

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2007/08

London Borough of Merton

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Foreword

Overview and Scrutiny at Merton operates within a balanced Council in which no party holds an overall majority. This balance is reflected in an equal division of Panel Chairs between the two major parties, with an Independent Chair of the Commission. In addition, no overall control has ensured greater opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of important policy initiatives on a cross-party basis before they proceed to Cabinet and Council for decision.

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission/Panels have undertaken a varied work programme during 2007/08 that was determined after consultation with key stakeholders and by considering how the items selected for review would contribute to the achievement of the strategic priorities in the Council's Business Plan and to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement.

The 2007/08 Overview and Scrutiny work programme has been delivered through a range of pre decision scrutiny reviews, policy reviews undertaken by smaller Task Groups and through consideration of key performance issues highlighted by the Performance Monitoring Lead for each Panel.

The outcomes of the 2007/08 work programme are outlined in greater detail by Panel in this Annual Report and highlight our successes and the impact that Overview and Scrutiny at Merton has made on the performance of services delivered by the Authority and partner organisations.

This year we have successfully developed and agreed with partners an External Scrutiny Protocol to ensure that partner organisations understand their relationship with Overview and Scrutiny and what is expected of both parties when a review is undertaken.

Members have continued to implement the recommendations of the Review of Scrutiny undertaken by Professor Steve Leach in 2006. In response to comments on the role of Overview and Scrutiny Panels/Commission in the budget setting and business planning process, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission initiated a review of best practice in other Local Authorities and met with other Members and Officers to discuss how best Scrutiny can contribute to the determination of the Budget and priorities and actions within the Business Plan. The findings will be taken forward as part of the 2008/09 work programme.

We have also recently appointed two new Scrutiny Officers to the Team to increase the dedicated support available to the Commission/Panels to undertake their work programmes and to ensure that we are constantly improving and building upon our reputation as an exemplar of good practice, locally, regionally and nationally. For example, we facilitated training for Managers, held an event on Councillor Call for Action as part of the London Scrutiny Network Programme and hosted an event for London Councils on Overview and Scrutiny.

In addition, the 2008 Annual Members Survey has shown that Members' perception of scrutiny as effective has increased from 55% in 2007 to 61% in 2008 (target 60%). Other improvements include increases in satisfaction with pre-decision scrutiny 56% to 65%; budget scrutiny 30% to 60%; and performance monitoring 34% to 55%.

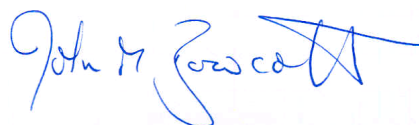
We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Scrutiny Members in undertaking and delivering the annual Overview and Scrutiny work programme 2007/08 and to thank the Scrutiny Team for supporting Members in their scrutiny role and adding value to the work of the Authority and its partners.

We would also like to thank Officers of the Authority and of partner organisations for their contribution to the delivery of the scrutiny annual work programme.

We look forward to the year ahead, to achieving our targets in relation to improvement activity and increased community and partner engagement in Overview and Scrutiny and to delivering successful outcomes from our work that contribute to improving the quality of life of the residents of Merton.



Councillor Peter Southgate
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny
Commission



Councillor John Bowcott
Vice-chair of the Overview and Scrutiny
Commission

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission have a thematic remit and are responsible for scrutinising: -

- Co-ordination of the annual input of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to the Business Plan and Budget formulation processes;
- Identifying issues for in-depth study by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and to set up task-and-finish groups for crosscutting and/or strategic issues that fall outside the remit of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- Putting forward suggestions for review topics to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for consideration when they set their work programmes;
- Endorsing the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for the Commission and the Overview and Scrutiny Panels;
- Responsible for call-in of decisions that are cross-cutting in nature or that have been subject to pre-decision scrutiny by an Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- Endorsing the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for submission to Council;
- Keeping the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function under review and recommending, where appropriate, changes in structures, processes or ways of working; and
- Acting as a co-coordinating body with the Cabinet, to facilitate Overview and Scrutiny's contribution to Merton's strategic priorities

During 2007/08 the Overview and Scrutiny Commission met nine times to look at a wide variety of items within their remit.

Members undertook and delivered the following Work Programme that was determined further to consultation with Panel Members, Co-opted Members, Merton residents, Senior Officers, local voluntary and community organisations and partner organisations.

The outcomes of the Commissions work during 2007/08 has contributed to the achievement of Merton's key strategic themes, aims and objectives within the Business Plan 2007-2010 and to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement and Community Plan 2006-2015.

Scrutiny reviews

- **Scrutiny Review of Neighbourhood Governance**

The Commission considered the Final Report of the review of neighbourhood governance, considering each of the recommendations in turn, prior to the submission of the Report to Cabinet. The recommendations concerned the Council retaining a series of area forums across the Borough; undertaking a feasibility study for area committees in 2009/10 to explore appropriate arrangements for rolling out area committees across the borough; and investment in area forums.

Members also made recommendations on the number of area forums, support provided, reporting and responding mechanisms, establishing best practice, and the Overview and Scrutiny Commission leading on and evaluating a pilot programme with devolved budgets to ward Councillors, working with local people and groups, to identify priorities for projects to benefit from the fund.

Members highlighted the importance of establishing a Working Group, comprising Members, officers and partners, to prepare for the introduction of scrutiny of Merton's Local Strategic Partnership and Merton's Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Equally the importance of the Council inviting questions periodically from members of the public, enabling local people to address council in person, and widening access for the residents to observe and participate in the public meetings of Cabinet was reinforced by the Commission.

Outcome: Cabinet considered and agreed to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. Members were later informed that five new area forums would begin to meet in May 2008, that a growth request had been made for an officer to lead on this area and that preparation for the recruitment of an officer was underway. The Commission appointed a Task Review Champion to monitor progress regarding implementation of the recommendations agreed.

- **Scrutiny Review of Council Enforcement Policies**

Members undertook a review of the Council's enforcement policies and made a number of recommendations to Cabinet that were subsequently agreed and an Action Plan drawn up in response.

Outcome: Members agreed to monitor the outcomes of their review and the achievement of the Action Plan on a six monthly basis until such time as the Panel felt appropriate.

- **Merton Partnership Annual Report 2006/07**

Members considered the Annual Report of the Merton Partnership, Merton's Local Strategic Partnership that oversees and ensures the delivery of the aims and priorities of Merton's Local Agreement and Community Plan 2006-2015.

The Commission had some general concerns about the clarity of some of the targets and their apparent focus on organisational arrangements rather than the impact the activities had on people's lives. Members also felt it would be helpful if each target indicated which partners were involved in its delivery. The Commission considered the targets for each of the Thematic Partnerships in turn and were advised that the Community Plan would be refreshed further to consultation with key stakeholders.

Outcome: Members suggested that Local Area Agreement targets and the Community Plan targets and priorities would be better expressed in terms of outcomes that reflect improvements to the community, rather than the development structural/process arrangements, when the Community Plan is refreshed.

- **Merton's New Style Local Area Agreement**

Members were presented with information for consideration and comment on the proposals for the refresh of Merton's Local Area Agreement that would be effective from 1 April 2008. Members were informed of the Government's requirements for the new style of Local Area Agreements and asked for their views on the proposed priorities and the provisional list of indicators for Merton, drawn from the National Indicator Set, prior to submission to Government Office for London for approval.

Members highlighted the importance of avoiding duplication of targets within the Local Area Agreement. Members were also keen to ensure that responsible officers within the Authority and other key partner organisations raised awareness of the Local Area Agreement and the role of the Merton Partnership, the Safer Merton Partnership and other thematic/strategic, operational and community/neighborhood level partnerships played in the delivery of the aims and priorities for Merton as outlined within the Community Plan.

Outcome: Members agreed to receive updates on the development of the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 and to comment upon performance information against the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement on a six monthly basis, making recommendations to partner organisations as appropriate.

Further information on Merton's Local Area Agreement can be accessed at: - <http://www.mertonpartnership.org/>

- **Mission for Merton**

Outcome: Members considered and commented upon the development of the Mission for Merton which would refocus Merton's priorities and strategic aims and reinforce the link between the various strategic and operational plans, internally,

and the aims and objectives of the Local Area Agreement externally. The Mission for Merton had been consulted upon with various key stakeholders.

- **Volunteering Strategy for Merton**

Members were presented with the Draft Volunteering Strategy for Merton that recognised the importance of working with the voluntary and community sector and the contribution that volunteering made to ensuring social cohesion and addressing worklessness. The Voluntary and Community sector also contribute to the delivery of a number of targets within Merton's Local Area Agreement. The Authority produced the Strategy in consultation with the Volunteer Centre Merton (VCM) and, following approval of the Strategy by Cabinet, a detailed Action Plan would be drawn up that would address the issues regarding succession, planning and progression in more detail.

Outcome: Members commented on the Draft Strategy and raised their concerns regarding the provision of funding, support and training.

- **Merton's Local Area Agreement – Performance Information**

Outcome: Members considered the progress made in delivering against the targets and indicators within Merton's Local Area Agreement by considering performance information on a six monthly basis and commenting, as appropriate, to the Merton Partnership Executive Board.

- **Social Inclusion Strategy and Corporate Charging Strategy**

Members were asked for their comments on the Authorities Social Inclusion and Corporate Charging Strategy. Merton had developed the policy further to a review of existing good practice in other Local Authorities; the findings of a review undertaken by the Audit Commission, entitled 'Positively Charged', and informed by a review of charging by Pricewaterhouse Coopers. The Strategy was also developed using tools provided by the Audit Commission that enabled comparison with other authorities.

Outcome: Members commented upon the Strategy and requested updates with regard to the success of the Strategy once implemented.

- **Draft Third Sector Strategy**

Outcome: Commission Members had an early opportunity to comment on a first draft of the Third Sector Strategy being developed to create a step-change in the Authority's relationship with the third sector, centred on clear priorities and outcomes for Merton residents. Members suggested amendments and additions to the draft strategy in a number of areas and agreed to consider a final version at a future meeting.

- **Post Office Closures**

In May 2007 the Government announced a programme of measures designed to put the Post Office on a stable footing. The 'Network Change Programme' is central to this process and involves the closure of up to 2,500 Post office branches nationally, each branch judged according to minimum access criteria.

London currently has 852 Post Office branches and the London Area Plan proposes the closure of 169 branches, leaving 681 branches open - almost a 20% reduction in the number of branches in London. This number of proposed closures is substantially more than anticipated during preliminary discussions at a London level with Post Office Ltd. Overall the Post Office proposed the closure of six post offices in Merton, leaving 15 branches open plus the Crown Office in Raynes Park, a reduction of over 27%.

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission considered the implications of the closure of a number of Post Offices for Merton residents and facilitated a number of consultation events to seek the views of members of the public for whom the closures would have a significant impact in terms of accessing services.

