Alambritis provided an overview of the impact of the pandemic in Merton and the council's response to date:

- 173 deaths, of which 131 died in hospital, 21 in care homes and 21 in other locations.
- the council has incurred considerable additional costs and loss of income that will leave a funding gap of between £25m and £35m, some of which will be met by the government.
- the council has 20 days supply of PPE, has given 20,000 items to care providers that the council works with and has worked with London Councils on Londonwide procurement of stocks
- the council has provided support to people who are shielded. Note – the council does not have a formal role in relation to testing and tracking.
- The council has a good working relationship with local hospitals, care homes and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The Leader has received a letter of thanks from the Chair of the CCG.
- Local schools have remained open for children who need them and teachers have been working in school and at home on virtual learning. The council will respect the decisions of headteachers and governing bodies on what is best in relation to opening schools to a greater number of pupils.
- 25 homeless people have been housed during the pandemic and the council is working to find funding to provide longer term housing so that they will hopefully not return to the streets.
- The council has drawn up an emergency transport strategy to increase the provision of safe walking and cycling routes. The strategy is currently out for consultation.
- Domestic violence figures have been relatively low in Merton.
- Work has commenced to support local BAME communities with the disproportionate impact that Covid 19 has had on them.
- Local businesses have been adversely impacted and the council has moved quickly to distribute government funding on to businesses (Merton was the third fastest in London).
- Parks and open spaces have remained open in Merton.

Ged Curran drew on his perspective as the co-ordinator of the response in South West London and their representative on the London-wide local government response team, to say that Merton has responded well to the challenges it has faced. The council has implemented a number of entirely new services at short notice to protect over 6,500 people on the shielding register.

Ged Curran said that there were a number of challenges ahead, some of which would be very severe. A second wave of the virus is inevitable at some stage. Constraints on the economy will be relatively long lasting and a significant recession is likely. London may be particularly badly affected because of its large hospitality sector and its reliance on public transport. The virus has underlined and exemplified existing inequalities in relation to BAME communities and those on low income, particularly in London.

Ged Curran said that the virus and its aftermath is likely to have big impact on the economy and on how and where people work and live. The climate change strategy will have an important part to play in shaping the recovery but resourcing this will be a challenge. The funding crisis facing Transport for London (TfL) will also impact on

the council as TfL fund transport development and infrastructure in the borough (such as repairing and maintaining roads).

Members of the Commission thanked the Leader and Chief Executive for the regular information that they had provided and for steering the council through these unprecedented times. Members asked detailed questions about a number of issues:

Deaths in Merton

In response to a request for more detailed data on differences between the east and west of the borough on overall deaths and on deaths in care homes, Ged Curran said that audited figures broken down by location had not yet been received but he could confirm that around 60% of Covid deaths had been in the east of the borough. A breakdown of care home data by location has not been provided.

In response to a question about the impact on people with diabetes, Ged Curran said that this data is not available at a local level but that national figures have established that diabetes makes people more likely to be seriously affected by the virus.

In response to a question about the differences between government data and Merton data on new cases in the past 4 weeks, Ged Curran said that there were slightly different datasets and definitions. He asked the member to email him the details so that he could check and respond.

Ward allocation scheme

A question was asked about how much is currently left unspent in the ward allocation scheme and whether that money could be used for cycling and pedestrian highway improvements in the wake of the pandemic. Ged Curran said that £290k remained unspent and that any re-allocation would need the consent of the relevant ward councillors.

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

In response to a question about the proposed reconfiguration of hospital services, Councillor Alambritis said that St Helier Hospital provided services to those most in need and those who need a hospital nearby. He said that all options remain on the table. His preference is for the hospital to remain in its current location with its current range of services.

Crime and disorder

A member asked whether the comparatively low domestic violence figures were due to under-reporting. Ged Curran said that there had been an increase in calls to the helpline and that it was not clear why these had not translated into an increase in cases. The council had made provision for an increase in cases and has widely publicised the service. He said that there may be an increase once the lockdown has eased.

In response to a question about crime and disorder, Ged Curran said the council had been working with police and with its contractor, Kingdom, to ensure an appropriate level of enforcement during the lockdown and afterwards.

Transport infrastructure

In answer to a question about Merton's approach to responding to funding opportunities, Councillor Alambritis said that the council considered officer time and capacity when considering which to apply for. He undertook to review the specifics of the cycling infrastructure fund and reflect on the council's approach..

Care homes in Merton

A member asked whether care homes had been alerted to the pandemic sufficiently early to be able to take precautions and how the council could ensure they would be protected in future. Ged Curran said that because Merton has a relatively small number (21) of care homes in the borough and already had good working relationships with them, it had been able to work with them in January and February to identify and mitigate risks. The number of care home places had been reduced and the council had assisted with this through payments and provision of PPE. Merton has experienced a comparatively small number of deaths as a result. He added that there was national recognition of the need to review the model for care home provision and funding post Covid 19.

The voluntary sector

A member asked what steps were being taken to protect the voluntary sector in Merton. Councillor Alambritis said that he had been working at both a local, sub-regional and Londonwide level to identify what could be done to assist and safeguard the voluntary sector through the pandemic and afterwards. Ged Curran said that the strength of social capital in Merton had been demonstrated through the active response of the voluntary sector to the crisis and the emergence of lots of new groups to provide assistance to local people.

Support for small businesses

In response to question about the use of the discretionary payments from government to small businesses and charities that are exempt from business rates and therefore haven't already received financial support, Councillor Alambritis said that the criteria had largely been set by the government. There is some local discretion and so the council has established a panel, including representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and Merton Voluntary Services Council, to advise on the allocation of the funding. The total sum involved is £1.3m.

Recovery

In response to a question, Councillor Alambritis said that the first steps would be to assess the damage and to work out how to help those who had been most adversely affected. The council would then look at how it should operate in the new environment, bearing in mind that resources would be limited, looking for better and leaner ways of operating. Ged Curran said that this would be done jointly with partner organisations to identify ways of maximising the application of scarce resources (for example working with health partners to invest in primary care and promote social prescribing).

Ged Curran said that the impact of the difficulties facing businesses in central London may encourage some small businesses to relocate to outer London areas such as Wimbledon and these may also become attractive locations for families.

In response to a further question, Councillor Alambritis said that the council would review the local economic strategy and the council's own medium term financial strategy.

In conclusion, the Commission RESOLVED to record its gratitude to the staff of the council and the voluntary sector for the dedication, commitment and ethos of service to the community that they have demonstrated during this exceptionally difficult period.

5 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC (Agenda Item 5)

The Chair invited the Chief Executive, Ged Curran, to set out ways in which scrutiny could add value without impeding the work to respond to and recover from the pandemic. Ged Curran welcomed the understanding that members had displayed at the start of the pandemic and said that he was pleased that scrutiny was now able to resume. He asked for continued acceptance for the time being that requests for written reports and officer attendance would need to be carefully managed. He said that scrutiny would have a valuable role in looking to the future, whilst ensuring that it does not impinge on the council's response to the pandemic.

The Chair introduced the proposal set out in the report for an interim model of scrutiny carried out solely by the Commission for the next 2-3 months. Discussion revealed a general consensus that shorter reports and more question and answer sessions with Cabinet Members and senior managers would be helpful. However, there were opposing views as to whether the Commission-only model, kept under review at each meeting, was most appropriate for the time being or whether the scrutiny panels should also resume meeting in order to scrutinise a wider range of issues and engage a larger number of members.

A number of members suggested that the pandemic provided an opportunity to rethink how scrutiny operates and to engage Cabinet members in dialogue in order to work together and achieve the councils goals.

It was also suggested that the work of the current task groups had been overtaken by events and should therefore be wound up rather than drawing further on officer resources at this time.

Members agreed that the suggested priority areas for scrutiny set out in paragraphs 2.14-2.18 were helpful and a good starting point for developing a work programme. It was suggested that the transport strategy, cycling and use of public spaces could be added to the list. A member suggested that the impact on schools and vulnerable children should be a priority for the next meeting. The Chair announced that he had received a request for pre-decision scrutiny of the Climate Strategy and Action Plan prior to consideration by Cabinet in July.

The Chair proposed that the Commission should continue to be the sole scrutiny body operating for the time being and should review this at its meeting on 24 June. The June meeting would also discuss the climate strategy and action plan, alongside a second topic. A vote was taken with 6 votes in favour and none against – the proposal was therefore agreed.

The Head of Democracy Services undertook to work with Directors and lead scrutiny members from all four political groups to bring a report to the June meeting setting out a proposal for re-starting the scrutiny panels with an indicative work programme for each.

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 24th June 2020

Wards: All

Subject: CSF Covid-19 Response

Lead officer: Rachael Wardell, Director of Children, Schools and Families

Lead member: Cllr Eleanor Stringer

Contact officer: Karl Mittelstadt, Head of Performance, Policy and Partnerships

Recommendations:

A. Members of the Commission to discuss and comment on the contents of the report.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report briefly outlines what impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on vulnerable children and their families, and the Children, Schools and Families directorate's response to these issues.
- 1.2. It also provides an update on the arrangements that have been made for wider re-opening of schools (beyond vulnerable children and children of critical workers).

2 DETAILS

Impact of Covid-19 on Children and Families

- 2.1. Although the direct impact of Covid-19 disease appears to increase with age, the indirect impact of the measures taken to combat the disease is significant for children and families, and impacts more significantly on those who are already vulnerable for other reasons.
- 2.2. The majority of children have been out of school since 23 March 2020, many without access to adequate resources to support their home-based learning. Families have lost income as a result of parents being furloughed or losing their employment altogether. More households are applying for universal credit and more children have become eligible for Free School Meals at a time when access to those meals through school has ceased and the alternative measures established to replace meals received in school have not always been reliable, despite schools' best efforts.
- 2.3. Children in already overcrowded housing have been confined for considerable periods of time in cramped spaces without good access to the outdoors for their physical and mental wellbeing. Some children who were already at risk of harm at home may have been more exposed to harm because of the 'lockdown'; others who have never previously needed support from children's social care may be in need, or at risk of harm for the first time, but because all our children are less visible to the wider

community, their situation is less likely to be referred, and where they are referred, there are fewer community resources available to their families to keep them safe at home.

- 2.4. Some children and families have suffered bereavement, in some cases multiple bereavements and there is reduced access to support for families in these circumstances.
- 2.5. Children in our BAME communities are more likely to have experienced both direct and indirect impact of Covid-19 on themselves and their families.

Changes to service delivery in Children, Schools and Families

- 2.6. From 23 March onwards all Children, Schools and Families functions moved largely to home-based working. Although face-to-face visits to families continued to take place, where the risk was such that it was essential to see children in person, the majority of interactions and 'visits' became virtual, using a range of online tools.
- 2.7. A critical operating model (<https://www.mertonscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CSC-Staff-Guidance-14-4-2020.pdf>) was implemented in children's social care, anticipating that there might be a significant reduction in staff resources and enabling a risk-based focus on those families where children were most likely to come to harm (those on child protection plans). A duty team was established to cover any visits that a family's own allocated social worker could not undertake. In fact, there has been less impact on our staff availability than we had feared, with much lower levels of sickness absence, and the critical operating model is likely to be withdrawn in the near future, with a return to normal operation, save for a continued reliance on increased remote working.
- 2.8. Settings where children and families had been able to come together for support, such as our youth centres in Pollards Hill and Phipps Bridge, Children's Centres across the borough and the Family Centre at Bond Road all ceased to offer any group work because this could not be managed in a way that was compliant with the social distancing requirements at that time. The Civic Centre closed to drop-ins.
- 2.9. Schools continued to be open to the children of critical workers and vulnerable children (those who have an education, health and care plan, those with a social worker or those the school in discussion with the local authority agrees are vulnerable). Health provision continued to be offered by our community health partners on Children's Centre sites, in special schools and elsewhere, and through virtual mechanisms.
- 2.10. Since 1 June, schools have begun to open more widely to other year groups in addition to those vulnerable children and children of critical workers who have been attending throughout this crisis.