Outcome: The views of Members and of residents were submitted formally to Post Office Ltd regarding the proposed branch closures in Merton. On 7th May 2008, it was announced by Post Office Ltd that the proposal to close Kingston Road Post Office, one of the six branches originally proposed for closure in Merton, would not proceed. Commission Members welcomed this decision, whilst continuing to oppose the remaining closures in Merton.

Call In

Merton changed its call-in process at the beginning of the 2006/07 municipal year following a full review of the overview and scrutiny function in March 2006. The determination of whether a request is valid is now taken by the Monitoring Officer, who assesses the information provided through the call-in form against the criteria set out in the constitution. As long as call-in requests meet these criteria there is a presumption that the call-in should be heard. In addition to this, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel responsible for the subject area now hears call-ins, rather than the overarching Overview and Scrutiny Commission as used to happen, unless the Panel has been engaged in pre decision Scrutiny or the item is cross cutting.

The following items were called in during 2007/08: -

- **Fairer Charging Policy Update, Increase in Meals on Wheels, Home Care Day Centre Charges and Introduction of Transport Charges**

Members called in the decision made by Cabinet regarding the Fairer Charging Policy, following pre-decision scrutiny by the Health & Community Care Scrutiny Panel at the end of 2006/7. Members were concerned that the Policy would have a disproportionate impact upon vulnerable groups, given the increase in charges and that Cabinet did not provide Scrutiny with an opportunity to comment as part of the budget process. Members were also concerned that the consultation programme for the Policy had been insufficient and felt that it should be extended to ensure the views of all stakeholders were heard.

Further to their discussion of the call in and consideration of the evidence presented by representatives from Mencap and Merton's Learning Disability Partnership Board, Members supported the decision made by Cabinet on the Fairer Charging Policy, believing that, on balance, it would not be in the interests of service users or their carers to ask Cabinet to reconsider its decision. Members also requested that Cabinet agree to prepare revised and extended proposals for consultation for any future changes to the Fairer Charging Policy.

In addition Members made a number of references to Cabinet highlighting that failure to complete consultation in time to feed into the budget scrutiny process prevented the Health & Community Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel from carrying out meaningful scrutiny of the proposed increases in charges and considering alternative options for achieving the required savings and requested that Cabinet reconsider whether the proposed increase in the charge for home care continued to represent value for money to users, bearing in mind that the current charge was already well above the average rate for London.

Outcome: Having given consideration to the reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, and having considered information on comparative figures for home care charges from other London Boroughs, Cabinet reaffirmed its earlier decision in relation to Fairer Charging Policy and confirmed its view that increased home care charges represent value for money for service users.

The Cabinet also acted on Members request for better consultation in future and agreed to monitor the effect of the increase in service charges; to Disability Related Expenses being looked at; and to the approved charges taking effect from May 2007 (or such appropriate date as the Director of Community and Housing determined).

Scrutiny of the Budget and Business Plan 2008-2011

The Council's constitution requires Overview and Scrutiny to be consulted as part of the process to develop the Council's Business Plan and Budget. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers the comments and findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and determines a number of recommendations from the reviews to submit a co-ordinated response from Scrutiny to Cabinet on the Business Plan and Budget.

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission have undertaken a review of the current practice at Merton regarding scrutiny of the Authority's budget and business plan and how this process can be improved, seeking best practice from other Local Authorities as part of this review.

Outcome: A Member Champion was appointed to ensure the successful completion of the review and interviews were held with Members to determine their views on how effective current practices are in scrutinising the budget and business plan. The findings of the review will be considered by the Commission as part of their 2008/09 work programme.

Health and Community Care Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The Health and Community Care Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel have a thematic remit and are responsible for scrutinising: -

- Adult Social Care Services;
- Health, including discharging the Council's responsibilities in respect of the Health and Social Care Act 2001;
- Health Scrutiny Consultation;
- Annual Health Checks;
- Scrutiny of substantial variations or developments in health service provision;
- Joint Health Scrutiny with other Boroughs; and
- Health Inequalities

During 2007/08 the Health and Community Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel met five times as a Panel to look at a wide variety of items within the Panels remit.

Members undertook and delivered the following work programme that was determined further to consultation with Panel Members, Co-opted Members, Merton residents, Senior Officers, local voluntary and community organisations and partner organisations.

The outcomes of the Panels work during 2007/08 have contributed to the achievement of Merton's key strategic themes, aims and objectives within the Business Plan 2007-2010 and to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement and Community Plan 2006-2015.

Scrutiny reviews

- **Scrutiny Review of Ill Health and Early Intervention**

In 2006 the Health & Community Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel appointed four Working Groups to undertake a cross cutting review on prevention of ill health and early intervention to determine how preventative measures could promote well-being, reduce pressures on local health and community care services and contribute to narrowing the health inequalities gap.

The four Working Groups covered the following themes/issues:-

- Keeping Fit and Well (including physical activity, leisure opportunities);
- Breaking the Habit (drugs, alcohol, tobacco addiction);
- Older People's Health (including chiropody, dentistry); and
- Young People's Health (including healthy schools, vaccination, TB)

In addition, the Panel met as a whole to consider issues regarding mental health and primary health care resources. A considerable number of recommendations emerged from the Panel and the four Working Groups.

Outcome: The review was a cross cutting project and did not finally report until June 2007, when Cabinet received and considered the Panel's recommendations and agreed to the production of an Action Plan in consultation with the Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and South West London & St George's Mental Health Trust. As part of this work, an evaluation of the resource implications arising from the review recommendations was undertaken through liaison with the Authority's officers, Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and South West London & St George's Mental Health Trust. Work has been undertaken to draw together the recommendations from this scrutiny review with recommendations from other work relating to health and adult social care, in order to produce a comprehensive set of actions, which will help to address health inequalities in the borough.

The Health and Community Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel will monitor the implementation of the Action Plan as part of its 2008/09 Work Programme.

- **Review of GP Services**

Three Members of the Panel undertook a review of GP Services in Merton and in doing so engaged directly with a group of local GPs at a joint workshop in February 2008. This provided an opportunity for key issues relating to primary health care such as GP appointment systems, surgery premises, the use of practice nurses and the sharing of patient data with adult social service providers to be discussed.

Outcome: The Health and Community Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel approved the review report and recommendations from this work in April 2008 and the report will be presented to Cabinet in June 2008 for consideration. A key outcome is that new links have been forged between Health Scrutiny Members and local GPs. The review group members hope to follow up this work with visits to some local GPs surgeries to see first hand how they operate on a day to day basis.

Follow up to previous scrutiny reviews
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- **Transitions Review Update**

The Panel have received progress updates regarding the outcomes of the joint review of the transition from children's social services to adult social services undertaken during the 2005/06 annual work programme, through the Panel's Transition Champion, Councillor Sheila Knight. Also, the new Transitions Strategy 2007 –2012 was presented to the Panel for views and comments in April 2008.

Members were keen to ensure that their concerns and recommendations were fully addressed and implemented and felt that there was merit in engaging with young people and their carers regarding the services provided by Connexions and other service providers in the future when the changes had time to embed and their effectiveness could be determined.

Further to the review, some Members attended the Transitions Fair and discussed their findings and concerns with officers when progress updates were received.

Members agreed to continue to undertake a monitoring role with regard to the implementation of their recommendations to determine the impact they had upon transition services and the transition experience for service users and their carers.

Outcome: The Panel considered the Transitions Strategy in April 2008 and welcomed the progress being made with improvement to the transitions process for service users.

- **Day Care Review**

Outcome: The Panel Chair, Councillor Gilli Lewis-Lavender was appointed as the champion for Day Care and continues to visit Merton's day care centres on a regular basis and report back to the Panel accordingly with any issues of concern, good news stories and best practice.

Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny
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- **Celebrating Age – Valuing Experience: Merton's Strategy for Older People**

Members' comments were sought on Celebrating Age – Valuing Experience: Merton's Strategy for Older People. The Panel queried the consultation programme surrounding the Strategy and was pleased to hear that the Merton Seniors Forum was consulted, amongst others.

Outcome: Members comments were taken into account in further revisions to the Draft Strategy.

- **Adult Social Care Improvement Programme**

Members received a report from the Head of Community Care and the Project Manager for the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme regarding the Adult Social Care Improvement Programme.

Members were informed that, as part of this programme, more than forty support services had been established and developed, one of which being a support line to enable individuals to call with any concerns about an adult protection issue, either at home, in care or in a medical setting which would replace all other existing help lines. Members noted that various projects would be brought to the Panel in the future for comments and suggestions.

The Panel agreed to oversee the progress of the Adult Social Care Improvement Programme to consider key projects from the programme as a Review Group. Members also considered the introduction of a new inspection regime from April 2008 and expressed concerns about the safety risks for vulnerable clients that this might involve.

Outcome: The Adult Social Care Review Group continued to meet to consider further projects from the Transformation Programme and updated the Panel on the changes to the inspection regime in terms of how they would impact upon the delivery of adult social care services in Merton. Members requested that the Group provide the Panel with regular progress updates on the Transformation Programme as part of the Panels 2008/09 work programme.

- **NSF Neurological Long-Term Conditions**

Members considered the progress made in implementing the NSF (Neurological Long-Term Conditions) Framework, which was in the early stages of delivery. Although this issue had a low profile nationally, Members were keen to establish how many people in Merton were affected, what had changed as a result of the framework and what difference it had made. Members also questioned the level of ownership at senior level of this issue, whether in Health or Social Care.

Outcome: Members received responses to their questions and were satisfied that the Local Authority and Primary Care Trust (PCT) would address the issues raised in due course in order to ensure that satisfactory progress was made. The implementation of the framework will be monitored during 2008/9

- **Outcomes of PCT Review of Value for Money in Primary Care**

Members received a report regarding the outcomes of the PCT review of Value for Money in Primary Care that considered the number of Doctors in GP Surgeries, number of practice nurses and access targets. The Review had also determined the outcomes of patient surveys, facilitated by IPSOS/MORI and another local survey undertaken during 2007. Members were informed that the 2007 national survey gave an 84% satisfaction rate. Members noted that the PCT is currently discussing with practice based commissioning groups the approach to 'fair share' budgets for 2008/9, i.e. budgets that allocate resources on the basis of actual need, rather than on the basis of the historic costs of health care services to a given population.

Outcome: The outcomes of the above were considered further by the GP Services Task Group in the course of their review.

- **Governance Arrangements for Joint Commissioning, Joint Service Provision and Joint Consultation Arrangements**

At the request of the Panel a report was presented by the Head of Community Care regarding the governance arrangements for Joint Commissioning, Joint Service Provision and Joint Consultation Arrangements concerning adult social care services. Members expressed concern regarding partnership arrangements, lack of formal feedback mechanisms and member involvement in partnerships.

Outcomes: In response to the concerns raised by the Panel, the PCT agreed to invite a representative from each Partnership Board to sit on the Healthier Communities Thematic Partnership in order to improve communication.

- **South West London & St George's Mental Health Trust – Mental Health Strategy**

Members received a presentation from the Chief Executive of the South West London & St George's Mental Health Trust outlining the vision and values of the trust, the ways in which these will be delivered, and the possible future foundation status of the Trust. The Chief Executive of the Trust invited Members comments on the Mental Health Strategy.

Members commented upon security and patient's safety, activity programmes, and consultation with stakeholders on the location of services for Merton patients.

Outcome: The Chief Executive of the Trust thanked Members of the Panel for their comments and for contributing to the development of the Strategy.

- **Charging for Out Of Borough Day Centres**

Members undertook pre decision scrutiny further to the report of the Director of Community & Housing regarding the charging scheme for out of Borough Day Centres. Members questioned the capacity for day centre services in Merton, the provision of out of borough centres that provided specialised services and the consultation undertaken with clients by the Authority regarding client charges.

Having considered these issues and outlined their concerns, Members agreed to submit the following reference to Cabinet: -

- That the Authority needed to show equity in terms of charging for day centre services, whether in-borough or out-borough was supported; and
- That affordability was a key issue and therefore a client's ability to pay for day centre services should be properly taken into account

The Panel recommended to Cabinet that the drop-out rate for using out of borough day centre services should be monitored to ensure there wasn't a detrimental effect on clients through incurring the charges (as recommended and agreed when the Panel scrutinised the Fairer Charging Policy in April 2007). Members also requested further information on the costings, including numbers of clients charged and income received.

Outcome: Cabinet endorsed the recommendations of the Panel as indicated and agreed to charging service users who attend day centres not managed by the Council, where those service users were formally placed under Merton's funding.

- **Peer Review of Healthier Communities Thematic Partnership**

The Director of Community and Housing presented a report to the Panel regarding the peer review of the Healthier Communities thematic partnership and associated recommendations and action plan.

Members expressed their concerns regarding Member involvement in operational partnerships accountable to the Healthier Communities Thematic Partnership, for example the Older People's Partnership. In addition Members considered the findings of the review regarding the health inequalities across the borough and the content of the Action Plan.

Outcome: The Panel endorsed the Action Plan and requested an update on the operation and performance of the partnership in the future.

Joint Health Scrutiny Work

- **Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action – Pan London Joint Health Scrutiny Committee**

The Panel considered proposals regarding the possibility of joining a Pan London Joint Health Scrutiny Committee to review the *Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action* document.

Outcome: The Panel agreed to its Chair being appointed to join the Pan London Joint Health Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Mary O'Connor from Hillingdon has chaired the Joint Committee and meetings have been held at various venues across London. A report is due to be produced by the Joint Committee in May 2008. Work will then eventually commence on Phase 2 of the proposals, when further joint scrutiny work will be undertaken.

- **Epsom & St Helier Hospitals NHS Trust Financial Recovery Plan/Better Healthcare Closer to Home Joint Health Scrutiny Committees**

A joint meeting of these two Joint Health Scrutiny Committees, which have operated concurrently, was held in April 2008, in order to consider the benefit of combining the terms of reference into one new joint committee, which would respond to key issues relating to the Trust as they emerge in future.

Outcome: At the joint meeting of the two Health Scrutiny Committees considering issues relating to Epsom & St Helier NHS Trust held in April 2008, Members agreed to the dissolution of the existing two Joint Committees and the formation of a new Joint Health Scrutiny Committee with wider terms of reference. Merton will retain 5 seats on this new committee and Annual Council will be requested to appoint these Members for 2008/9 and endorse the new terms of reference.

- **The Henderson Hospital**

The proposals by south West London 7 St George's Mental Health Trust to close the Henderson Hospital in Sutton from March 2008 was highlighted to Scrutiny Members at a very late stage. Merton, together with other neighbouring boroughs where patients have used the services of the Henderson (for treating personality disorders) formally agreed that the proposed closure represented a substantial variation in service, therefore requiring formal consultation and a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.

Outcome: The Panel Vice-Chair, Councillor Sheila Knight was appointed to represent Merton on the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, which will meet in the near future. The lead PCT for the Henderson Hospital, (West Kent) has agreed that formal consultation is required and is being worked on at present.

Scrutiny of the Budget and Business Plan 2008-2011

The Council's constitution requires Overview and Scrutiny to be consulted as part of the process to develop the Council's Business Plan and Budget. The Panel is responsible for considering the proposals relating to its thematic remit and forwarding any comments and/or recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission who provide a co-ordinated response from Scrutiny to Cabinet on the Business Plan and Budget.

Outcome: The Panel examined the draft budget 2008/09-2010/11 and the proposed Business Plan priorities, planned outcomes and performance measures. Members also considered and commented upon the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Performance Management

Each Overview and Scrutiny Panel appoints a Member performance lead to undertake a monitoring role in relation to the Authority's performance against key targets and delivery of strategic aims and objectives within the Community Plan, Business Plan and Departmental Plans, as well as the performance of the Authority in contributing to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement.

Outcome: The lead Members for performance monitoring for the Health & Community Care Panel 2007/8 were Councillors Jeremy Bruce and Gregory Udeh, who have selected performance indicators for scrutiny by the Panel throughout the year. They have utilised the performance information on the Dashboard System to identify key performance issues and trends that fall within the remit of the Panel. Lead Officers have then been invited to account for underperformance against a particular indicator/group of indicators. The indicators monitored during 2007/8 included: -

- Waiting times for assessment
- Take up of direct payments
- Numbers of adults with physical disabilities helped to live at home
- Numbers of adults with learning disabilities helped to live at home

Items monitored

- **Review Group to Monitor the Mental Health Inspection Action Plan**

Outcome: The Panel's Mental Health Review Group concluded its monitoring of the Action Plan and has continued to meet in order to consider the Review of Adult Community Mental Health Services being conducted by the Mental Health Trust and the PCT, including the issue of mental health services for older people. This work has arisen through the Mental Health Inspection Action Plan and the Review Group will continue to meet as required and feedback to the Panel as necessary.

- **Sutton & Merton PCT Learning Disability Services Action Plan**

Further to an informal meeting with the acting Chief Executive of the PCT, it was agreed that the Sutton & Merton PCT Learning Disability Services Action Plan would be presented to the Panel on a quarterly basis for consideration and comment.

Members were provided with the context of the Action Plan and the progress that had already been made, in particular at Orchard Hill. Members were informed that the PCT had invited the Healthcare Commission to work with them to improve the service to ensure that the standards of service did not decline again.

Outcome: Members will continue to receive updates alongside the Action Plan regarding progress made in delivering the Plan and improving the service. A report to the Panel on the outcome of the re-inspection of the Learning Disability Service by the Healthcare Commission is also awaited.

Other issues considered

- **LINKs (Local Involvement Networks)**

Members were briefed on the introduction of Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) within the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Members were informed that LINKs would replace Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forums (PPIF), from April 2008, as a mechanism by which members of the public, service users and carers, receiving health and social care services, would be able to affect the design and delivery of services in their area, in consultation with the local NHS Primary Care Trust and the Local Authority. One feature of this mechanism is the ability of the LINK to refer any issue of concern to scrutiny, Health and Community Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel according to Merton's scrutiny arrangements) for consideration.

Members sought nominations from local PPIFs to appoint a representative to the Panel. Two representatives were nominated and appointed to the Panels membership, one from the PCT PPIF and one from the Mental Health Trust PPIF.

Outcome: The Panel agreed to undertake a monitoring role with regard to the procurement of a host organisation for the LINK and has been able to comment on the development and establishment of the LINK.

- **The Annual Health Check 2006/2007: Healthcare Commission - Performance Ratings for NHS Trusts**

Members considered the annual health check Healthcare Commission Performance Ratings for the NHS Trusts and were informed that the PCT's ratings of 'Weak' and 'Fair' were largely due to non-compliance with regard to Orchard Hill. A further report was presented to the Panel at a later meeting regarding two specific surveys carried out by the Healthcare Commission, relating to treatment of patients with diabetes, and those who suffered heart failure. The PCT were found to be top in London with regard to the former, and were given an 'Excellent' rating for the latter.

Outcome: The Health and Community Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the scrutiny responses to the draft declarations for local NHS trusts at

the April 2008 Panel meeting and will consider the outcomes of the annual health check 2007/08 during their 2008/09 work programme.

- **Podiatry Services: Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust's Assessment of Current Client Needs**

Members' comments and questions regarding Podiatry Services and Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust's Assessment of Current Client Needs were responded to by the PCT

Outcome: Members were advised that appeals were still being received from patients who had been discharged from the service under the new criteria and that a final figure was difficult to determine at present. It was confirmed, however, that the telephone system was now fully operational. The Panel was advised that the service is working on the promotion of self-care and independence in a number of ways, including via leading workshops.

- **Annual Performance Assessment for Adult Social Care**

Members were asked to comment on and endorse the Authority's response to the performance rating given by the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate regarding its adult social care services.

Outcome: Members questioned the Authority's Adult Social Care Officers and endorsed the performance rating given.

Life Chances Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The Life Chances Overview and Scrutiny Panel are responsible for scrutinising: -

- Children's Social Care Services;
- Education Access, Opportunity and Inclusion;
- Early years;
- Educational Services, Inspectors, Consultants and Governor;
- Support;
- Online Research Services;
- Youth Offending Team;
- Youth Service;
- Library Heritage; and
- Merton Adult Education

During 2007/08 the Life Chances Overview and Scrutiny Panel met seven times to look at a wide variety of items within the Panels remit.

Members undertook and delivered the following work programme that was determined further to consultation with Panel Members, Co-opted Members, Merton residents, Senior Officers, primarily within the Children, Schools and Families Directorate, local voluntary and community organisations and partner organisations.

The outcomes of the Panels work during 2007/08 have contributed to the achievement of Merton's key strategic themes, aims and objectives within the Business Plan 2007-2010 and to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement and Community Plan 2006-2015.

Scrutiny reviews

- **Gang Culture in Merton**

Members established a Task Group to review gang culture in Merton to look at the issue of criminal gang activity and determine ways to discourage young people from joining criminal gangs in Merton. Members of the Task Group sought to determine levels of involvement of young people in gang culture in Merton – in both numbers and depth of involvement; the effects of gang culture on young people and on the families and siblings of young gang members; and how the socio-economic demographics of domestic arrangements impacted upon young people in Merton.

The Task Group also investigated how the Authority's role in addressing the problem of gang culture in Merton; how the Authority and other agencies were working in partnership across the borough in order to improve the position in Merton; and determined what best practice existed locally, regionally and nationally.

Outcome: The Task Group agreed that the work currently being undertaken by the Council and partners was positive and on the whole very successful. The Task Group will forward their recommendations to Cabinet for consideration in June 2008.