Impact on Vulnerable Children

- 2.11. During the period Monday 23 March to Monday 8 June, numbers of vulnerable children (as defined by DfE) have changed as follows:
- 2.12. Children with an EHCP from 1999 to 2061.
- 2.13. Children with a child in need plan from 213 to 313.

- 2.14. Children on a child protection plan from 94 to 106.
- 2.15. Children looked after from 150 to 157.
- 2.16. Throughout this time, both the children of critical workers and vulnerable children have been entitled to attend school. This is both to sustain their education and to provide a measure of safeguarding assurance by making sure children are seen. All Merton schools have been open throughout this period, though some have chosen to operate through 'hub' arrangements in partnership with other nearby schools. Attendance at schools throughout this period has been reported to DfE who have sent back to LB Merton the aggregated data returns. The numbers of children who have attended school has increased steadily throughout this period, albeit with daily fluctuations and with understandable reductions during the periods which would ordinarily be school holidays (Easter, May half term).
- 2.17. In w/c 23 March up to 390 children attended Merton schools, of which the majority (194) were children of critical workers and no more than 78 were recorded as 'vulnerable'. In the week before the May half term, this number had risen to 830+ children at its height, of which 250+ were classed as vulnerable children and 550+ the children of critical workers.

Wider opening of schools

- 2.18. Since 1 June, schools have begun to open more widely to other year groups in addition to those who have been attending throughout this crisis. Children in year groups Nursery, Yr1, Yr2 and Yr6 have been permitted to attend, and encouraged to do so. We have encouraged and supported schools to develop their arrangements, having regard to government guidance and basing their plans on a good understanding of their individual context (including building capacity and staffing availability) and the preferences of their school community. Schools have therefore had a range of reopening arrangements.
- 2.19. In w/c 1 June, up to 2321 children attended Merton schools. In the week that followed, when more schools were open to more year groups, that number had risen to 2837 at its height, including nearly 600 vulnerable children. As schools and parents grow in confidence about the safety of the wider opening, we expect these numbers to continue to grow.
- 2.20. With effect from 15 June, secondary schools have been expected to make arrangements for face-to-face time for their Year 10 and Year 12 cohorts. This is not expected to be a full curriculum offer and schools are restricted to no more than 25% of these year groups in school at any one time. The secondary schools have made individual arrangements that best fit their own school community. At the time of drafting this report we have not yet received data back from DfE about secondary school attendance.
- 2.21. The government originally intended that all primary school children would return to school for about a month before the end of the summer term. However, this has proven to be practically impossible in the light of ongoing social distancing requirements. On 10 June it was announced that this was no longer the ambition. On 15 June, government issued further guidance about these revised expectations
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider->

[opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools#inviting-back-additional-pupils-where-there-is-capacity](#)). There will also be government guidance released in due course to support an increased return to school from September onwards.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. No specific implications for this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. None for this report.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. N/a for this report.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. None

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. None

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

11.1. None

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 24 June 2020

Wards: All Wards

Subject:

Lead officer: Director of Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee

Lead member: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment, Cllr Tobin Byers

Contact officer: Katie Halter, katie.halter@merton.gov.uk, 0208 545 3821

Recommendation for Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

- A. To discuss and comment on the 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan so that Cabinet can take scrutiny's views into account when considering the Strategy at its meeting on 13th July 2020.
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Draft Recommendations for Cabinet 13 July 2020:

- A. That Cabinet recommends the 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan to Council for adoption.
 - B. That Cabinet notes the significant cost to the Council and to the residents and businesses of Merton to become zero carbon, as well as the need for a national Green recovery programme to shift towards a zero carbon economy and a more sustainable future.
 - C. That Cabinet recommends to Council that it lobby for further funding and policy changes at national level to support and accelerate the delivery of the 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan.
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Draft Recommendations for Council 16 September:

- A. That Council adopts Merton's 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan (see Appendix 1).
 - B. That responsibility for overseeing the delivery of the 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan is delegated to Cabinet.
 - C. That Council notes the significant cost to the Council and to the residents and businesses of Merton to become zero carbon as well as the need for a national Green recovery programme to shift towards a zero carbon economy and a more sustainable future.
 - D. That the Council lobby for further funding and policy changes at national level to support and accelerate the delivery of the 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan.
 - E. That delegated authority is given to the Director of Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment, Councillor Tobin Byers, to make minor amendments before publication.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Climate Strategy and Action Plan is the proposed formal response to the net-zero greenhouse gas emissions targets set by full Council in July 2019.
- 1.2. The report sets out a complete framework of actions and a strategic approach which, if met, will enable Merton to become carbon neutral by 2050, and the Council's buildings and services to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.3. The Council has continued to work on this alongside Covid 19 work, since the climate emergency is one which will still need to be addressed with the same urgency as we recover from the pandemic.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Merton was responsible for producing up to 0.7 million tonnes of carbon emissions in 2017. These emissions are mainly caused by the use of gas and electricity in our buildings, and from petrol and diesel vehicles on Merton's roads. Although not possible to accurately quantify, it is thought that Merton also indirectly influences carbon emissions from products and services consumed by Merton's inhabitants that are greater than the sum of direct emissions. The Council's buildings, transport and services are responsible for around 2% of Merton's greenhouse gas emissions [1].
- 2.2. The Council's July 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration [2] was a cross party motion that received unanimous support. It recognised the irrefutable evidence of the damaging impacts of climate change across the globe if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced. The declaration committed to:
"....work towards ensuring that the borough is carbon neutral by 2050, in line with the Mayor and the Government's targets. Achieving this will require significant investment and policy initiatives from the Government, and Council hopes it would be achieved earlier than 2050;
.....work towards ensuring that the Council is carbon neutral by 2030, recognising the leadership role it has in the borough;"
- 2.3. The declaration led to the formation of the Climate Emergency Working Group. Chaired by Cllr Tobin Byers, the group was made up of 16 volunteer residents, business and community representatives from a range of different sectors. They provided valuable input into every aspect of the plan; by bringing new expertise to the table, reflecting the views of a wide range of stakeholders, and providing oversight and challenge to the process.
- 2.4. The 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan sets out a vision for a low carbon Merton and an approach to achieving that vision through the combined efforts of the Council, residents, communities, businesses and those who deliver key services in Merton.
- 2.5. Action taken by Merton since the adoption of Merton's first Climate Strategy [3] in 2009 has been significant, including a reduction in the Council's own emissions by 40%. The proposed 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan represents an acceleration and expansion of activities to reflect new

evidence on the pace and scale of change needed to avoid the risk of average global temperatures increasing by more than 1.5 degrees [4, 5].

- 2.6. The actions support the major transformations that would be needed:
- better insulated buildings supplied by low carbon energy;
 - a reduction in petrol and diesel road vehicles in favour of active and sustainable travel;
 - a change in focus towards a green and circular economy; and a greater use of vegetation to adapt to the effects of rising temperatures such as prolonged spells of intense hot weather and increased local flooding.
- 2.7. If fully met, the actions would reduce all major sources of greenhouse gas emissions to near zero by the target dates.
- 2.8. The actions are wide-ranging and not limited to Council activities, reflecting the fact that over 90% sources of carbon emissions are beyond the direct reach of the Council. The success of some actions is dependent on key changes to national government policy and increased funding. The plan recognises the key role that the Council plays in leading by example, in lobbying for wider change and funding, and in developing policies and programmes which support the delivery of the targets, within all areas of the Council's operations and the policies which impact the wider borough.
- 2.9. Analysis of global emissions suggest that the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic will result in the largest ever annual fall in greenhouse gas emissions [6]. More locally, environmental improvements such as air quality have been tangible. Whilst recognising that activities will change as lockdown is eased, where possible we are seeking to harness some of the behaviours that have led to such as marked reduction in carbon emissions. The plan reflects the intention to lobby for and take advantage of opportunities that facilitate a "green recovery".
- 2.10. We are also seeking to perpetuate and expand upon the collaborative approach used to develop the 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan as we move towards accelerating action to tackle climate change within the borough. The plan commits to the formation of an implementation group to facilitate this process.
- 2.11. This report seeks delegated authority to the Director of Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment to make minor amendments (such as grammatical changes, factual updates and to recognise any new government laws or council initiatives, and graphic design) to Merton's 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan prior to publication.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. Alternative Option 1: Delay the adoption of the 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan until all more detailed actions and costs are known: The Climate Strategy and Action Plan is intended to be used as an overarching and long-term framework from which detailed actions both within and outside of the Council can be formed. As such, a delay in publishing this framework is

likely to delay the development of collective actions and potentially focus effort on actions which will not ultimately lead to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Due to their long-term nature, all actions will necessarily need to be updated and adjusted on a regular basis as they are developed.

- 3.2. Alternative Option 2: Limit action plan to Council-only activities: Our latest estimates suggest that greenhouse gas emissions from Merton's operational buildings, transport and procured activities account for just 2% of the total emissions produced in Merton each year. So limiting the action plan only to the Council means that it would not be possible to meet the 2050 Borough-wide target.
- 3.3. Alternative Option 3: Do nothing: This is not an option without the council reversing the Declaration of Climate Emergency it made in July 2019.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Extensive public and internal consultation has taken place in the development of the Climate Strategy and Action Plan.
- 4.2. To establish a robust approach based on the best available evidence, LBM commissioned consultants to develop a greenhouse gas inventory and a pathway to net-zero, and to advise on necessary actions and costs [1]. In addition, a wide-ranging evidence review was carried out including technical data on greenhouse gas impacts and "softer" evidence on the most cost effective ways to deliver a reduction in carbon emissions.
- 4.3. To ensure that the process was transparent, open to the challenge and involved the views of key stakeholders, the Climate Emergency Working Group oversaw the work undertaken by Climate Change officers, linked with community groups and inputted their own expertise which culminated in a series of discrete recommendations for the plan. Details of the members, papers and minutes of these meetings are available on Merton Council's Climate Emergency Working Group web page [7]. Merton's Sustainable Communities and Transport Partnership and a number of individual community groups, businesses, delivery partners and organisations were also consulted.
- 4.4. To enable full public participation, a climate change survey was published and widely advertised using the Council's web pages, my Merton, social media and Community Forums. The over 600 respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of strong action to reduce carbon emissions in Merton. The consultation highlighted key barriers and put forward many suggested actions [8].
- 4.5. We also consulted council officers in all Departments to assess the extent to which current Council policies and programmes are likely to be consistent with meeting the greenhouse gas emission targets and identify major gaps in potential activities and funding.
- 4.6. A stakeholder workshop was held on 26 February 2020 with council staff and representatives from a range of businesses, groups and organisations in Merton to inform the action plan.

- 4.7. From the wide range of consultation responses we can understand the scale of Merton's emissions, what needs to be done to reduce those emissions and the potential actions that are needed [9].

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The Climate Strategy and Action Plan, following consideration by Scrutiny on 24th June, will be considered by Cabinet on 13th July and Full Council on 16th September 2020 or the next available Council meeting.
- 5.2. The implementation of the action plan will take place over the next thirty years, spanning the duration of the targets. A Delivery Plan will be developed, and regularly reviewed to track progress of individual actions where the Council has a significant role to play, through agreed milestones.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Whilst we can be clear about what needs to be done we cannot be certain how. The cost of necessary investment across the borough in privately owned homes, businesses and means of transport will require many hundreds of millions of pounds. The cost to the Council of meeting its carbon challenge amounts to c£88M. In the current financial climate post Covid it is not possible to confirm where and when this funding will be available.
- 6.2. A major part of the Council's role will be to seek external resources, lobby for policy and regulatory changes to support investment in the right infrastructure and to pursue a green recovery. It is clear given the cost estimates included in this report that this plan – even the 2030 targets that relate to the Council's emissions, cannot be delivered from existing Council resources alone.