Follow up to previous scrutiny reviews

- **Scrutiny Review of the Libraries Service**

As part of their 2007/08 work programme the Panel undertook a scrutiny review of Libraries to look at ways to improve footfall and usage of library services across the borough. Members of the Task Group found that libraries were an integral part of the local community and sought to explore the diverse requirements of the service from the community and the ways in which the service could meet the current and future needs of people in the borough.

The Task Group made a number of recommendations to Cabinet that were split into four key areas: -

- Improving usage and reaching a wider cross section of the community;
- Providing facilities and services that users want;
- Marketing and publicity of services; and
- Budget, staffing and financial issues

Outcomes: Cabinet considered and agreed the recommendations and produced an Improvement Plan. The Plan pulled together the recommendations of the Panel's Review of Library Services; the subsequent library review undertaken by consultants; Library staff input through the Fitter, Faster, Focused workshops; and other relevant drivers such as Investors in People into one plan.

The Panel later considered this Improvement Plan and raised their concerns regarding the proposed reduction in hours being in conflict with the Business Plan priorities; the bid for capital funding to refurbish the library; the use of volunteers for the Home Library Service; and the impact of the suggested savings the service intends to make upon vulnerable groups and the possibility that this may discourage usage of libraries in the borough.

A Libraries Task Review Champion was appointed by the Panel to undertake a monitoring role to ensure that the Task Groups recommendations and the Improvement Plan were delivered and implemented. The Task Review Champion submits regular updates on progress in delivering the Improvement Plan to the Life Chances Overview and Scrutiny Panel and will continue to do so as part of the Panels 2008/09 Work programme.

Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny

• **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision in Merton's Schools**

The Panel were given the opportunity to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on the proposals to enhance Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in Merton's schools.

As part of the discussion, Members raised queries about a number of issues, including:

- The distribution of consultation documents and the response rates;
- Findings from the consultation and the impact of these findings on the proposals;
- The impact of the proposals on the experiences of children and parents currently receiving SEN support;
- The achievability of meeting the proposed timescales set out in the report;
- The overarching strategy underpinning the separate proposals;
- Funding levels for the proposals; and
- The improvements being made at a number of schools, including Bishopsford School and the development of a 'virtual head teacher' pilot in the borough.

Following the discussion, the Panel agreed to endorse the proposals with their full backing, although Members noted that they planned to keep the funding to deliver these proposals under review to ensure that adequate resources were being provided.

Outcome: The Panel commented upon and considered the proposals and supported their submission to Cabinet for agreement.

• **Options for the Organisation of Secondary School Provision in Merton**

The Panel undertook pre-decision scrutiny by considering the options for the organisation of secondary school provision in Merton. A key element of the strategy for secondary schools in Merton "Options for the Future" was the proposal to develop new sixth form provision. It is envisaged that for four schools with no sixth form provision, this extended offer would make the schools more attractive to parents and pupils, as well as assisting in driving up standards.

Whilst the Panel supported the plans outlined in the report on the options for the organisation of secondary school provision in Merton, Members expressed their concerns regarding the roles that collaboration and competition would play in bringing the proposals to fruition and regarding the delivery of a whole curriculum that would enable children and their parents to have a choice in the secondary education provision in Merton.

Members acknowledged that competition was essential in the drive to build up standards but urged the four schools and the wider community of Merton secondary education to support each other and work together to ensure the successful transformation of all four schools. The Panel furthermore urged that all the schools should start off with the same chances, on the 'level playing field' principle.

The Panel also agreed, in principle, to the idea of an Education Board with a request that the Panel be informed of the progress of the Board when membership had been established.

Finally Members considered the extent of support that would be offered to children during the change; the need for support to be given to the schools in developing and implementing the proposals both in terms of curriculum development and the built environment; the level of proposed consultation; and the marketing strategy which would need to be sustainable with a long-term focus and cover all schools in Merton.

The Panel supported the longer-term aim to provide a sustainable level of education to the children of Merton. The Panel agreed unanimously and wholeheartedly that the proposed development of sixth form, combined with the marketing strategy, is essential to this aim. Members were keen, however, to express their concern to Cabinet regarding the proposed start date and the importance of implementing the scheme as soon as was feasible.

Outcome: Cabinet considered the Panels recommendations.

Scrutiny of the Budget and Business Plan 2008-2011

The Council's constitution requires Overview and Scrutiny to be consulted as part of the process to develop the Council's Business Plan and Budget. The Panel is responsible for considering the proposals relating to its thematic remit and forwarding any comments and/or recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission who provide a co-ordinated response from Scrutiny to Cabinet on the Business Plan and Budget.

Outcome: The Panel examined the draft budget 2008/09-2010/11 and the proposed Business Plan priorities, planned outcomes and performance measures. Members also considered and commented upon the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Performance Management

Each Scrutiny Panel appoints a Member performance lead to undertake a monitoring role in relation to the Authority's performance against key targets and delivery of strategic aims and objectives within the Community Plan, Business Plan and Departmental Plans, as well as the performance of the Authority in contributing to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement. Members also ensure that the Authority's performance management arrangements are robust and efficient.

Outcome: The performance lead utilises the performance information on the Dashboard System to identify key performance issues and trends that fall within the remit of the Panel. Members are able to consider any key performance issues by inviting Lead Officers to account for underperformance against a particular indicator/group of indicators, or by agreeing to undertake a review, as a whole Panel or as a smaller Task Group.

Items monitored

- **Merton's Children's Trust**

The Panel undertook the role of performance monitoring Merton's Children's Trust, the thematic partnership responsible for the delivery of the Children and Young People Block of Merton's Local Area Agreement and guiding the delivery of the Merton Children and Young People's Plan 2006 -2009.

The Task Group held a number of meetings and site visits to explore the role of the Children's Trust and its performance. Members considered the proposals for the Special Educational Needs and Behaviour Review consultation and how the proposals impacted upon the Children's Trust, the governance arrangements and membership of the Children's Trust Board, the experiences of Brighton and Hove Council (which was an original Pathfinder pilot for Children's Trusts) and the plans and strategies driving the work programme of the Children's Trust.

Outcomes: Overall, the Task Group was happy with the partnerships arrangements and the 'virtual' Trust scheme adopted for Merton's Children's Trust which brought together a cross-agency approach to the provision of services for children and young people.

The Task Group agreed that it was essential for scrutiny to maintain an overview of the development of the Children's Trust and its contribution to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement.

The Life Chances Panel will continue to receive regular updates on the Children's Trust as part of their 2008/09 work programme.

Other issues considered

- **Draft School Standards Report**

The Panel reviewed the Draft School Standards Report for the Academic Year 2006-2007 to determine performance in Key Stage tests of pupils in Merton schools and areas for further improvements.

Members made the following comments/suggestions in relation to improving educational attainment from Foundation Stage up to Key Stage 4: -

- Members questioned the importance of further developing communication, language and literacy at foundation stage;
- Members reinforced the importance of working with Children's Centres to identify children at foundation stage requiring further support and to facilitate the assistance they required;
- Members expressed concern regarding under achievement of vulnerable groups, particularly BME pupils, at Key Stage 1;
- Members questioned the possibility of underachievement if preparation and standards at lower Key Stages is inadequate;

- The extent to which the Children's Plan had progressed and the opportunities for parents to get more involved in their children's education being facilitated was queried (with a request that the Draft Parenting Strategy be brought to the Panel for consideration as part of their 2008/09 work programme).

Outcome: Members were assured that any issues regarding underachievement at the various Key Stages were being addressed and that the Academies and educational provision at Key Stage 4 were moving in the right direction. Members suggested that other schools in the borough might find it useful to work with staff at the new Academies to consider methods for raising standards.

Regeneration and the Public Realm Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The Regeneration and the Public Realm Overview and Scrutiny Panel have a thematic remit and are responsible for scrutinising: -

- Drug Action Team;
- Regeneration;
- Street Management;
- Planning and Public Protection;
- Property and Service Development;
- Leisure and Landscape Facilities;
- Parks and Open space;
- Housing Policy;
- Housing Services; and
- Leisure and Sports Development

During 2007/08 the Regeneration and the Public Realm Overview and Scrutiny Panel met six times to look at a wide variety of items within the Panels remit.

Members undertook and delivered the following work programme that was determined further to consultation with Panel Members, Co-optees, Merton residents, Senior Officers, primarily within the Environment and Regeneration Directorate, local voluntary and community organisations and partner organisations.

The outcomes of the Panels work during 2007/08 have contributed to the achievement of Merton's key strategic themes, aims and objectives within the Business Plan 2007-2010 and to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement and Community Plan 2006-2015.

Scrutiny reviews

Members undertook the following in depth scrutiny reviews as part of their 2007/08 Work Programme: -

- **Scrutiny Review of the Planning Application Process**

A Task Group was formed to undertake a review of the planning application process in Merton to examine the effectiveness of the planning application process. The terms of reference specifically excluded the review of individual applications and of planning policy apart from where it had an impact on the application process.

The review identified improvements that could be made to the current application process and Members conclusions were drawn from a consideration of best practice literature and guidance, public opinion, and how development control may change in the future. Recommendations were made by the Panel under five main headings: - Information; Guidance and Training (both for residents and Councillors); Planning Application Committee; Consultation with residents; Speed, efficiency and operation; and Member involvement.

Outcome: Cabinet submitted an Action Plan to the Panel outlining how the recommendations would be taken forward. The Panel will monitor the implementation of their recommendations against the Action Plan.

- **Sports and Active Recreation Provision in Merton**

Members formed a Task Group to identify the existing sports and active recreation provision in Merton provided by the private sector and private clubs, to review the Authority's existing provision and to contribute to the development of an overarching facility strategy for sport and active recreation provision in Merton.

Outcome: Cabinet will consider the recommendations of the Task Group at a future meeting.

Follow up to previous scrutiny reviews

- **Waste Collection Review**

Members of the Panel undertook a review of the Authority's Waste Collection Service as part of their 2006/07 Work Programme. The Panel formed a Waste Collection Review Champions Task Group to monitor the implementation of the recommendations from the review that were agreed by Cabinet.

The Review Champions Task Group identified one key recommendation that had not been progressed, 'the introduction of a dual wheeled bin system for collection of recyclable and residual waste'. Members received a response to this issue from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Traffic Management and were reassured that action would be taken.

Outcome: Members of the Panel were satisfied with the response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Traffic Management and the Review Champions Task Group have maintained a monitoring role regarding the implementation of the recommendations and associated actions outstanding as part of their 2007/08 Work Programme.

Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny

- **Disposal of HRA Land and Property**

Members undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the disposal of HRA Land and Property concerning proposals to dispose of 35 Mitcham Park, 1 Durham Road, 118 Robinson Road, land adjacent to 55 Hanover Road and 98 Worple Road SW19.

Members raised their concerns with the Authority's Housing Needs Manager regarding the spending of capital receipts and any restrictions; the impact upon housing for families; addressing demand for housing for vulnerable 16/17 year old homeless young people; the potential increase in demand for housing benefit and the possibility of refurbishing the properties to be disposed of.

The Panel recommended that all options to maximise the value of the sites/ properties be considered and that an assessment of any costs that may be generated elsewhere

for the authority as a result of the disposal of the properties be undertaken. Members also requested a response be provided regarding the capital receipt to be generated and the reasons for its allocation to the General Fund.

Outcome: The Housing Needs Manager responded to the Panel regarding Members query of the allocation of any capital receipts to the General Fund. Cabinet approved the submission of this item as a matter of urgency in order to ensure that decisions on the various sites were made in time for them to be implemented and effective within the current financial year, particularly where capital receipts were anticipated as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Members' recommendations were received and considered by Cabinet.

- **Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy**

Members received an update on the current position and outcomes in relation to the Authority's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy given its relevance to Merton's Local Area Agreement and the delivery of the 'Bridging the Gap' theme. Members raised a number of concerns about the Strategy and were informed that the Strategy would be amended early April 2008.

Members resolved to recommend to Cabinet that Officers place more effort on seeking additional funding from central government and other external sources to deliver the Strategy and to receive updates on the development and delivery of the Strategy from April 2008 for comment and consideration.

Outcomes: Members were informed that the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive had met with Government Office for London regarding Neighbourhood Renewal funding and it had been made clear that Merton would not be receiving funding from that source. The Panel agreed to consider this further when the mid-term evaluation of the strategy was available.

- **Housing Stock Transfer**

In undertaking pre decision scrutiny regarding the housing stock options for Merton, the Panel appointed a Task Group to provide a cross party forum for discussing and debating the key issues surrounding the future of Merton's housing stock and to look at the options for potential housing stock transfer.

The Panel later considered the findings of the Housing Stock Options Task Group, the report of the Head of Housing, and the draft Terms of Reference for the Steering Group and made a number of recommendations to Cabinet for their consideration. Members recommended that, in principle, a transfer of Merton's housing stock should only be considered as an option for the future management of the Council's housing stock.

Members requested that a further report be submitted to the Panel on the selection of a new landlord and that Cabinet undertake consultation with tenants and leaseholders regarding the option of Merton's housing stock transferring to a Registered Social Landlord, with the assistance of a communications company with specialist experience of housing transfers.

Outcome: The Panel later considered the options available and recommended by the Housing Stock Transfer Steering Group and submitted a reference to Cabinet in support of the transfer of existing housing stock to a new subsidiary of an existing Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and that the project plan for consulting and balloting tenants and leaseholders on the transfer of stock be approved.

- **Climate Change Strategy**

Members undertook pre decision scrutiny in considering the draft Climate Change Strategy for Merton. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Traffic Management highlighted various issues for consideration in the Strategy which Cabinet welcomed Members comments on. These included: -

- The Council's commitment to local change;
- Decreasing carbon emissions;
- Sustainable transport; waste management;
- Council's key role as an estate manager;
- Recycling initiatives;
- Eco-schools;
- Possibility of Wimbledon Park as a plastic bag free park;
- Sustainable Merton;
- Combined heat and power (CHP) projects;
- Use of wind turbines; and
- 20mph zones.

The Panel felt that the development of a Climate Change Strategy was an opportunity for the council to think innovatively and strategically about how the Council and residents could work together to tackle climate change. However, Members felt that the Strategy required more work, with an indication of targets and timescales for the achievement of the aims and objectives outlined within the Strategy and a consideration of officer and resource implications.

Members also highlighted the importance of the Strategy being accessible to all and easily understood by residents and questioned the intended promotion and publicity campaign for the Strategy. The Panel also felt that a Climate Change Champion for the Authority should be nominated.

Members requested that Cabinet did not approve the Strategy at this stage and that they be given an opportunity to comment upon the Strategy at a future meeting, subject to the revision of the Strategy in light of Members comments.

Outcomes: Cabinet agreed the draft Climate Change Strategy for public consultation in December 2007 and agreed to receive the final Climate Change Strategy for approval in March 2008. Members agreed to monitor progress with development and implementation of the Strategy and established a Task Group for this purpose.

Cabinet, at their meeting in March 2008, noted the recommendations of the Panel and welcomed the monitoring role that Members of the Task group would play. Cabinet agreed to more work being undertaken on the Strategy and to the Panel having a further opportunity to comment before its final approval in June 2008.

- **Award for the Transfer, Transport and Disposal of Waste through the South West London Waste Partnership**

The Panel carried out pre-decision scrutiny with regard to the award for the Transfer, Transport and Disposal of Waste through the South London Waste Partnership. The Panel raised queries around governance arrangements for the partnership, TUPE and pensions arrangements for transferred staff, and how standards would be maintained.

Outcome: The Panel highlighted their concerns about the assumptions made with regard to projections for an in-house service and, having done so, agreed to endorse the recommendations to Cabinet to proceed with the award of the contract through the South West London Waste Partnership. Cabinet subsequently awarded the contract.

- **Award for the Management of Household Refuse and Recycling Centres through the South West London Waste Partnership**

Members undertook pre decision Scrutiny in considering the proposals to award a contract for the Management of Household Refuse and Recycling centres through the South West London Waste Partnership. Members of the Panel queried staff transfer arrangements, the staff consultation process, and certainty of the recycling rate projections contained in the report, risk analysis, and the way in which services would be improved.

Whilst the Panel agreed to endorse the recommendation within the report, Members expressed concerns about the financial projections contained within the report to which they received responses.

- **Award of a contract for the provision of a responsive repair and maintenance service for Council housing stock**

Members undertook pre decision Scrutiny of the responsive repair and maintenance service contract award decision report. The Panel concluded that although Members recognised that under the TUPE arrangements, should any members of staff choose not to TUPE to the contractor they would not be eligible for redeployment, however the Panel thought that it would be an act of goodwill for the Council to do so.

Outcome: The Panel recommended to Cabinet that they proceed with the award of the contract and Cabinet agreed to award the contract to Connaught Partnerships Limited.

- **South West London Waste Partnership**

Members were asked to consider and endorse the amount of funding required from the Authority for the Joint Waste Development Plan of the South West London Waste Partnership and support the establishment of a joint committee. The Joint Committee would comprise Members of the Royal Borough of Kingston and the London Boroughs of Croydon, Merton and Sutton.

The Panel queried how disputes and conflict would be resolved between member authorities and were informed that governance arrangements had been considered and that a dispute resolution procedure would be in place.

Outcomes: Members agreed, in principle, to jointly fund the preparation of the Joint Waste Development Plan Document. Further to the Panels discussions the Cabinet Member for Environment and Traffic Management provided the Panel with an update on the Joint Waste Development Plan and establishment of the Joint Committee.

Members were informed that the Shadow Board for the partnership had been formed and had met to consider and agree the governance arrangements of the partnership, that each constituent local authority would have one vote and that nominations for the South West London Waste Partnership Board were being sought with a view to agreeing the Boards membership in November 2007.

- **Housing Strategy**

Outcome: Members considered the Authority's Draft Housing Strategy 2008-2011 and submitted their approval of the Strategy to Cabinet, prior to the Strategy being adopted by full Council at its July meeting.

Call In

Merton changed its call-in process at the beginning of the 2006/07 municipal year following a full review of the Overview and Scrutiny function in March 2006. The determination of whether a request is valid is now taken by the Monitoring Officer, who assesses the information provided through the call-in form against the criteria set out in the constitution. As long as call-in requests meet these criteria there is a presumption that the call-in should be heard. In addition to this, the scrutiny panel responsible for the subject area now hears call-ins, rather than the overarching Overview and Scrutiny Commission as used to happen.

The following items were called in during 2007/08: -

- **Development of P4 Site – Call In**

Members heard the call-in regarding the development of the P4 Site in Wimbledon. The Cabinet Member for Community Services, the Director of Environment and Regeneration and the Head of Regeneration and Leisure attended the meeting to respond to the Panel's questions.

Following discussion about the reasons for call-in and responses from the witnesses present, the Panel resolved to ask Cabinet to reconsider the decision and to identify other alternatives, including selling the site on a commercial basis and using the proceeds for other capital projects and/or repayment of Council debt. The Panel also expressed concern about the consultation process so far and, noted that it may progress to the next stage. The Panel therefore recommended that consultation with the wider community be undertaken.

Outcomes: The Director of Environment and Regeneration confirmed that consultation had taken place with schools, ethnic minority organisations, and representatives of the 'New Wimbledon Theatre', the Polka Theatre and extensively with a wide range of interest groups in a broad number of fora. Cabinet confirmed their satisfaction with the consultation process to date and their intention that

further and full consultation would take place with the wider community once the project approached the next phase.

Cabinet thanked the Panel for their comments and recommendations and reaffirmed the Authority's commitment to providing community and leisure facilities on the P4 site.

- **Morden Playing Fields - Call In**

Members met to consider the call-in of the Morden Park Playing Fields – Site A. Members found that local residents and groups felt strongly that they were not adequately consulted in the lead up to the commercially sensitive stage of the tendering process. Equally Members highlighted issues regarding the request for further information on the bid by the approved bidder (Goals Soccer Centres Plc) and the Cannon Hill Ward Councillors Newsletter.

Outcome: A review of the consultation that took place was undertaken to ensure that future consultation complied with the Authority's consultation policies and procedures.

- **Virements of Leisure Centre Capital Expenditure**

Members called in the decision of Cabinet regarding the virements of Leisure Centre Capital Expenditure given concerns regarding the future proposals for the Morden Park Pools Site, the cost and financing of any new facility, the level of commitment to provide a new facility, concern that finance derived from the P4 site and that the virements must go ahead. Members of the Panel also undertook a review of Leisure Centre Provision, the findings of which would be submitted to Cabinet at a future meeting.

Outcome: Further to the Panels discussion with officers regarding the decision, Members accepted that the virements must go ahead and agreed not to refer the decision back to Cabinet. The Panel also encouraged Cabinet to consider CHP (Combined Heat and Power) when such decisions needed to be made.

- **Stock Transfer – Tadworth**

Members called in the Cabinets decision to recommend to Council that the housing stock on the Tadworth estate be transferred to Raven Housing Trust (formerly known as Reigate and Banstead Housing Trust) and that Council approved the application to the Secretary of State for consent to the transfer.

Members felt that the call in of this decision was necessary to protect the interests of those on the housing waiting list by seeking to ensure that nomination rights were not lost.

Outcome: Members discussed the Call in with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration and resolved to support the decisions taken by cabinet to recommend the terms for proceeding with the transfer, noting that Merton would retain 100% nomination rights.