INVESTMENT COSTS FOR THE 2030 TARGET

- 6.3. Based on high-level estimates [10], costs associated with meeting the Council's 2030 target are likely to be in the region of £88M; the majority of which is to upgrade the building stock that is owned and operated by the Council and the replacement of the Council's vehicle fleet. The investments could lead to cumulative fuel bill savings of around £5M to 2030, which may reach up to £27M by 2050. It is important to note that these estimated costs have not yet been built into the Council's MTFS yet and will require the redirecting of resources from existing spending plans. Further, given the time lag on certain Capital schemes it is important that urgent attention be given to developing affordable proposals if the target is to be met by 2030.
- 6.4. Half of the above £88M cost relates to Community Schools meeting the net zero carbon standard. Works are likely to be extensive, replacing the full gas fired heating system and major changes to the fabric of the building. It is likely the school building would need to be vacated during the building works. It is suggested a detailed feasibility study is undertaken at a small number of schools to determine the feasibility, including displacement costs, which may increase the above cost by some 25%. There is presently not a

government requirement to meet this standard so there is no government funding to do so, and so Community Schools are likely to be the only types of school within the borough to meet this standard. The council receives a government grant of some £1.9 million per annum for capital maintenance for Community Schools and only a proportion of this could be used as it would still be required for essential capital maintenance items.

SOCIATAL INVESTMENT COSTS FOR THE 2050 TARGET

- 6.5. Cost estimates undertaken by the technical consultants for the 2050 borough target are highly uncertain and likely to change as new technology is adopted, prices change and innovative financial structures are formed to help reduce the initial up-front costs. Currently, the estimated cumulative marginal additional investments that are needed within Merton to achieve all major transformations are in the region of £3bn to 2050. These are mainly focused on achieving zero-carbon buildings, a fossil fuel-free vehicle stock and an infrastructure that will support the change in energy and transport supply. Measures largely result in a reduction or switch in energy source which produces an ongoing saving once the initial investment has been made. The cumulative ongoing savings to 2050 are estimated to be in the region of £2.1bn. Costs would fall to residents, businesses, service providers and the Council.
- 6.6. The 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan sets out an overall approach to Council spend on reducing climate emissions which is focussed on using available resources in the most efficient way possible to support the major transformations needed to meet the targets.
- 6.7. For the 2050 target, the extent to which any costs will be borne by the Council is currently uncertain. Many actions contained in the plan are not funded and lie in areas that are beyond the reach and responsibility of the Council. For example, all of the borough's existing buildings will need to become highly energy efficient and run on carbon-free energy by 2050. Up-front investment costs, at roughly £2.7bn for Merton, are beyond what residents and businesses can afford, but as yet no National decarbonisation strategy or funding is in place.
- 6.8. Council spend will depend on future decisions taken as actions are developed in further detail, costs to the Council are estimated and budgets assessed in light of fully scrutinised business cases and policy proposals. There will be regular discussions with the finance team as the actions are developed in more detail.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There is no statutory requirement for Local Authorities to set climate targets, or produce a Climate Strategy or an Action Plan set out in the Climate Change Act 2008. Local Authorities are, however, obliged to be in keeping with the objectives of policies implemented by the Greater London Authority and National Government through obligations set out in grant funding agreements, under regulatory arrangements such as through air quality reviews and monitoring under the Environment Act 1995 and national

planning law including the Planning Act 2008 and in development of local plans under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, where the local planning authority must have regard to national policies.

- 7.2. The summary of initial actions for Merton's Delivery Plan refers to Merton's 2050 target that is intended to be consistent with the ambitions set out in the Mayor of London's 1.5 degree compatible action plan, and the Climate Change Act 2008, which presently sets a target for the UK to be net-zero by 2050.
- 7.3. In order to carry out the investments and actions required of this report the Council must follow, where appropriate, the Council's contract standing orders and at present include the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 in relation to entering into public contracts.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. "*Reaping the benefits for all*" forms part of the strategic approach set out in Merton's 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan. It highlights the Council's ambition to ensure that neither the effects of climate change, nor the costs of reducing emissions disproportionately affect the vulnerable or those less able to pay.
- 8.2. It also identifies that delivering the action plan will reap many co-benefits that have the potential to increase equality and community cohesion. These include improving health and wellbeing through more active travel, improving air quality with reduced vehicle use, increasing social inclusion through community activities and reducing fuel poverty by insulating homes and installing on-site renewable energy.
- 8.3. In practice the actions are too high-level and long term to undertake a meaningful equality assessment on Merton's Climate Strategy and Action Plan. Individual equality assessments will be undertaken as actions are developed.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None for the purpose of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are two main risks to the development and implementation of Merton's 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan, already highlighted on the corporate risk register. The first are the uncertainties associated with setting such a long-term framework. The other is the substantial costs and complexity of delivering Merton's 2020 Climate Strategy and Action Plan.
- 10.2. The wide scope and long-term nature of the plan, the many ways in which each high-level action could be delivered, the complex and rapidly changing evidence and unknown future economic factors mean that it is not possible to identify in full all activities and costs that the Council will incur. The most

pressing example is the consequences of the Covid-19 outbreak. The impacts of the response to Covid-19 have been severe and will have lasting, but as yet undetermined effects on the economics and behaviour of society, and of Council activities.

- 10.3. Two commitments are set out in the plan which address these uncertainties, and make sure that progress against the net-zero targets can be assessed. The first is a commitment to regularly update our greenhouse gas inventory to measure overall progress. The second is the development of a Delivery Plan which serves to track progress of individual actions where the Council has a significant role to play.

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

See separate attachment

12 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1. List of documents referred to in the body of the report:

[1] Aether Technical report, June 2020 – Draft available on request

[2] Merton's Climate Emergency Declaration, July 2019

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency>

[3] Merton's Climate Change page "*what we have done*", May 2020

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/what-merton-has-already-done-to-address-climate-change>

[4] Government's Committee on Climate Change "Net zero" report, May 2019

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/>

[5] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 1.5 degree report, October 2018

<https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

[6] CarbonBrief, April 2020

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-coronavirus-set-to-cause-largest-ever-annual-fall-in-co2-emissions>

[7] Membership, papers and Minutes of Merton's Climate Emergency Working Group, May 2020

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency-working-group>

[8] Summary and Analysis of the Responses to Merton's Climate consultation February 2020

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency>

[9] A full list of actions that resulted from Merton's consultation, February 2020

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency>

[10] Cost estimates are largely based on a projected capital cost per m² to retrofit a similar building portfolio to a net zero standard. This estimate is subject to significant revision given it includes crude assumptions about building types and state of repair within the LB Merton portfolio. Surveys of buildings within Merton's portfolio are being undertaken to improve the accuracy these assumptions.

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A CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR MERTON

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VERSION 5

June 2020

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FOREWORD

As scientists show us that the world is warming faster and the effects may be worse than originally predicted, there has never been a more pressing time to act on climate change. Now, alongside 26 London councils and 60%ⁱ of local authorities across the UK, the London Borough of Merton has publically committed to taking action. In July 2019, the Council agreed to work towards net-zero carbon emissions from the Council's operations by 2030, and the borough by 2050. Our public consultation showed that Merton is ready to act, with 90% of respondents stating that they they felt personally responsible to act. 85% of respondents supported further Council action.

The wave of public support did not come as a surprise. With a climate strategy in place since 2009, Merton has a history of taking strong action in this area. The Council has already achieved a 40% reduction in carbon emissions across the Council's estateⁱⁱ and supported numerous policies and projects which take us in the right direction. Despite all of our past efforts, we need a major expansion and acceleration of action to ensure that Merton can make the major transitions in our energy systems, our buildings, our transport, our public spaces and our economy to avoid the worst damaging effects of climate change.

During the development of this plan, we have experienced the beginnings of the unprecedented impacts of the Covid-19 global pandemic. Many people in Merton have suffered from the effects of the virus, the necessary changes needed to slow its spread, and the immediate economic shock. We have yet to fully comprehend what the lasting effects will be.

If there is to be any silver lining to the Covid cloud, it is that the impacts of the pandemic will result in the largest ever annual fall in greenhouse gas emissionsⁱⁱⁱ. And the local effects are tangible: improvement in the air, the Wandle River, cleaner streets and lower levels of traffic and less waste. We have also seen an uplifting community support network all working towards the same goal. It demonstrates that strong action taken as a whole community can make a tangible difference to tackling climate change. As we work together to recover from the crisis, we are seeking to harness changes that maintain and build upon these environmental and community benefits we have experienced.

The Covid-19 outbreak also serves to remind us that that circumstances are ever-changing and a long-term plan must be responsive and adapt over time. The success of this plan is dependent on four major factors, and the extent to which they can be realised is uncertain. Firstly, National Government must provide the right policy framework to allow the transition to take place. Secondly, sufficient funding to support the actions is needed, which is particularly poignant as the Covid crisis has put extra strain and uncertainties on existing budgets and major funding gaps at national level still remain. Thirdly, with each individual responsible for producing roughly 2.9 tonnes of carbon emissions^{iv}, everyone in Merton must share the responsibility. Businesses, service providers, residents and consumers must all be part of the solution.

We have already made a good start. We want to thank the many partners that have helped develop the plan including Merton's Climate Emergency Working Group, Aether and a wide range of individuals and groups across Merton, London and beyond. We hope this is only the beginning. As we turn the plan into action we want participation to spread and grow into every corner of Merton. Some say Merton is too small to make a difference in this global problem. I say that we have the potential to reduce nearly 0.7 million tonnes of carbon emissions each year. We can and must play our part.

Cllr Tobin Byers: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment

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CLIMATE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN ON A PAGE

[Add a 1 page or double page infographic, summarising the whole report which can be used separately for comms, schools, and the website.]

INTRODUCTION

About this document

This document sets out Merton’s strategic approach to reducing carbon emissions that arise from activities occurring in the borough, and identifies a set of high level actions that are required to become a carbon neutral Council by 2030 and borough by 2050. It contains the following sections:

About the targets, actions and costs: explains the main terms used throughout the report, the scope of the targets, and how actions and costs have been formed.

Merton’s carbon emissions: shows our current understanding of all major sources of emissions in Merton; an important first step to understanding the scale of the challenge and how we can work towards achieving the targets.

Vision for a net-zero Merton: depicts what we want Merton to be like once the targets have been met, based on the major transformations required to the economy, buildings, energy, transport and green spaces.

Strategic approach: sets out how we will collectively focus our efforts and resources to bring about the actions that need to happen to tackle emissions and guard against the effects of climate change.

Action plan: sets out major actions in all sectors that are needed to meet the 2050 and 2030 targets.

Costs: provides a high-level estimate of the main additional investment costs associated with delivering the actions.

Delivering the plan: shows how, if actions across all sections are completed the net-zero targets can be achieved, how we will measure success and our next steps.

Terms used

For the purposes of this document “carbon emissions” or “emissions” refer to all greenhouse gases which cause global warming, for which carbon dioxide is the most significant. Air pollution emissions such as particulates or oxides of nitrogen which cause harm to human health are subject to a separate action plan already underway^v.

Carbon neutral or net-zero describe where the overall balance of greenhouse gas emissions going into the atmosphere is zero. This means that any carbon emissions produced inside Merton are offset elsewhere, for example through supporting additional renewable energy generation outside the borough.

About the targets

In July 2019, Merton Council committed to working towards two greenhouse gas reduction targets. The first is to produce net-zero emissions in the borough by 2050. Meeting this target is consistent with current national legislation^{vi} and the Mayor of London’s climate action plan^{vii}, but our aim will be to achieve the targets sooner if possible. The second a more ambitious target to achieve net-zero emissions across the Council’s buildings and services by 2030. Both targets are extremely challenging.

To better understand the carbon emissions in Merton, the pace of change needed to meet the targets, and how to track progress, a technical support was commissioned. The emissions inventory and decarbonisation pathways model^{viii} provide the main evidence for the action plan.