Scrutiny of the Budget and Business Plan 2008-2011

The Council's constitution requires overview and scrutiny to be consulted as part of the process to develop the Council's Business Plan and Budget. The Panel is responsible for considering the proposals relating to its thematic remit and forwarding any comments and/or recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission who provide a co-ordinated response from Scrutiny to Cabinet on the Business Plan and Budget.

Outcome: The Panel examined the draft budget 2008/09-2010/11 and the proposed Business Plan priorities, planned outcomes and performance measures. Members also considered and commented upon the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Performance Management

Each Scrutiny Panel appoints a Member performance lead to undertake a monitoring role in relation to the Authority's performance against key targets and delivery of strategic aims and objectives within the Community Plan, Business Plan and Departmental Plans, as well as the performance of the Authority in contributing to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement. Members also ensure that the Authority's performance management arrangements are robust and efficient.

Outcome: The performance lead utilises the performance information on the Dashboard System to identify key performance issues and trends that fall within the remit of the Panel. Members are able to consider any key performance issues by inviting Lead Officers to account for underperformance against a particular indicator/group of indicators, or by agreeing to undertake a review, as a whole Panel or as a smaller Task Group.

Way We Work Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The Way We Work Overview and Scrutiny Panel have a thematic remit and are responsible for scrutinising: -

- Audit, Corporate Safety and Risk;
- Budgetary Control Monitoring, Procurement and Value for Money;
- Civic and Legal Services;
- Communication;
- Community Support;
- Corporate Equalities;
- Corporate Finance;
- Customer Access and Development;
- Departmental Finance Support;
- Human Resources;
- Information Technology; and
- Chief Executives Department

During 2007/08 the Way We Work Overview and Scrutiny Panel met five times to look at a wide variety of items within the Panels remit.

Members undertook and delivered the following work programme that was determined further to consultation with Panel Members, Co-opted Members, Merton residents, Senior Officers, local voluntary and community organisations and partner organisations.

The outcomes of the Panels work during 2007/08 have contributed to the achievement of Merton's key strategic themes, aims and objectives within the Business Plan 2007-2010 and to the delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement and Community Plan 2006-2015.

Scrutiny reviews

- **Staff Attitude Survey 2007**

Members considered the findings of the Staff Attitude Survey that was considered in the context of the areas for improvement and of concern and the role that the Authority's Departmental workforce development teams would play in addressing these issues.

Members were informed that, in comparison to other similar Authorities, the results of Merton's Staff Attitude Survey were believed to be average and that Merton had put in place an Action Plan; arranged focus group sessions with colleagues; planned Road Shows and Manager Seminars; and initiated a leadership programme to address the issues raised in the survey.

Outcome: Members later considered a report outlining the ways in which the Panel's concerns had been addressed and requested that Members be given the opportunity to consider the findings of Authority's review of its approach to the employment of Black and Ethnic Minority staff following its completion.

- **Annual Complaints Report 2007**

Members considered the Annual Complaints Report that had been compiled using information from the recently introduced Customer Relationship Management System that enabled service users to make complaints on the web, as well as through more traditional methods for submitting complaints to the Authority.

Members expressed their concerns regarding the figures within the report and the possibility of the Customer Relationship Management System impacting upon the under reported level of complaints. Members were reassured that the Customer Relationship Management System was actually enabling the Authority to address past poor practice in recording complaints. In response to the concern that enquiries from Members or MPs were not accounted for within the report, Members were reassured that a Customer Relationship Management based system to record and learn from Members' and MPs' enquiries was being developed with input and support from Members regarding the requirements of the system.

Outcome: Members requested further detail on the Member Enquiry system being developed be brought to a future meeting to enable the Panel to comment on the specification for the system.

- **Adult Social Care Billing System**

Following reports of delays in billing clients for social care services, Members received a report on the development of the Adult Social Care Billing System (ASH) that aims to reduce the time taken for internal staff to process and despatch time sheets and invoices and to avoid administrative errors. Members were informed that the Authority's officers, working with Social Workers, were drawing up the specification of the system.

A summary of the timetable for the implementation of the corrective measures to the system was circulated to Members and it was agreed that the Panel would monitor the development and implementation of the billing system.

Outcome: The Panel received updates throughout the 2007/08 municipal year and commented upon the development of the system, including the proposal to introduce a direct debit payment system that was welcomed.

- **Member and MP Enquiry System**

Further to their consideration of the Annual Complaints Report 2007, the Panel requested further information on the development of a customer relationship management based system to capture Members and MP's enquiries and an opportunity to comment on its development and implementation.

The Member and MP Enquiry system was developed, with the assistance of Members, in response to concerns that Members' and MPs' enquiries were not being sufficiently captured and analysed alongside staff, partner and public enquiries/complaints.

Members felt that the system should enable them to track their enquiries and complaints on one system and that the system should be accessible to enable Members to track and submit enquiries from home. Members also proposed that best practice on how similar systems have been developed and implemented in other local authorities be sought.

Outcome: The Panel agreed to receive updates on the further development of the system, as and when appropriate.

- **Scrutiny Review of Income Generation**

The Panel appointed a Task Group to undertake a review of how the Council could raise additional income other than through the traditional means of taxation and central government grant, and ensure that its existing income from other sources was maximised. The Task Group identified two main streams. Firstly, the power to charge for discretionary services and trade in the Authority's normal functions and secondly, implementing and/or improving sponsorship and advertising across the Council.

Outcome: The Task Group made a number of recommendations to Cabinet that were agreed and an Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations was drawn up. This Action Plan formed the basis for monitoring the outcomes of the review on a six monthly basis. Progress will be monitored as part of the Panels 2008/09 work programme.

- **Council Wide Review of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Employment**

Members commented upon the outcomes of the Authority's review of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) recruitment and retention. Members were pleased to note that the Authority was aware of the need to look at recruiting BME employees in higher scale posts and that work was underway to identify how specific media and executive searches to attract candidates could be utilised. Members heard that the recruitment of BME staff was an issue across the whole of London, not just in Merton.

Outcome: Members recommended that the outcomes of the review be presented to the Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations for their comments. The Panel agreed to consider the effectiveness of measures introduced/utilised by the Authority to ensure more BME staff are recruited and

retained as part of their 2008/09 work programme, alongside the results of the 2008 Employee Profile.

- **Scrutiny Review of Merton as an Employer of Disabled People**

Members considered the Action Plan drawn up in response to the findings and recommendations of the Authority's review of its status as an employer of disabled people. Members commented upon the actions within the Plan in light of the findings of the Employment Profile for 2007.

Outcome: The Panel endorsed the Action Plan, noting the Authority's key priorities for the next three years, and amendments to the recruitment and selection process for people with learning and physical disabilities. The Panel also supported the proposal to pilot a 'job carving' scheme in frontline service areas such as Merton Link, Libraries and Refuse for one year in order to provide employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities, and proposed that a review be undertaken in six months on the effectiveness of the pilot project. In addition, Members reinforced the need for a commitment to continue to support the 'Workstep' scheme, which provides support to people with learning disabilities moving into employment and to identify new posts in departments that did not currently have Workstep participants.

- **Scrutiny Review of the Implications of the Age Discrimination Act**

Members considered the implications of the Age Discrimination Act and the requirements of the Authority. Members appointed a Task Group to consider the implications of the Act further and to determine what measures the Authority had put in place in response to the requirements of the Act.

Outcome: The Panel was advised that the recommendations from this review had been implemented, including the running of a pilot scheme to undertake exit interviews. It was agreed that a Member Task Group should be established to identify, with Human Resources, ways to recruit younger people to the Council's workforce, as this age group is under-represented in the workforce. This review reported its initial findings back to the Panel early in May 2008 and the final report with recommendations will be agreed in June 2008.

- **Corporate Communications Update**

The Panel was provided with an overview of the significant changes to the Corporate Communications Team following an external review in August 2006, and the introduction in November 2006 of a partnership arrangement with Westminster City Council aimed at improving the way the communications function works at Merton.

An annual Work Plan was produced to take forward improvements in the communications function and the Panel was informed of the progress made against the key objectives for 2007/8 as well as having an opportunity to comment on the plan for 2008/9, which proposes nearly 30 external and internal key media campaigns for 2008/9.

Outcome: The Panel welcomed the opportunity to scrutinise the Communications Work Plan and was reassured that good progress in improving the communications function continues to be made.

Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny

- **Corporate Performance Assessment 2007**

Members considered the outcomes of the 2007 Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) of Merton Council and were informed of the Authority's three star CPA rating. Members were also informed of the changing nature of assessment the Authority and its partners would be subject to under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) that would begin in April 2009 and replace the Corporate Performance Assessment and other inspection bodies.

Outcome: Members were pleased to note the good work of the Authority and success in achieving a three star rating and agreed to receive updates on the new Comprehensive Area Assessment Inspection regime that the Authority would be subject to from April 2009.

- **Single Status Pay Structure**

Members were informed of the progress being made by the Authority in implementing the Single Status Pay Structure and considered the effort being made by the Authority to reach a joint agreement with trade unions.

Outcome: Members considered and commented upon the settlement of potential equal pay claims/appeals, the outcomes of an equal pay audit that had recently been undertaken and the potential risks to be addressed. Members will continue to receive updates as and when appropriate.

Other Items

- **Financial Report 2007/08**

In addition to scrutinising the budget and Business Plan for 2008 onwards, the Way We Work Panel is responsible for monitoring the budgetary control process for 2007/8, which highlights particular areas where there are budget pressures, or overspends and outlines mechanisms to address these. As part of this budget monitoring, twice yearly reports are presented to the Panel on the use of consultants on a departmental basis, as agreed by the scrutiny review on use of consultants undertaken in 2002.

Call In

Merton changed its call-in process at the beginning of the 2006/07 municipal year following a full review of the Overview and Scrutiny function in March 2006. The determination of whether a request is valid is now taken by the Monitoring Officer, who assesses the information provided through the call-in form against the criteria set out in the constitution. As long as call-in requests meet these criteria there is a presumption that the call-in should be heard. In addition to this, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel responsible for the subject area now hears call-ins, rather than the overarching

Overview and Scrutiny Commission as used to happen.
The following items were called in during 2007/08 relating to this Panel's remit: -

- **Funding for Environmental Enhancements**

Members called in the decision made by Cabinet regarding environmental enhancements and how they would be funded. Members felt that there was a lack of clarity concerning the aims and outcomes of the environmental enhancements and how they would be financed. Members also felt that there had been an insufficient evaluation and consideration of alternatives.

Outcome: Further to the Panels discussion with the Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources, Members endorsed the Cabinet's decision to approve a virement of £181,000 being made from miscellaneous debt reductions and other efficiencies to Street Cleansing in 2006/07 to fund the implementation of the service enhancements.

- **Corporate Branding**

Members called in the decision of Cabinet regarding corporate branding and questioned the re branding exercise that had been undertaken.

Outcome: Members discussed their concerns and endorsed the use of the current Merton waterwheel logo without any strapline on all future publicity material and livery on a renewal basis and endorsed Cabinet's decision that the current strapline 'Moving Ahead' be replaced with a new message, which is to be featured separately from the logo.

Scrutiny of the Budget and Business Plan 2008-2011

The Council's constitution requires Overview and Scrutiny to be consulted as part of the process to develop the Council's Business Plan and Budget. The Panel is responsible for considering the proposals relating to its thematic remit and forwarding any comments and/or recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission who provide a co-ordinated response from Scrutiny to Cabinet on the Business Plan and Budget.

Outcome: The Panel examined the draft budget 2008/09-2010/11 and the proposed Business Plan priorities, planned outcomes and performance measures. Members also considered and commented upon the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Performance Management

Each Scrutiny Panel appoints a Member performance lead to undertake a monitoring role in relation to the Authority's performance against key targets and delivery of strategic aims and objectives within the Community Plan, Business Plan and Departmental Plans, as well as the performance of the Authority in contributing to the

delivery of Merton's Local Area Agreement. Members also ensure that the Authority's performance management arrangements are robust and efficient.

Outcome: The performance leads for the Way We Work Panel are the Chair and Vice-Chair who utilise the performance information on the Dashboard System to identify key performance issues and trends that fall within the remit of the Panel. Members are able to consider any key performance issues by inviting lead officers to account for underperformance against a particular indicator/group of indicators, or by agreeing to undertake a review, as a whole Panel or as a smaller Task Group, where this is deemed necessary. A range of performance indicators has been selected for monitoring during 2007/8, including: -

- Percentage of Council Tax collected
- Percentage of people seen in Merton Link within 30 minutes
- Number of days lost through sickness absence
- Percentage of social services debt collected

Get Involved - Community Engagement in Overview and Scrutiny at Merton 2007/08

Overview and Scrutiny at Merton seeks to engage residents and local community groups in the development and delivery of our annual Scrutiny work programme to ensure that our Overview and Scrutiny Panels/Commission address issues of local concern and to enable Merton residents to influence the way the council and partners deliver services in their area.

Engaging the local community in Overview and Scrutiny is one of our key priorities and the Scrutiny Team sets targets to ensure an increase in community engagement in Overview and Scrutiny at Merton year upon year.

During 2007/08 we aimed to facilitate the engagement of 500 members of the public in Overview and Scrutiny at Merton. We exceeded our target and engaged over 580 members of the public in various ways. For example, by suggesting a topic for a scrutiny review or submitting evidence to a review.

We have set ourselves the following targets for community engagement in Overview and Scrutiny at Merton for the next three years, increasing our target year upon year as we seek to improve the means by which we can involve local residents in the decision making process.

Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Target	700	800	900

The tables below illustrate engagement by Panel and by area (residents postcode) and our achievements from last year, our current performance and our target for the 2008/09 work programme.

Figure 1: Community engagement in scrutiny – 2008/09 target

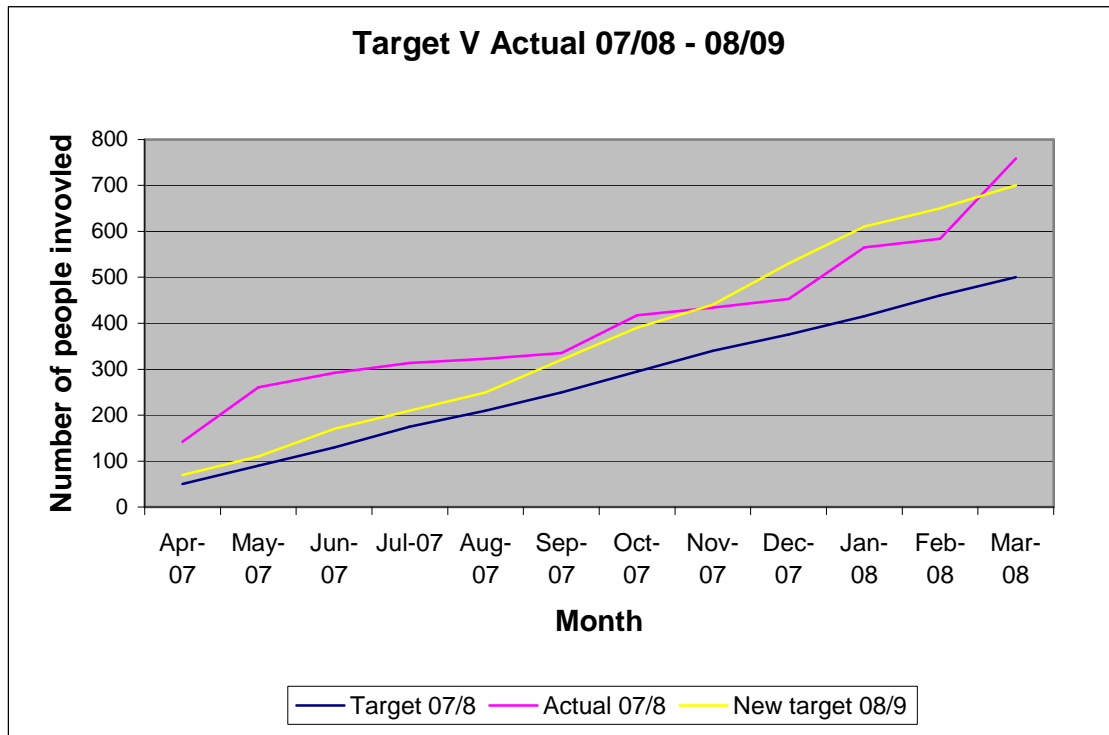


Figure 2: Number of people engaged in scrutiny - Actual V Target

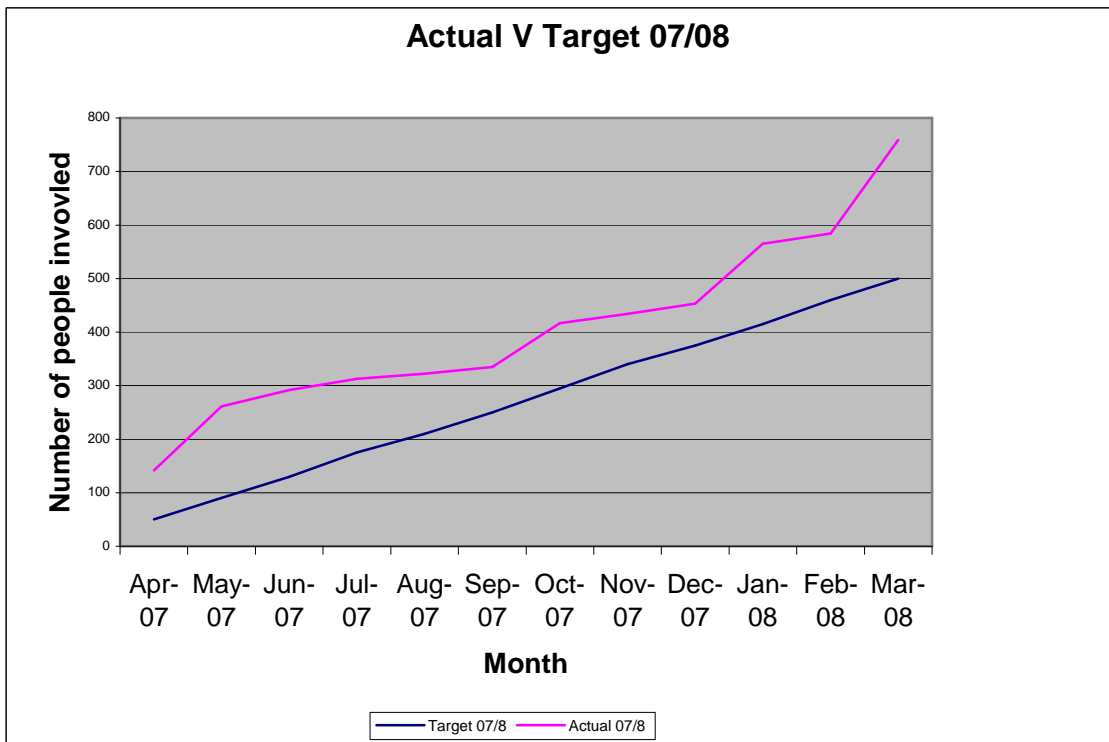


Figure 3 Engagement by Overview and Scrutiny Panel

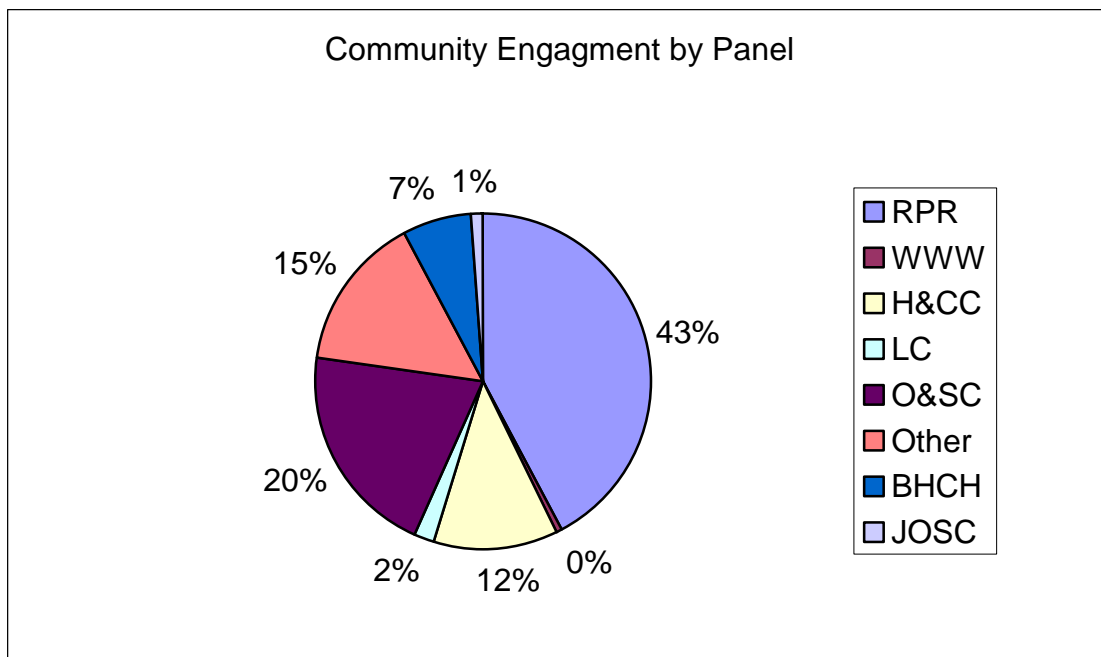
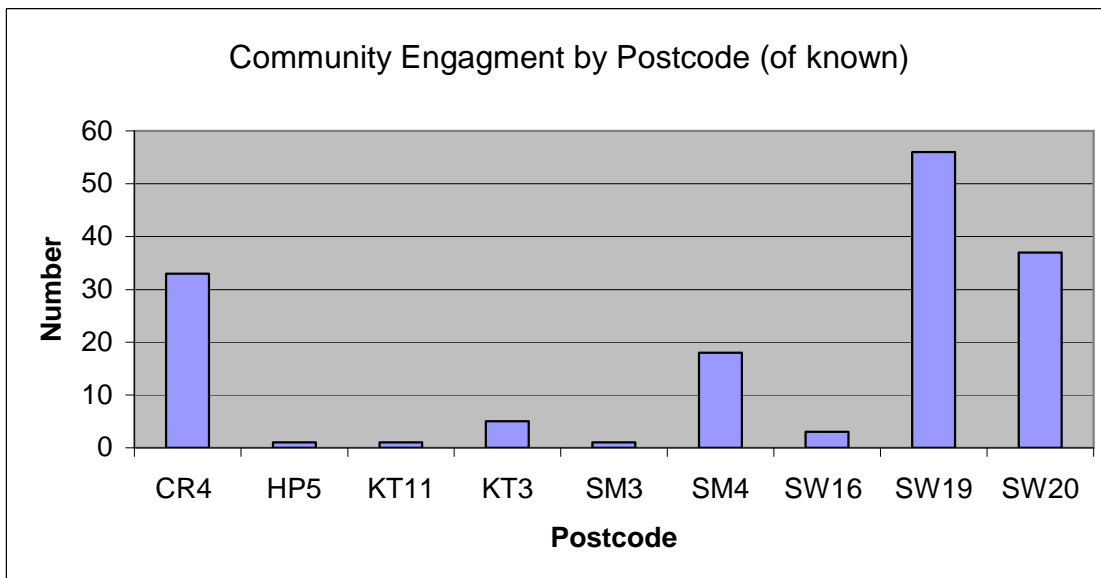