Carbon targets are based on measurable emissions, but the actions set out in the plan have a much wider scope. Many carbon plans only estimate and seek to reduce “direct” emissions such as the use of gas, petrol and diesel, and the emissions associated with producing electricity, which can be tracked using national data. Many ignore emissions from the consumption of goods and services^{ix}. The action plan has sought to address all major sources of emissions that Merton can influence and has included actions which help Merton to reduce the impact of a change in climate.

Whilst the focus is firmly on reducing emissions as far as possible, producing no carbon emissions whatsoever would be technically unfeasible or extremely expensive. So the target is “net-zero” to allow some emissions to be offset if necessary.

About the actions

The actions are designed to deliver the major transitions needed to make Merton a carbon neutral borough by 2050. They are limited to those which are technically possible and within the control of the Council or Merton’s organisations and residents^x. The Council has an important part to play in many actions to 2050, but in most cases, the change must lie with others. The plan identifies where individuals, businesses, organisations, landlords, service providers and communities play a key role. A list of sources for opportunities to get involved or apply for funding can be found on the Council’s climate change page^{xi}. It also sets out how the Council intends become carbon neutral by 2030.

The action plan will be regularly reviewed to reflect the fact that climate change is a fast moving area where new legislation, technologies and initiatives are rapidly evolving. To ensure that the plan is responsive to change, a delivery plan^{xii} has been published alongside this document to track progress and measure success of each action in more detail.

About the costs

Actions which will result in decarbonising Merton’s buildings, transport and energy supply require huge financial investment. These investment costs have been estimated, but are likely to change over time with the advent of new technologies and changing market forces. At this stage it is unclear who will pay. Some of these investment costs will fall to the Council, but many will require additional investment from national government, businesses and members of the public. Without this investment, the costs of dealing with a world with average temperatures above 2 degrees will be far higher.

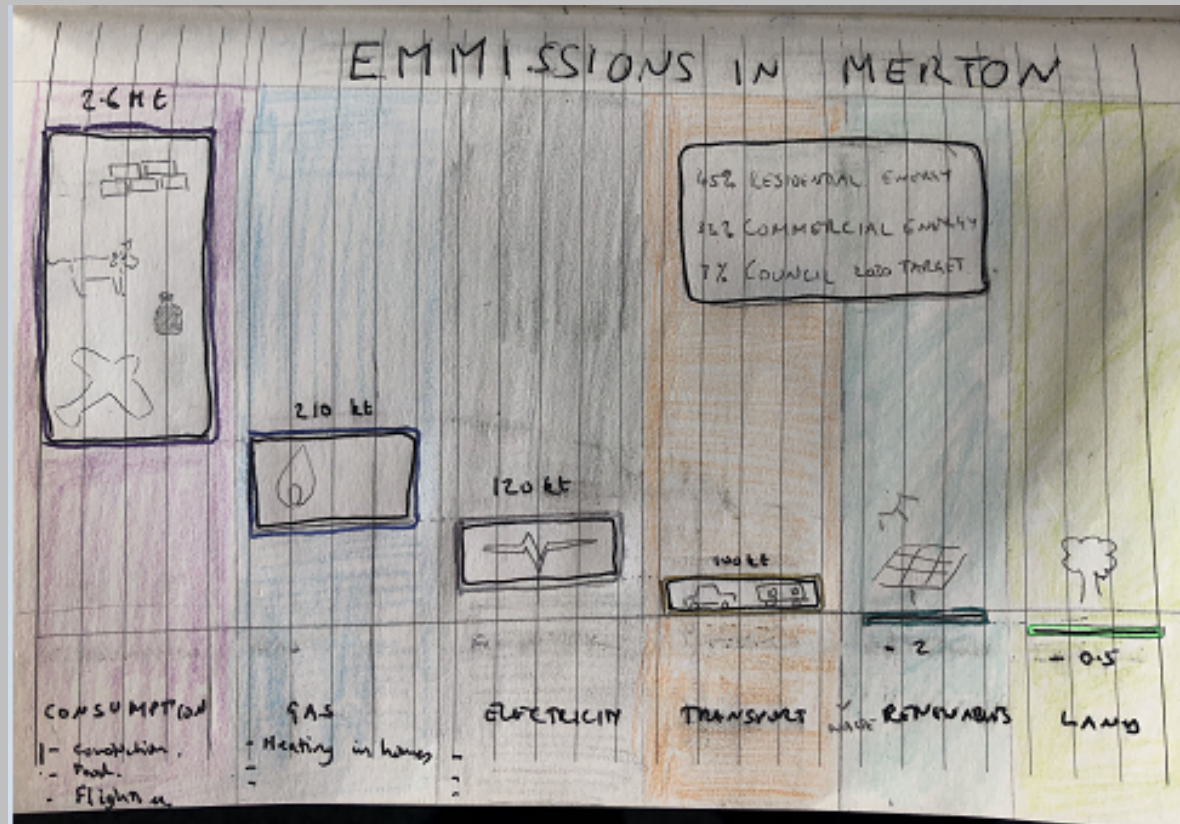
After the initial investment is made, a reduction or change in energy supply can result in long-term cost savings which will benefit many (such as bill savings from energy efficiency measures in homes).

All actions necessary to achieve our net-zero targets have been set out in the plan, even if we do not yet know how they will be funded. It is important to note that actions which fall to the Council can only be taken forward that are within our financial means. This means that currently, many of the actions needed to meet the target are aspirational. Those that require additional funding are marked on the plan with the symbol “\$”.

MERTON'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

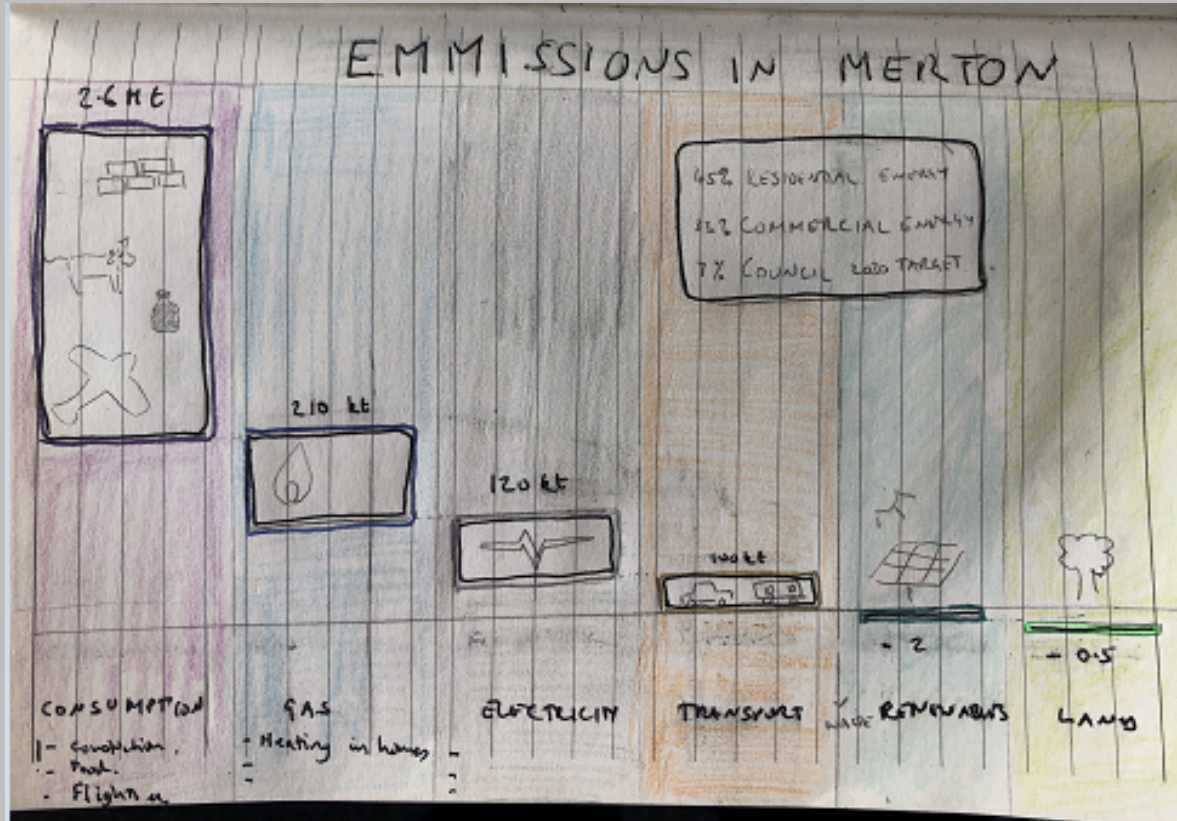
2050 borough target

[Add diagram showing Merton's emissions for the 2050 target, similar to the draft below]



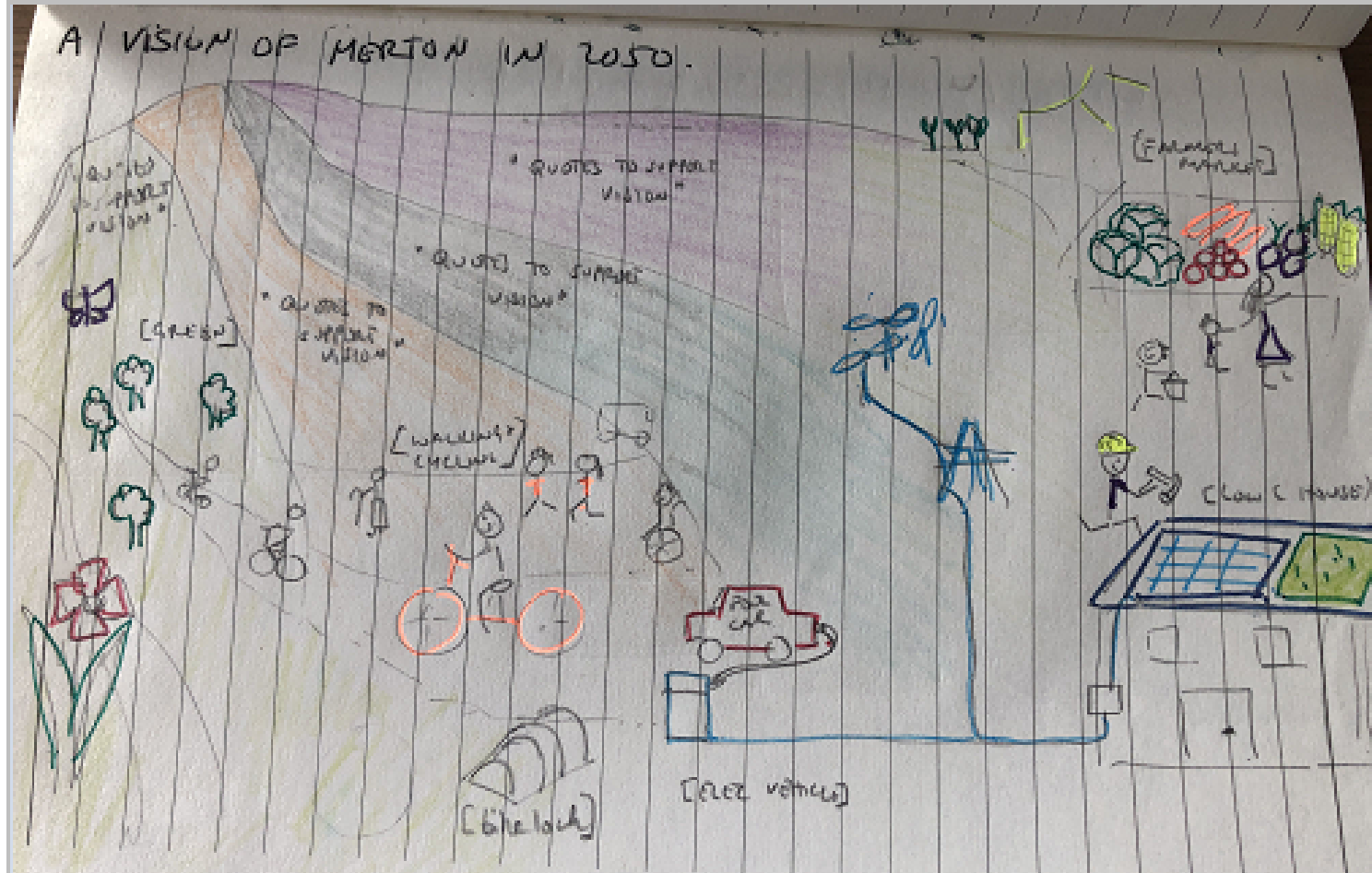
2030 council target

[Add diagram showing Merton's emissions for the 2030 target, similar to the draft in the page above]



A VISION FOR MERTON

[Add diagram showing Merton's emissions for the 2030 target, similar to the draft in the page above]



“vision” quotes to include in the diagram above:

Our vision is of a better future with healthier lives and more connected communities.

Green economy: Merton will have a thriving green and circular economy, with businesses providing accessible low carbon services and offering sustainable, local and healthy products. Individuals and companies will consider the environmental impact of what they buy and sell due to increased climate awareness. People will re-use, repair and share products, avoiding unnecessary packaging and single-use plastics, so very little waste will be generated in Merton. Any remaining waste streams will be re-used or recycled where possible.

Buildings and energy: Residents and businesses will have much lower energy bills because homes will be more energy efficient and will store and generate low carbon energy. Gas heating will be replaced with a low carbon alternative. All new developments will be net-zero carbon, sustainable and adapted to the effects of climate change.

Transport: People will be healthier as a result of more active travel and cleaner air. Walking and cycling will be accessible to all. Less people will own cars and all road vehicles will use electric or other low carbon fuels. Many neighbourhoods and town centres will be car free. Public transport will be clean and provide an excellent and accessible service.

Green Merton: The borough will have more trees and vegetation for people to enjoy. Town centres and residential areas will feel cooler, be less prone to flooding and have cleaner air. Communities will feel more ownership of public green spaces, more connected to nature and have an improved sense of wellbeing.

Council vision for the 2030 target: The Council will provide excellent quality net-zero carbon services to Merton. Council-run buildings and transport will be efficient and will use carbon neutral energy. Service providers will undertake net-zero carbon activities for Merton on behalf of the Council. All Council staff will be making sustainable choices in their travel and workplace.

A STRATEGY TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Leading by example

Merton Council intends to play a pivotal role in increasing Merton's ability to decarbonise. By setting a 2030 net-zero carbon target, the Council can demonstrate leadership and ambition where it has most control. In addition, the Council is in a unique position to partner with major providers such as Transport for London (TfL), the National Health Service (NHS), schools, social housing providers and energy network operators to develop joint climate ambitions to deliver low carbon services in the borough. Through effective communication the Council will endeavour to facilitate and empower individual and community action in areas that are beyond the normal reach of the Council, areas such as the consumption of goods, recycling and re-use, reducing car use, tree planting on private land or community energy.

Making a strong case for change

Merton cannot achieve our climate ambition in isolation. Actions at an international, national, regional and individual level all have a bearing on Merton's ability to combat and adapt to climate change. Funding or national policy can hinder large-scale transformational change to roads, energy supply and buildings. Many actions are dependent on changes in people's attitudes and behaviours towards more sustainable lifestyles. Some actions require new technology to become more widespread and accessible. Some actions require the introduction of new skills in the local economy, such as tradespeople being trained to install low carbon appliances.

As the plan has developed, the gaps in funding, policies and actions from others have become ever clearer. On behalf of the residents and businesses in Merton we will lobby for funding and faster change that enables the major investments to be made and for low carbon activities to become the default choice.

Prioritising Major transformations

The Council must ensure that our efforts to reduce emissions do not undermine the essential services that the Council provides in supporting the young and the vulnerable; to maintain safety and ensure the upkeep of public spaces. In order to make sure that limited resources are focused where they can have most impact, the action plan is focused on the major transformations which need to happen in Merton that are likely to make the most significant impact on reducing carbon emissions.

The three transformations that form key pillars of the action plan are: A change towards a green economy; facilitating the supply and purchasing of more sustainable products and services with less waste. Low carbon buildings and energy including reducing energy consumption, the replacement of gas heating (with heat pumps), and an increase in locally generated renewable electricity. A transition in transport in favour of walking, cycling and public transport, and a replacement of the remaining vehicle stock to low carbon alternatives where powered vehicles are needed.

Merton's high population and suburban environment serves to limit extent to which planting more trees can reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the borough. Despite its limited potential in locking up carbon, greening Merton has a role to play in adapting to the effects of climate change. Strategic tree cover can providing shade to guard against more prolonged and intense spells of hot weather, manage the increased risk of local flooding by providing sustainable drainage and increasing the resilience biodiversity by creating and preserving habitats.

Designing with climate in mind

Actions to reduce climate impacts are likely to be cheaper and more successful if they are taken into account from the outset. The Council is therefore seeking to embed thinking on climate change in all parts of the Council. This includes ensuring that the impacts of climate change have been taken into account in all policies, programmes and strategies; and that efficiencies in Council services have been maximised to reduce carbon emissions.

We are also considering how planning and planning policies can support a shift to low carbon activity and adapt to a change in climate. Key areas of focus include low emission regeneration, provision of appropriate infrastructure to accommodate a change in energy generation and transportation, changes in public spaces and building design to prevent overheating, minimise energy use and emissions, and limit water use, and use of sustainable drainage solutions to help prevent flooding.

Reaping the benefits for all

Many actions have benefits which go beyond emissions reduction. Where this is the case we are seeking to maximise the co-benefits. Many actions in the plan go hand in hand with making the borough a more pleasant place to live, by reducing waste, improving air quality and providing public spaces which are more people-focused, greener and more biodiverse.

There is also a major opportunity to help support community cohesion and wellbeing, which is particularly important as we seek to recover from the worst effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Actions have the potential to improve health and wellbeing, increasing social inclusion and reduce poverty. We also want to prevent the vulnerable being disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, or exposed to the costs of reducing emissions.

To best achieve this, we want the public to have a greater role in deciding how climate actions are prioritised and carried out, giving rise to our intention to set up an implementation group to support the delivery of this plan.

Measurable success

The climate action plan is based on our understanding of the best available evidence. Our collective understanding of this complex area is changing fast. Many innovative ideas that could offer major solutions are being trialled. So whilst the high level actions are unlikely to change greatly, the delivery of the actions will. To ensure that the action plan continues to identify and prioritise the most cost-effective approaches, a delivery plan will serve to track detailed actions and be adapted on a regular basis to ensure the plan continues to respond to new circumstances.

An agile delivery plan requires careful monitoring. As well as undertaking regular greenhouse gas inventories, we will track major actions with measurable outcomes where possible, and regularly report on progress through updates on the climate change website.

ACTION PLAN

GREEN ECONOMY

This section considers actions which reduce emissions from the things we buy and sell by changing what we eat, how we use products and services, and how we avoid waste through prevention, recycling and re-use. Carbon emissions generated from the production and transportation of goods and services consumed by Merton's residents cannot be accurately estimated or tracked, but are likely to far exceed Merton's other sources of emissions^{xiii}.

2050 vision for the green economy:

Merton will have a thriving green and circular economy, with businesses providing accessible low carbon services and offering sustainable, local and healthy products. Individuals and companies will consider the environmental impact of what they buy and sell due to increased climate awareness. People will re-use, repair and share products, avoiding unnecessary packaging and single-use plastics, so very little waste will be generated in Merton. Any remaining waste streams will be re-used or recycled where possible.

Case study:

Young residents in Merton have spoken out about the need to take action in addressing climate change. In 2019, a local young resident launched the 'SwopItUp' initiative, a programme run by teenagers and for teenagers which enables clothes swaps in schools to encourage people to use second-hand clothes instead of buying new products, and to reduce waste. In response to the Covid-19 lockdown, SwopItUp have launched a Creator's programme and the #SwopItUpClub for young people aged 11 - 18 to get involved in online environmental action associated with the programme. This scheme showcases how individuals can take steps to reduce their carbon footprint, promote a circular economy and work towards Merton's ambition of becoming net zero carbon by 2050

ACTIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Individuals, businesses and organisations

By 2050, individuals must **reduce their carbon footprint to near zero through lifestyle and product choices** and by influencing others.

Emissions associated with food, clothing and textiles, construction, electronics, aviation and the manufacture of private vehicles are likely to have the greatest carbon impact. Individuals should **choose products and services which are low carbon and sustainable**. For example, **moving from a high-meat diet to a reduced-meat diet**^{xiv} can reduce your dietary emissions by 35%^{xv}; and is often healthier and cheaper. Eating seasonally and locally helps reduce the emissions associated with the production and transportation of food respectively. Other actions include **choosing biodegradable products** and **investing in companies that support a low carbon economy**.

Individuals, businesses and organisations **should prevent waste where possible** to achieve a 75% reduction in waste^{xvi}; waste prevention saves more carbon than recycling. **Food waste can cause high emissions** unless it is recycled appropriately, and on average results in consumers spending 14% more on their weekly shop. Plastics have a high carbon impact so **choosing reusable items** and

avoiding single-use plastic is better. Textiles have a high carbon impact, so **reducing the number of new clothing items** bought every year could achieve a 66% reduction in emissions from the clothing industry^{xvii}.

Business and organisations

By 2050, **businesses and organisations must help to build a low carbon economy** in Merton, by: working to reduce supply chain emissions and **provide local, sustainable and healthy products** whilst **minimising waste**; and avoiding investing in or procuring companies which produce high emissions.

Businesses and organisations should undertake an **environmental audit**^{xviii} or **sign up to a sustainability charter or certification scheme** and provide **information on the carbon footprint of products and services** to customers.

Businesses and organisations should **encourage low carbon behaviour** in staff and clients.

ACTIVITIES THAT ENABLE CHANGE TO HAPPEN

As plans are developed to manage the long-term effects of Covid-19, the Council and organisations will **support actions which maximise opportunities for a green recovery**.

The Council and organisations will **promote a circular and low carbon economy** by raising awareness on and encouraging sustainable consumption, waste reduction and recycling, and green finance to 2050.

[§]The Council will **support commercial and community efforts** to promote a low carbon economy through local projects which encourage sustainable consumption, waste reduction and low carbon lifestyles to 2050.

By 2021, the Council will **review on-street waste infrastructure** across Merton and develop a strategy to encourage residents and businesses to recycle and reduce waste.

By 2023, the Council will consider mechanisms to help **address the skills gap** in the low carbon economy in Merton. Priority areas will likely include skills required to deliver domestic retrofit at scale and repair skills to promote the circular economy.

By 2023, the Council will consider financial and other mechanisms to **incentivise low carbon performance** in local businesses.

By 2021, the Council will promote a green and circular economy in Merton through **strategic planning** documents such as the Local Plan and the Wimbledon Masterplan.

[§]The Council will promote a green and circular economy through **major regeneration projects** such as the Morden town centre regeneration to 2050.

BUILDINGS AND ENERGY

Energy used to heat and power buildings in the borough makes up around 79% of carbon emissions in Merton's greenhouse gas inventory. The amount of energy consumed is influenced by the efficiency of our building stock. Well under half of the 88,000 homes^{xix} are not yet efficient enough to make the necessary move away from natural gas central heating to low carbon alternatives. Electricity and gas used in non-residential buildings make up around 34% of emissions. Solar PV currently on Merton's roofs replace grid electricity with electricity which is nearly zero-carbon; reducing energy emissions by 0.2%.

2050 vision for buildings and energy:

Residents and businesses will have much lower energy bills because homes will be more energy efficient and will store and generate low carbon energy. Natural gas heating will be replaced with a low carbon alternative. All new developments will be net-zero carbon, sustainable and adapted to the effects of climate change.

Case study:

A Merton resident, having purchased an Edwardian semi-detached home, found it difficult and expensive to heat and had high energy bills. He added double and triple glazed windows, floor, roof and wall insulation and installed solar PV and solar thermal renewable technology. The real-time data gathered from the PV unit gave him cause to install very efficient appliances and LEDs. These investments have resulted in significant energy bill savings from a 35% reduction in electricity and a 43% reduction in gas use. The renewable technologies provide additional income from electricity sales and a payment from the Government's Renewable Heat Incentive. With a further investment in solar PV he is expecting to become self-sufficient in electricity in the summer months.

ACTIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Home owners and landlords

47% of homes in Merton are rented and 53% are owned. By 2050 **all homes must be highly energy efficient** to reduce the amount of energy used. In practice this means moving from an average EPC rating of D to A^{xx}, mainly by investing in loft, wall and floor insulation and replacing doors and windows. Investments should result in significant ongoing energy bill savings.

98% of all homes in Merton have gas heating and are responsible for the largest share of Merton's emissions. By 2050, **all homes must replace natural gas central heating and cooking with a low carbon alternative** such as heat pumps and electric cookers^{xxi}. Until March 2022, heat pumps may be eligible for 7 years of additional payment through the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)^{xxii}, or potentially from a proposed Government grant scheme^{xxiii}.

By 2050 **all homes should maximise the amount of renewable energy generated on-site and energy storage**. Solar PV and battery storage on a typical property can reduce energy bills, save several tonnes of carbon emissions and enable the production of around 94GWh per year of local, flexible electricity supply. Using group purchasing schemes such as Solar Together^{xxiv}, and the Government's Smart Export Guarantee^{xxv} can help to minimise and pay back initial investment costs.

Energy bill payers should consider a **switch to a 100% green energy tariff** to ensure that their electricity supply is from a renewable source; for which there are very competitive rates on offer^{xxvi}.

All occupants should take steps to **reduce energy consumption within the home**. For a typical home, £150 per year can be saved by reducing the heating by 1°C, not overfilling the kettle and switching off appliances. Low cost additions such as draft excluders or reflective radiator panels can save a further £17 per year. For under £100, installing LEDs and a thermostat could save a further £90 per year.^{xxvii} Energy efficient appliances, installing smart-meters and smart charging will also reduce energy consumption.

Property developers, landlords and individuals planning renovations

By **2025 all new buildings should be capable of operating at net zero carbon emissions^{xxviii}** if possible to avoid the cost of expensive retrofit in later years^{xxix}, following the principles of the Mayor's energy hierarchy which takes a "fabric first" approach.

All new buildings, developments and renovations should be designed to reduce the effects of climate change, in particular by minimising the risks of overheating and flooding, and minimising water use.

All new buildings, developments and renovations should **minimise carbon emissions from construction methods and materials** used.

Businesses, organisations and landlords

Merton's businesses, organisations and landlords must, if possible, **invest in measures to reduce energy use, replace fossil fuel heating** with a low carbon alternative such as heat pumps, and **maximise renewable energy generation**.

Businesses, organisations and landlords should **actively monitor energy use** and if feasible, consider installing energy management systems and support staff to reduce emissions from home-working.

ACTIVITIES THAT ENABLE CHANGE TO HAPPEN

Businesses, organisations and landlords to **encourage energy efficiency amongst staff and tenants**.

Individuals, businesses, organisations and the Council will **lobby for National government to bridge the massive funding gap** to support the decarbonisation of buildings and **provide clarity on a national strategy** to decarbonise heat and buildings.

[§]The Council will **encourage individual, business and community efforts** to reduce emissions from buildings, and by 2025, will explore options to overcome the high up-front cost of installing low carbon measures through a loan scheme or energy service company.

[§]By 2023, the Council will consider mechanisms to **ensure that landlords meet energy efficiency standards** and adopt low carbon measures in their buildings to 2050.

By 2021, the Council will review the draft Local Plan policies to **promote net-zero carbon development for new buildings, and to maximise energy and carbon savings, reduce embodied carbon, and increase resilience to the effects of climate change** for all developments. [§]By 2023, the Council will **develop an energy masterplan** to support a transformation in energy use.

The Council will ensure **major Council redevelopments and works** are in keeping with net-zero targets to 2050.

TRANSPORT

The use of petrol and diesel vehicles in the borough makes up 19%^{xxx} of Merton's emissions as a result of the 600 million kilometres driven in Merton each year^{xxxii}. Cars produce more carbon emissions than all other modes of transport put together. Emissions from buses, heavy goods and light goods vehicles also generate significant emissions. Around 1000 of the ~77,000 vehicles registered in Merton are ultra-low emission^{xxxiii}, and so far over 140 charge points have been installed in public spaces.

2050 vision for transport:

People will be healthier as a result of more active travel and cleaner air. Walking and cycling will be accessible and be the default choice for most local journeys. Fewer people will own cars and all road vehicles will be electric or use other low carbon fuels. Many neighbourhoods and town centres will be car free. Public transport will be clean and provide an excellent and accessible service.

Case study:

Merton Council has worked for many years with schools to advise on child pedestrian safety and cycle training skills. From the much loved Debra the Zebra, our road safety mascot, to the more recent implementation of School Safety Zones improve air quality and safety outside schools has improved.

ACTIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Residents and communities

There are 77,000 vehicles registered in Merton^{xxxiii}. By 2050, all residents must **stop using petrol and diesel vehicles**, which on average generate several tonnes of carbon emissions per year.

Individuals should **reduce car use in favour of walking, cycling or using public transport**; to increase active and sustainable travel from 58% to 73% by 2041^{xxxiv}.

Residents should **consider whether it is necessary to own a car**, as vehicle hire becomes more accessible and lower cost. Where private vehicles are necessary, by 2030, **all vehicles should be replaced with ultra-low emission alternatives**; which are predicted to have similar lifetime costs to fossil fuel cars by 2025^{xxxv}.

Communities should work together to encourage **20 minutes of active travel a day^{xxxvi}**, and **make neighbourhoods more cycle and pedestrian friendly**, limiting through-traffic.

Communities should work to **reduce car use and air pollution around schools and densely populated areas^{xxxvii}**; as a reduction in air pollution will also reduce carbon emissions.

Organisations and businesses

All businesses and organisations must ensure that **journeys undertaken on behalf of their organisations result in net zero carbon emissions** by 2050.

Businesses, organisations and schools should implement travel plans^{xxxviii} which support staff and clients to work remotely or choose sustainable travel alternatives; in particular ceasing the provision

of petrol and diesel company cars, limiting parking to essential users and **avoiding short-haul flights**, which produce the most carbon per kilometre travelled.

Businesses and organisations should implement and actively **encourage schemes which help staff into active and sustainable travel**, such as the cycle to work scheme^{xxxix}; and invest in supporting facilities such as cycle parking. Grants may be available to help install electric charge points^{xl}.

ACTIVITIES THAT ENABLE CHANGE TO HAPPEN

Individuals, businesses, organisations and the Council will **lobby for greater funding** and support a national policy framework which results in an acceleration of active travel and reduced private car use^{xli}.

The Council will lobby and work with Transport for London (TfL) to improve services and **accelerate the decarbonisation of public transport** to 2050^{xlii}, and encourage the use of public transport (taking into account social distancing measures which may be in place as part of the Covid-19 restrictions).

[§]The Council will **accommodate the increase in active travel that has resulted from the travel restrictions put in place due to Covid-19**, by expanding pavements and increasing the number and range of cycle paths. Where possible, these measures will be made permanent^{xliii}.

By 2022, the Council will carry out a **review of the Local Implementation Plan (LIP-3)** funding priorities to ensure they are in keeping with the Mayor's Transport Strategy objectives^{xliv}, and net-zero 2050 target, [§]and by 2023 work towards the creation of a **long-term sustainable transport plan** to develop integrated walking, cycling and electric vehicle charging networks by 2050.

[§]The Council will support **safe, active and sustainable travel in schools, residents and businesses** to 2050 and by 2022 explore options that will incentivise people to move away from cars.

By 2021, the Council and TfL will **encourage more dockless and electric vehicle hire schemes**, and ensure all new licenced private hire vehicles and **taxis operating in Merton will be zero emission capable**.^{xlv}

By 2021, the Council will review Local Plan policies to encourage a **reduction in car use in new developments** and offer sustainable transport alternatives.

By 2020, the Council will **consult on emission-based parking charges** to discourage the use of higher polluting vehicles, and by 2025 consider options to achieve a **net reduction in parking spaces**.

GREENING MERTON

At 28%^{xlvi}, Merton has one of the highest proportions of tree cover of any London Borough. The growth of vegetation, particularly the approximately 220,000^{xlvii} trees, captures a small fraction (0.08%) of Merton's emissions each year. Trees can play an important role in climate adaptation, absorbing air pollution emissions and providing wildlife habitats which may maintain and increase biodiversity.

2050 vision for a Green Merton:

The borough will have more trees and vegetation for people to enjoy. Town centres and residential areas will feel cooler, be less prone to flooding and have cleaner air. Communities will feel more ownership of public green spaces, more connected to nature and have an improved sense of wellbeing.

Case study:

Merton is one of the few London boroughs to have a longstanding partnership with the voluntary sector with the aim of planting and maintaining community woodlands. Operational since 1992, the volunteer Tree Warden Group Merton with the support of Greenspaces and Friends groups across the borough, have since planted over 25,000 trees and hedge plants in 28 public open spaces throughout the borough, to create new canopy cover.

ACTIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Merton will achieve a **10% increase in tree cover**^{xlviii} by 2050, potentially equivalent to planting around 800 trees every year to 2050. The main opportunities to plant trees are likely to be on private land such as gardens, which hold around two thirds of the trees in Merton.

The Council will **plant new trees on public land and council-managed green spaces**, and take opportunities to **introduce sustainable drainage systems** and green verges to 2050.

Individuals, businesses organisations and developers

By 2050, individuals, organisations and business should **maximise the amount of vegetation** where possible: from adding a window box, to the removing paving^{xlix}, installing a green roof or add sustainable drainage. Planting a suitable tree can save several tonnes of carbon if allowed to grow to maturity.

Individuals can **support community planting by joining a volunteer group**^l, or businesses can **sponsor local tree planting** event water a newly planted street trees, or take up free tree offers available through organisations such as the Woodland Trust^{li}.

ACTIVITIES THAT ENABLE CHANGE TO HAPPEN

[§]The Council will work with organisations to **develop a tree strategy** by 2022, to increase tree cover by 10% to 2050 and increase public participation.

By 2020, the Council will review planning policies to ensure that, where possible, **new developments protect existing vegetation, and add new green cover** to mitigate the impacts of climate change such as overheating, flooding and loss of biodiversity.

2030 COUNCIL TARGET

The Council is responsible for around 2% of the borough's emissions. Services provided on behalf of the Council, such as the management of highways and green spaces, waste collection make up at least 16% of the 2030 target. Energy used in the Council's buildings make up 69% of emissions, followed by transport (5%).^{lii}

Vision for 2030:

The Council will provide excellent quality net-zero carbon services to Merton. Council-run buildings and transport will be efficient and will use carbon neutral energy. Service providers will undertake net-zero carbon activities for Merton on behalf of the Council. All Council staff will be making sustainable choices in their travel and workplace.

Case study

The Council has undertaken a 10 year programme of investment to improve the energy efficiency of Council-owned and operated buildings, and install of 2MW of solar panels. The energy savings have resulting in a 45% reduction in carbon emissions and significant bill savings.^{liii}

ACTIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

[§]The Council will convert its **operational buildings to net-zero carbon by 2030**, including council staff buildings, community schools and leisure centres, through appropriate retrofit measures including improvements to energy efficiency, conversion of gas heating to low carbon alternatives, increasing renewable energy capacity and sourcing 100% green electricity.

The Council will ensure that all new **Council buildings and extensions are net-zero carbon**, using a 'fabric first' approach, to avoid the cost of expensive retrofit in later years.

[§]Transport team will convert the **Council vehicle fleet to an ultra-low emission alternative** by 2030.

Highways team will convert **90% of street lighting to LED** by 2030.

ACTIVITIES THAT ENABLE CHANGE TO HAPPEN

Contract Managers, in conjunction with Commercial Services and South London Legal Partnership, will **work with existing service providers on opportunities to reduce carbon emissions** in Merton.

By 2021, Commercial Services team will put in place procurement governance, processes and procedures to ensure products and **services provided to the Council are in keeping with the net-zero carbon targets**.

Finance team will ensure **investments are net-zero carbon by 2030** and consider ways to positively invest in low carbon business that can **deliver carbon offsets**.

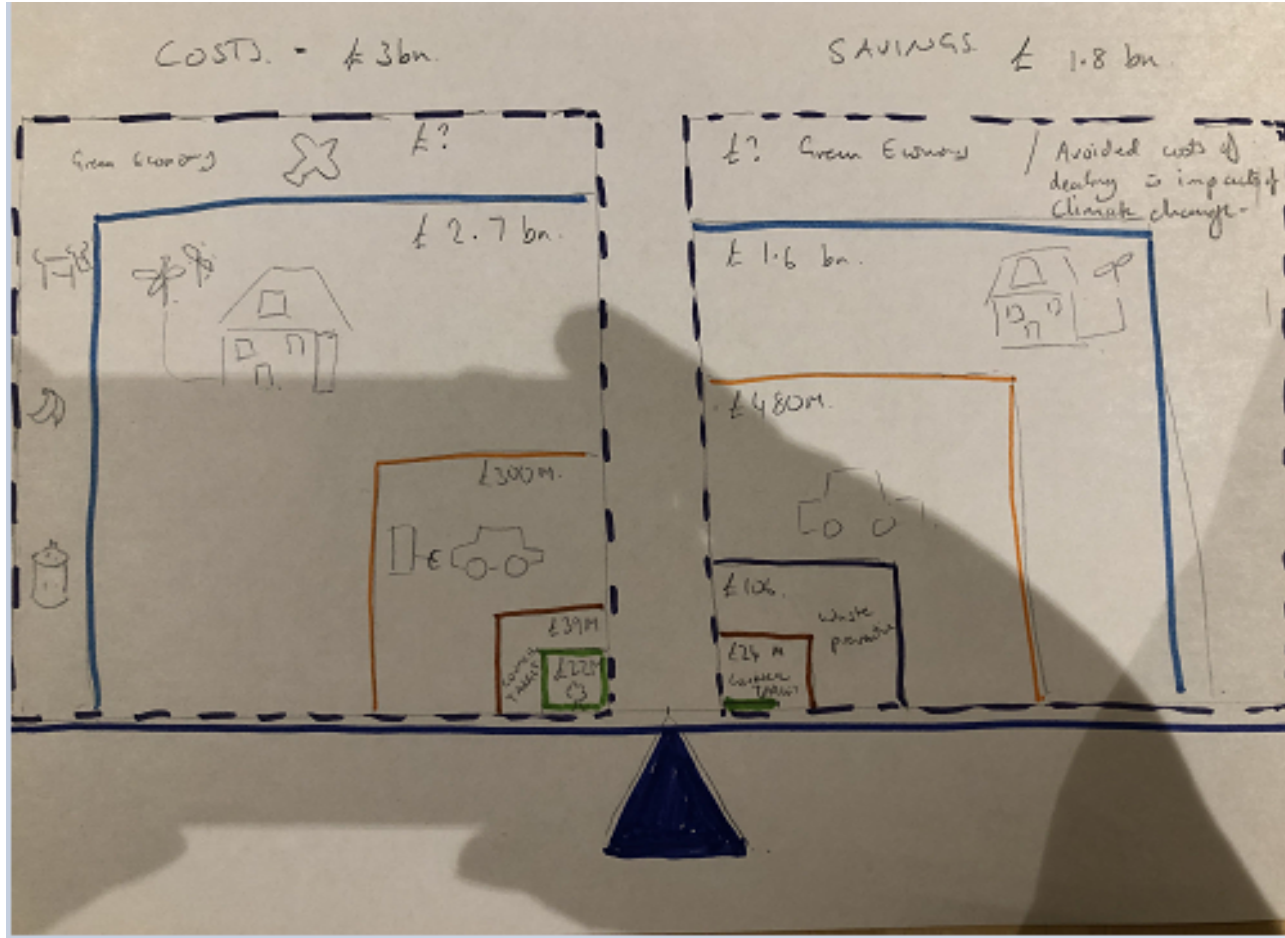
Transport team will introduce a **staff travel plan** consistent with achieving net-zero carbon.

[§]The Council will carry out **improvements to Council-operational facilities** and trial innovative low carbon measures to support low carbon transport and energy by 2030.

By 2020, Future Merton and Public Health will set up an action group to **accelerate change within all Council Departments**.

COSTS

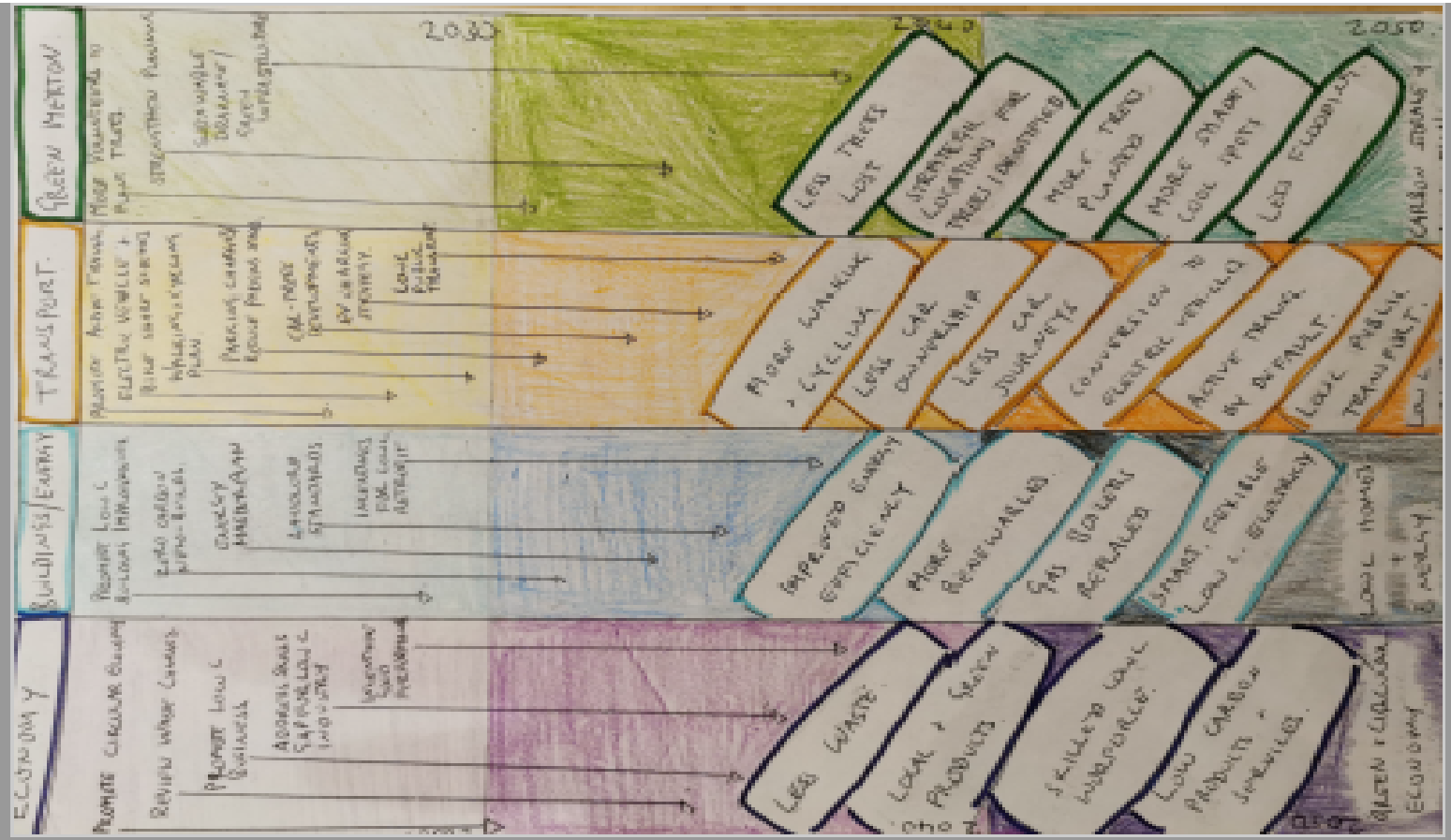
[add double page diagram to show costs to Merton and potential savings. Cost in the draft diagram are examples only]



DELIVERING THE PLAN

How the actions will help us to meet the targets

[add image which shows the how the actions will lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and meet Net zero targets – work in progress]



Measuring success

By updating Merton’s greenhouse gas inventory and developing a Delivery Plan, progress will be monitored with measurable outcomes where possible, and reported through updates on Merton’s climate change web pages^{liv}. The table below shows the main measure and other useful indicators used to track progress:

	Indicator	Baseline In 2020	Final target (by 2050 unless stated)	Data source
Overall	An overall reduction in carbon emissions that matches the pace and scale of change needed to meet our targets	Borough 2050 target: Y tCO ₂ eq Council 2030 target Y tCO ₂ eq	Borough 2050 target: Net zero tCO ₂ eq Council 2030 target Net zero tCO ₂ eq	Council Greenhouse Gas reporting ^{lv}
Green Economy	Decrease in tonnes of waste produced by Merton.	[tcb tonnes LA collected]	[75% reduction in LA collected waste]	Data from Local Authority Waste Collections ^{lvi} Estimate based on Defra statistics ^{lvii}
Buildings and Energy	Improved energy efficiency of Merton’s building stock	22%EPC A-C 78%EPC D-G	100% EPC A-C	CROHM database ^{lviii}
	Increase in the number of buildings with solar panels.	c1000	11,000	No accurate data source identified to monitor solar PV installations ^{lix}
Transport	Increase in number of active travel journeys.	58%	73% by 2041	Data supporting the Local Implementation Plan ^{lx}
	Decrease in number and shift in vehicle ownership	76,780 cars 1,166 EV	0 Petrol and diesel cars All vehicles ultra-low	Data supporting the Local Implementation Plan ^{lxi} / DfT Vehicle Licencing Statistics ^{lxii}
	Number of electric charge points.	143	[Target TBC]	Statistics collected by Transport team
Green spaces	Percentage increase in canopy cover.	28%	31%	Open Space Strategy technical report (not yet published)

Next steps

We hope this plan has helped you to understand what role you may be able to play in meeting the borough's carbon reduction target and how the Council are looking to support you. So what now?

STEP 1: Get informed: There is a wealth of information about what changes you can make to help combat climate change. As a starting point, check out our website (<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency>), articles and facebook information, which provide more information and links on what you can do.

STEP 2: Take up the challenge: Decide on what can you change your home, your work, your travel, your purchases or your connection with others that will help? Small actions make a big difference when everyone is involved.

STEP 3: Join in with community action: Many local groups are taking to make changes for the better in Merton and reduce carbon emissions. Find out more about voluntary services in Merton see <https://www.mvsc.co.uk/homepage>, Merton's Climate Implementation Group [[add web link](#)] or maybe start your own group. Contact the Council at Future.Merton@Merton.gov.uk for advice and support.

Lobby for change: Your voice with others can make change happen faster. Join with us to seek more funding and policy changes at a national level that will support changes in Merton to reduce carbon emissions and help us to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Follow progress: Look out for updates on actions completed progress in reducing carbon emissions through the climate emergency website (<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency>).

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- i May 2020: <https://www.climateemergency.uk/blog/list-of-councils/>.
- ii Merton Council greenhouse gas reporting: not yet published.
- iii April 2020: <https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-coronavirus-set-to-cause-largest-ever-annual-fall-in-co2-emissions>.
- iv BEIS Statistics, June 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2017>.
- v Merton's air quality action plan, 2018: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/pollution/air-quality-and-air-pollution/local-air-quality-management>.
- vi The Climate Change Act, which sets a net-zero carbon target in 2050, amended 2019: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2019/9780111187654>.
- vii The London Mayor's 1.5 degree compatible action plan, 2018: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/climate-change/climate-action-plan>.
- viii London Borough of Merton Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report. London Borough of Merton Pathways to Decarbonisation Report. London Borough of Merton Greenhouse Gas Tracking Report: [Add link once published]
- ix The Future of Urban Consumption in a 1.5 degree World, June 2019: <https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/the-future-of-urban-consumption-in-a-1-5c-world>.
- x Key sources include Aether's technical report, 2020 [add link once published] and GLA Zero Carbon Pathway, 2018: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-s-zero-carbon-pathways-tool> and SCATTER, 2020: <https://scattercities.com/> and the CCC Net Zero report, 2020: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/>
- xi <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change>
- xii The delivery plan [add link once published]
- xiii London Borough of Merton Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report [add link once published]
- xiv May 2020: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-46459714>
- xv Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming, 2019: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/>
- xvi London Borough of Merton Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report [add link once published]
- xvii The Future of Urban Consumption in a 1.5 degree World, June 2019: <https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/the-future-of-urban-consumption-in-a-1-5c-world>.
- xviii May 2020: <https://www.britsafe.org/audit-and-consultancy/health-safety-and-environmental-audit/iso-14001-environmental-audit/>
- xix March 2019: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan/newlocalplan/local-plan-stage-2-consultation-results>
- xx May 2020: <https://www.which.co.uk/money/mortgages-and-property/home-movers/selling-a-house/epcs-explained-a6nmp1q099fb>
- xxi Unless the Government plan to supply a low carbon gas through the gas grid, pending the publication a clean heat strategy (October 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy>)
- xxii May 2020: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/domestic-rhi>
- xxiii May 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-support-for-low-carbon-heat>
- xxiv May 2020: <https://www.solartogether.co.uk/merton/home>
- xxv January 2020: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/smart-export-guarantee-seg/about-smart-export-guarantee-seg>
- xxvi May 2020: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-power>
- xxvii May 2020: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/blog/energy-saving-budget>
- xxviii January 2020, <https://www.leti.london/cedg>
- xxix <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-costs-and-benefits-of-tighter-standards-for-new-buildings-Currie-Brown-and-AECOM.pdf>
- xxx London Borough of Merton Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report
- xxxi May 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/road-traffic-statistics-tra#traffic-volume-in-kilometres-tra02>
- xxxii May 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/about/statistics>

xxxiii Local Implementation Plan, September 2019: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/lip3>

xxxiv Local Implementation Plan, September 2019: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/lip3>

xxxv May 2019: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-technical-report/>

xxxvi May 2020: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/healthy-living/sport-and-healthy-living/walk-4life>

xxxvii 2018: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/pollution/air-quality-and-air-pollution>

xxxviii May 2020: <https://www.globalhealthyworkplace.org/global-healthy-workplace-certification/>

xxxix May 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-to-work-scheme-implementation-guidance>

xl May 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/update-on-the-infrastructure-grants-schemes>

xli March 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creating-the-transport-decarbonisation-plan>

xlii 2019: <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/tfl-business-plan-2019.pdf>

xliii April 2020:
<https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Merton%20Covid%20Transport%20Strategy%207%20May%202020.pdf>

xliv 2018: <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/the-mayors-transport-strategy>

xlv May 2020: <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/taxis-and-private-hire/emissions-standards-for-phvs>

xlvi Unpublished

lvii OPEN SOURCE CANOPY COVER AUDIT (OSCCA), Merton Council 2014, unpublished

lviii <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/trees-and-woodlands/tree-canopy-cover-map>

lix https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/grey_to_green_guide.pdf

l <https://www.mvsc.co.uk/civicrm/profile/view?reset=1&id=2802&gid=1>

li <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/campaign-with-us/big-climate-fightback/>

lii London Borough of Merton Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report. London Borough of Merton Pathways to Decarbonisation Report. London Borough of Merton Greenhouse Gas Tracking Report.

liii <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/what-merton-has-already-done-to-address-climate-change>

liv <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change>

lv <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/sustainability-and-climate-change/greenhouse-gas-emission-reports>

lvi Data from South London Waste Partnership used for the creation of national statistics:
<https://www.wastedataflow.org/>

lvii <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data>

lviii <https://parityprojects.com/platform/>

lix Initial estimate from Feed in Tariff: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/feed-tariff-installation-report-31-march-2020>

lx indicator targets for modal shift <https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/lip3> (LIP (3) Table ST07)

lxi Indicator target for reduced car ownership <https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/lip3> (LIP (3) Table ST07)

lxii <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vehicles-statistics> (Table veh132a, Q4 2018)

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 24 June 2020

Wards: All

Subject: Scrutiny work programme during the Covid 19 pandemic – a proposal for restarting the scrutiny panels

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

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

Contact officer: Julia.regan@merton.gov.uk; 0208 545 3864

Recommendations:

To agree to restart the scrutiny panels, with indicative work programmes as set out in the appendices.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission, at its meeting on 20 May, agreed that it would receive a report at its next meeting setting out a proposal for restarting the scrutiny panels with an indicative work programme for each. It was agreed that the scrutiny officers would work with the relevant Directors and a lead scrutiny member from each of the four political groups to identify what the work priorities would be for each of the Panels.
- 1.2. This report sets out proposed work programmes for each of the Panels and for the Commission, based on discussion with representatives from each of the four political groups. These are indicative work programmes with flexibility built in to respond to unforeseen events and to operate scrutiny in a way that is proportionate during the pandemic and whilst meetings are being conducted via Zoom.
- 1.3. It is anticipated that much of the input from Cabinet Members, Directors and other departmental officers will be continue to be mainly verbal into the autumn and that detailed written reports will not be provided so that scarce resources are not diverted from the emergency response

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Indicative work programmes from July 2020 onwards have been provided in the appendices for each of the Scrutiny Panels and for the Commission. The dates are those in the corporate calendar that were agreed by Council in February 2020, with the exception of an additional meeting of the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel in order for it to discharge its statutory responsibilities once a final decision has been announced on the Improving Healthcare Together Programme.
- 2.2. The Commission is asked to consider the indicative work programmes and agree to the panels restarting. The Commission may wish to comment on potential elements of duplication.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. The Commission has responsibility for keeping under review the effectiveness of the overview and scrutiny function and to recommend, where appropriate, changes in structure, processes or ways of working.
- 3.2. An alternative option would be for the Commission to continue to be the sole scrutiny body in operation for the time being and to review again in July. This would be contrary to many of the views expressed at the Commission's meeting on 20 May.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. None for the purposes of this report.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The timetable from 1 July is that set by Council at its meeting in February 2020, with the exception of an additional meeting of the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel in July 2020.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The proposals within this report can be carried out within existing budgets..

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Overview and scrutiny bodies operate within the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 7.2. Scrutiny has had specific powers relating to health services since 2001 and to crime and disorder since 2006.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the human rights, equalities and community cohesion issues relating to the topic being scrutinised.
- 8.2. Scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 10 In line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police and Justice Act 2006, all council departments must have regard to the impact of services on crime, including anti-social behaviour and drugs. Scrutiny activity will therefore identify any implications relating to crime and disorder where appropriate.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. None for the purposes of this report.

12 APPENDICES :

Draft work programmes:

- 12.1. Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny Commission
- 12.2. Appendix B – Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- 12.3. Appendix C- Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- 12.4. Appendix D – Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny panel

13 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1. None

Appendix A

Overview and Scrutiny Commission draft work programme 2020/21

Meeting date – 15 July 2020

Item/Issue
Merton's Public Space Protection Order – pre decision scrutiny
Scrutiny Improvement Plan – to include analysis of Members Survey
Overview and Scrutiny annual report

Meeting date – 9 September 2020

BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton
Safer Merton Update (Community Resilience and Domestic Violence)
Covid 19 update – to include information on communications
COVID 19 Transport Plan

Meeting date – 11 November 2020

Voluntary Sector Capacity – invite MVSC
Covid 19 update – to include information on impact on budget
Budget scrutiny round 1 – incl info on cost of London Living Wage

Meeting date 20 January 2021 – scrutiny of the budget

Budget scrutiny round 2
Covid 19 update if any urgent business

Meeting date 17 March 2021

BCU Commander – crime and policing in Merton
Safer Merton Update (ASB and serious violence)
Customer contact strategy and access to services through the council's website

Meeting date 28 April 2021

Universal Credit – invite CAB and Trussell Trust
Equality And Community Cohesion Strategy Action Plan
Demographic Profile Of Councillors And Senior Council Managers
Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report
Analysis of Members Survey

Children and Young People draft work programme 2020/21

30 September 2020

• Covid 19 update – to include info on school opening status and attendance, including attendance of key worker children and ‘vulnerable’ children
• Harris Wimbledon
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme 20/21

4 November 2020

• Budget/business planning (round 1)
• Covid 19 update – Access to education for vulnerable children
• SEND Provision
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme 20/21

15 January 2021

• Budget/business planning (round 2)
• Covid 19 update – Children’s social care
• Corporate parenting report
• Cabinet Member priorities
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme 20/21

10 February 2021

• Merton Safeguarding Children Board - Annual report
• Teacher Recruitment and Retention
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme 20/21

27 April 2021

• Schools standards - Annual report
• Community Hubs / Youth Centres
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme 21/22

Appendix C

Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel draft work programme 2020/21

Note - Discussions on public health topics will take place in July as the department is currently focussed on the COVID 19 response.

Meeting date – 21 July 2020

Panel discussion on the final decision of the Improving Healthcare Together Programme.
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Commissioning arrangements in South West London – Update on the new merged CCG's and the implications for Merton as a place.
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Meeting date 2 September 2020

COVID-19 – How Adult Social Care is managing the response over the next 12 months and preparing for wave two. Including lessons learned from the early outbreak and work with partners, impact on specific communities within care homes and support to those who are shielding.
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NHS South West London - response to COVID-19
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Commissioning arrangements in South West London – Update on the new merged CCG's and the implications for Merton as a place.
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Meeting date 3 November

Mental Health Services – Update on support provided to the community as a result of COVID-19
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Draft Business Plan – budget scrutiny round one

Meeting date 11 January 2021 Scrutiny of the Budget

Draft Business Plan – budget scrutiny round two

Meeting date 09 February 2021

Access to GP Surgeries –update report setting out comparative data on access to GP appointments across South West London. The Panel will also consider out of hours GP Services

Safeguarding Adults Annual Report

Safeguarding Adults Reviews

Meeting date 26 April 2021

Agenda items tbc

Sustainable Communities draft work programme 2020/21

1 September 2020

• Scrutiny of external body: Idverde
• Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning (receive feedback on recommendations)
• Bishopsford Road Bridge update
• Climate Strategy and Action Plan
• Covid-19 Transport Strategy
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme 20/21

2 November 2020

• Budget/business planning (round 1)
• Clarion Housing Group (focus on repairs and maintenance)
• Housing Strategy
• Support for private renters
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

19 January 2021

• Budget/business planning (round 2)
• Roadworks/Utilities programme
• Lorries/HGV's
• Sustainable Travel / Transport Strategy update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

23 February 2021

• Clarion Housing Group (focus on regeneration)
• Design Review Panel
• Morden Town Centre redevelopment
• Performance monitoring:
• Work programme

29 March 2021

• Idverde
• Library and Heritage Service
• Merton Adult Education
• GLL Leisure
• Parking Charges
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