Figure 4: Engagement by Postcode



Get Involved

Community engagement is central to the work of Overview and Scrutiny at London Borough of Merton and ensures that the recommendations made by our Overview and Scrutiny Panels/Commission are reflective of what the people of Merton feel and want and that services are developed and delivered in response to these views.

During the 2007/08 municipal year, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission/Panels engaged Merton residents in a number of reviews, including the Post Office Consultation Exercise, in which residents were asked to submit their views to the consultation by Post Office Limited regarding the proposed closures of branches in Merton, the Planning Application Process, Fairer Charging Policy, Review of GP Surgeries and the review of sports and active recreation provision in Merton.

We welcome and encourage community engagement in Overview and Scrutiny at Merton. If you would like to get involved you can do so in the following ways:

Attend an Overview and Scrutiny Panel Meeting - Except on rare occasions, Overview and Scrutiny Commission/Panel meetings are open to the public and provide an opportunity to listen to proceedings. There may be an opportunity to contribute directly to a Scrutiny review depending upon the nature of the work being undertaken. (Please access Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting dates on our website at the following address: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/committee.htm>)

Suggest a Topic for a Scrutiny Review by notifying the Scrutiny Team of issues of concern or by completing the Scrutiny Topic Suggestion Form. This leaflet is available online, in the public gallery at Panel meetings and circulated to all of the Merton Voluntary Service Council at the beginning of the municipal year when the Overview and Scrutiny Commission/Panels are setting their annual work programmes. All suggestions will be considered in accordance with the focus of the Scrutiny on the Council's and partner's strategic priorities and service improvement (please be mindful that Scrutiny Members have a limited amount of time and all issues will be considered according to scrutiny review selection criteria).

Submit your views or evidence to a scrutiny review. You can access the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Work Programme 2008/09 at the following address www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny and contact the Scrutiny Team for further details.

Health and Social Care Scrutiny

Individual Scrutiny Reviews may indicate the need to undertake consultation with patients; service users and carers that provide an opportunity to comment upon health and social care provision. You can also get involved in Local Involvement Networks (LINKS) which monitor and review health and social care services from the patients' perspectives to seek the public's views and to make recommendations to the NHS and social care providers based on those views. Local Involvement Networks (LINKS) also have the power to refer issues to the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

Alternatively you can Get Involved in Overview and Scrutiny by accessing our web pages at the following address: - (www.merton.gov.uk/council/scrutiny/scrutiny-getinvolved.htm).

Looking Ahead - Developing Overview and Scrutiny at Merton 2008/09

Overview and Scrutiny at London Borough of Merton has continued to develop in light of the findings of the Review of Scrutiny undertaken by Professor Steve Leach in 2006. We have addressed the recommendations of the review and have responded to Members suggestions and comments resulting from our Annual Members Surveys.

In doing so, Overview and Scrutiny at London Borough of Merton has become an exemplar of good practice, regionally and nationally, and our scrutiny reviews have produced tangible outcomes for the residents of Merton.

To build upon our successes and to ensure the continued development of the Overview and Scrutiny function we will undertake the following improvement activities during the 2008/09 municipal year: -

- Increase Member satisfaction with, and implement the findings of, the review of Scrutiny of the Budget and Business Plan, undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission as part of their 2007/08 work programme;
- Adapt our Scrutiny arrangements to ensure alignment with the strategic priorities of the Authority's Business Plan and Merton's Local Area Agreement and assess their effectiveness in twelve months time to determine the extent to which scrutiny has been able to add value and contribute to the achievement of the Authority's and partners priorities under these new arrangements;
- Develop the support provided by the Scrutiny Team and Officers to the Performance Monitoring Member Leads for each Overview and Scrutiny Panel to strengthen the performance monitoring role of all of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels;
- Build upon the existing relationships with Merton's Local Strategic Partnership and other Local Area Agreement partners to raise awareness of Overview and Scrutiny and encourage engagement of partners in the scrutiny process;
- Develop a process for responding to Councillor Calls for Action from members of the public;
- Determine opportunities within the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for area based scrutiny;
- Develop guidance for Members on the new scrutiny powers within the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007; and
- Undertake a Quality Standard Charter Mark Application

We will evaluate the outcomes of our improvement activity within our 2008/09 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and determine Member satisfaction with the Overview and Scrutiny function through the Annual Members Survey.

Panel and Commission Membership 2007/08

The following Members developed and delivered the Scrutiny Annual work programme for 2007/08 and contributed to the achievement of the Authority's corporate priorities and the aims and priorities of Merton's Local Area Agreement: -

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Members of the commission

Councillor Peter Southgate (Chair)	Councillor Simon Withey
Councillor John Bowcott (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Chris Edge
Councillor Gilli Lewis-Lavender	Councillor Martin Whelton
Councillor Sheila Knight	
Councillor Nick Draper	

Substitute members of the commission

Councillor David Dean	Councillor Gregory Udeh
Councillor Corinna Edge	Councillor Krysia Williams
Councillor Judy Saunders	

Co-opted members of the commission

Mr Ravi Kurup – Parent Governor Representative
Mrs Allison Kelly – Parent Governor Representative
Revd David Monteith – Church of England Diocesan Representative
Mrs Anna Juster – Roman Catholic Diocesan Representative

Health and Community Care Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Members of the panel

Councillor Gilli Lewis-Lavender (Chair)	Councillor Denise March
Councillor Sheila Knight (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Peter McCabe
Councillor Jeremy Bruce	Councillor Gregory Udeh
Councillor Zenia Jamison	Councillor Ron Wilson

Substitute members of the panel

Councillor Nick Draper	Councillor Rod Scott (replaced Cllr David Dean in April 2007)
Councillor Barbara Mansfield (replaced Cllr Rod Scott in Nov 2006)	Councillor Richard Williams

Co-opted member of the panel

Mr Saleem U Sheikh – Sutton & Merton PCT Patient and Public Involvement Forum

Life Chances Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Members of the panel

Councillor Nick Draper (Chair)	Councillor Karin Forbes
Councillor Simon Withey (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Patricia Lewis
Councillor Agatha Akyigyina	Councillor Barbara Mansfield
Councillor William Brierly	Councillor Maxi Martin
Councillor Richard Chellew	Councillor Jeremy Bruce

Substitute members of the panel

Councillor David Chung	Councillor Rod Scott
Councillor Denise March	Councillor George Reynolds

Statutory Co-opted Representatives (with voting rights on education matters):

Co-opted members of the panel

Vacant (Parent Governor Representative)
Mr. Ravi Kurup (Parent Governor Representative)
Revd David Monteith (Church of England Diocesan Representative)
Mrs. Anna Juster (Roman Catholic Diocesan Representative)

Non Statutory Co-opted Representatives (with no voting rights):

Vacancy (Primary Head Teacher Representative)
Vacancy (Secondary Head Teacher Representative)
Conor Johnson, Vanessa Vas (Members of the Youth Parliament)
Vacancy (Youth Forum)

Regeneration and the Public Realm Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Members of the panel

Councillor Chris Edge (Chair)	Councillor Russell Makin
Councillor (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Rod Scott
Councillor Mark Betteridge	Councillor Peter Southgate
Councillor Marc Hanson	Councillor Krysia Williams
Councillor Stephen Kerin	

Substitute members of the panel

Councillor Jeremy Bruce	Councillor Ian Munn
Councillor Corrina Edge	Councillor George Reynolds

Way We Work Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Members of the panel

Councillor Martin Whelton (Chair)	Councillor Angela Caldara
Councillor Henry Nelles (Vice-Chair)	Councillor John Dehaney
Councillor Mark Allison	Councillor Brian Lewis-Lavender
Councillor Mark Betteridge	Councillor Rod Scott

Substitute members of the panel

Councillor Steve Austin	Councillor Richard Williams
Councillor Stephen Kerin	Councillor Ron Wilson

Scrutiny Support – Contact the Scrutiny Team

The Scrutiny Team provides independent and professional support and advice to the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the four standing Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

You can contact the Scrutiny Team using one of the following methods: -

In writing:

Scrutiny Team
Chief Executive's Department
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
Surrey SM4 5DX

By email/telephone:

Kate Martyn – Acting Stronger Communities Manager

Kate.martyn@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3857

Barbara Jarvis – Acting Scrutiny Manager

Barbara.Jarvis@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3390

Daniel Moore – Scrutiny Officer

Daniel.moore@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 4685

Rebecca Redman – Scrutiny Officer

Rebecca.redman@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 4035

scrutiny@merton.gov.uk

The Scrutiny Team receives administrative and professional support and advice on constitutional issues from the Councils Democratic Services Team.

For further information about Overview and Scrutiny at Merton please access our web pages using the following address: -www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny