

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 20 March 2017

Subject: Draft Equality Strategy 2017-21

Lead officer: Ged Curran, Chief Executive

Lead member: Councillor Edith Macauley, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Equalities and Engagement

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Recommendations: That Cabinet recommends to Council that the draft Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2021 be endorsed and adopted.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's Community Cohesion Strategy 2012-15 has expired and the Equality Strategy 2013-17 will expire in March 2017. The Equality Act 2010 requires the council to publish equality objectives every four years to demonstrate how it will meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 1.2 The new strategy combines equality and community cohesion objectives, reflecting the synergies between the two.
- 1.3 This report sets out a refreshed Equality Strategy and Action Plan for 2017-21 and asks Cabinet to recommend to Council that these documents be endorsed and adopted. This will ensure the council continues to meet its duties under the legislation. The report also summarises consultation feed back.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 The refreshed strategy stating the council's equality objectives meets legislative requirements to publish equality objectives every four years. Following the agreement of Corporate Management Team (CMT) the refreshed strategy combines equality and community cohesion commitments.
- 2.2 The equality objectives have been developed through discussion with community representatives, the Corporate Equality Steering Group, Collective DMT and the Senior Leadership Team. Five of the objectives relate to service provision and are outwardly focused and one of the objectives is internally focused relating to staffing matters.
- 2.3 Outlined below are the six draft equality objectives:
 - a. To ensure key plans and strategies narrow the gap between different communities in the borough;
 - b. Improve equality of access to services for disadvantaged groups;

- c. Ensure regeneration plans increase the opportunity for all Merton's residents to fulfil their educational, health and economic potential, participate in the renewal of the borough and create a health promoting environment;
 - d. Promoting a safe, healthy and cohesive borough where communities get on well together ;
 - e. Encourage recruitment from all sections of the community , actively promote staff development and career progression opportunities and embed equalities across the organisation;
 - f. Fulfil our statutory duties and ensure protected groups are effectively engaged when we change our services.
- 2.4 The objectives aim to narrow the gap in outcomes between residents in the East and West of the borough. A cross-departmental approach will be needed to deliver some of the commitments such as Hate Crime and Domestic Violence.
- 2.5 The draft Equality Strategy 2017-2021, attached at Appendix I, is a four-year strategy that sets out what the council will do to tackle discrimination and inequality and promote equal opportunities and community cohesion in Merton.
- 2.6 The accompanying Action Plan (the delivery vehicle for the draft strategy attached at Appendix II), sets out the actions we will take to meet our equality priorities both corporately and departmentally
- 2.7 In this new draft strategy the activity in the action plan are closely linked to the council's performance framework as commitments are aligned with departmental service plans. This will ensure the strategy is embedded in service plans across the council to ensure effective implementation. The aim is to set smart targets and, where no baseline information exists, improving data collection and analysis will itself become a target. The actions will be reviewed annually and reported on to Overview and Scrutiny Commission, Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with Ethnic Minorities and CMT.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 As a public authority the council has a duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people of different backgrounds. The publication of an Equality Strategy setting out our equality objectives fulfils the Council's legal obligations relating to equalities legislation. Failure to do so would mean the Council is not fulfilling its legal obligations and could be subject to legal action. Not having an Equality Strategy would put the Council at risk of legal challenge and potentially damage the council's reputation.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1 Extensive consultation was undertaken with a range of stakeholders which included meetings with user groups and a web based survey. Consultation feedback is outlined in Appendix III. Public consultation ran from 26 January to 10 March and outlined below are the questions in the online survey:
- 4.1.1 Do you think we have set the right priorities for Merton Council to focus on over the next four years? If not what should our priorities be?

- 4.1.2 Are there any other issues you think should be included in this Equality Strategy?
- 4.1.3 The aims of the strategy will be delivered through the activity in the Action Plan – do we have the right actions?
- 4.1.4 Do you have any other comments you would like to make about this draft Equality Strategy?
- 4.2 The draft strategy was well received and it was felt that we are focusing on the right things.
- 4.3 A number of consistent themes emerged with concerns expressed about:
 - 4.3.1 The need to improve engagement and do more outreach work, especially with User groups. In particular managers should engage with residents at the start of service reviews and not just at the end.
 - 4.3.2 The need for ambitious targets and clear success criteria in the action plan.
 - 4.3.3 The need for more diversity in leadership roles.
 - 4.3.4 Respondents with hidden disabilities felt that some officers displayed a lack of sensitivity in their approach.
 - 4.3.4 Disabled residents are willing to work with officers to deliver disability equality training.
 - 4.35 A more pro-active community cohesion approach is needed through a publicity campaign to educate the public about diversity and how we can more effectively live together and behave towards each other.
- 4.4 The emerging issues will be discussed with departments and responses included in the final version of the draft strategy presented to Council

5. TIMETABLE

Action	Date
Document to be presented to Council for adoption	12 April 2017
Launch and publicity for new objectives	April 2017

6. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Failure to implement equality legislation could result in the cost of discrimination claims being incurred.
- 6.2 The activity in the action plan is linked to departmental service plans and will be delivered within existing resources.

7. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 On 6 April 2011 the Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires the Local Authority, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not. “Protected characteristics” are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and, in relation to the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination only, marriage and civil partnership.
- 7.2 With effect from 12 April 2012 the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulation 2011 requires the council to prepare and publish equality objectives and subsequently at least four-yearly. The objectives must be specific and measurable.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 By developing and producing a new Equality Strategy, the Council is re-affirming its commitment to human rights, equality and community cohesion. Merton’s approach to equality and diversity is driven by its overall vision of Merton – a great place to live, work, learn and visit. The draft strategy will encourage a wider public debate about equalities in Merton and the actions needed to address inequality.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There is a risk of increased hate crime activity directed towards certain groups if there is no commitment to eliminate discrimination and harassment.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There is a risk to the Council’s reputation if it fails to produce and publish equalities objectives. This can also increase the risk of legal challenge against the council’s decisions. Additionally there is a risk of claims of discrimination based on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

11. APPENDICES – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- Appendix I: Draft Equality Strategy 201-2021
- Appendix II: Draft Equality Strategy 2017-2021 Action Plan
- Appendix III: Comments and feedback from Consultation

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 Merton’s Equality Strategy 2013-17
- 12.2 http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/plansandpolicies/equality_strategy_2013-17_final_v2.pdf

APPENDIX I - DRAFT EQUALITY STRATEGY

Merton's Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-21

1. Introduction

The Equality Strategy sets out the council's equality objectives in one document and outlines how we will embed equalities considerations into our day-to-day business.

Under the Equality Act 2010 Merton has a Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure that in exercising our functions and delivering services and partnership work we:

1. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
2. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share a protected characteristic
3. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The Act also introduced nine 'Protected Characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation.

At the decision-making stage councils are required to assess how changes to policies and service delivery will affect different people. Therefore the Act requires that we provide accessible services to all our customers.

We acknowledge that the Council has a key role to play to promote a fair and more equal society by putting equalities considerations central to the decisions we make about service delivery, contract arrangements and employment.

In producing this strategy we have developed objectives that promote equality and promote community cohesion in Merton by addressing issues of concern in the borough.

The Equality Act underpins the strategy and the objectives apply to all the protected characteristics. Therefore, we will not tolerate discrimination and will endeavour consider all the protected characteristics in the delivery of our services.

We recognise that some people share more than one protected characteristic and as a result may face multiple disadvantage.

2. Merton the place

Merton's population, according to Greater London Authority (GLA) 2016 projections, is 207,141 people, living across 83,446 occupied households. The population density of the borough is higher in the wards of the east compared to the wards that are in the west. Just over half of the borough is female (51%).

The average age of residents in the borough is 36.6, this is just above the London average of 35.9. GLA 2013 round population projections records Merton's BAME population as 74,971, meaning Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups make up around 36.7% of the population. This is lower than the London average of 42.5%.

Based on GLA trend-based projections, Merton's population is projected to increase by 13,245 between 2014 and 2020. During this time the boroughs age profile is also projected to change, with the most notable growth coming in the numbers of those aged under 16 and those over 50. This will be set against a projected decline in the proportion of people aged 25-35. Merton's ethnic composition is also forecast to change, with the BAME proportion set to increase to 40%

The borough's growing diversity shows the number of people that live in the borough that come from different backgrounds. According to data collected from the 2011 Census the three largest migrant populations by country of birth are Polish (3.5%), Sri Lankan (3.2%) and South African (2.8%). 34.9% of school pupils in Merton have a first language known or believed to be other than English.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) sets out a relative position for each local authority in the country, giving an overall score for each area. The indices were updated in September 2015 and ranks Merton as 7th least deprived out of the 33 London boroughs and 212 out of 354 local authority areas (where 1 is the most deprived) for the rest of England. This overall lack of deprivation does, however, hide stark inequalities in the borough between deprived wards in the east of the borough (Mitcham) and the more affluent wards in the west (Wimbledon).

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Merton highlights health inequalities that are based on gender, ethnicity and where people live. Health outcomes in Merton are generally better than those in London, and in line with or above the rest of England, however, there is a difference between the most and least deprived areas within the borough for life expectancy of 7.9 years for men and 5.2 years for women. Linked to deprivation, those in the east of the borough have a much higher chance of serious illness and early deaths from illnesses such as cancer and heart disease. In 2015 13.5% of residents in Merton that are of a working-age were recorded as having a disability or long-term health condition.

Merton residents who are in active full-time employment are distributed all over the borough, however, unemployed residents are concentrated towards the east of Merton, and self-employed residents are concentrated toward the west. Although unemployment in the borough is below the national average, it rises significantly in some of the eastern wards, and 63% of all benefit claimants live in the east of the borough. There are also significant differences in skill levels between residents in the Wimbledon area, with higher numbers of people in the east of the borough in receipt of benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance. The GLA Pay-check 2011 dataset illustrates the large disparities in the distribution of income within Merton. In general the west of the borough is more affluent, notably Wimbledon Park, Village, and Hillside wards. These wards have a median income range of £41-£50,000. By comparison wards in the east such as Figge's Marsh, Pollards Hill, St. Helier, and Cricket Green have a median income range of £24-28,000.

3. Our achievements

Over the past three years progress has been made towards embedding equality practice throughout the Council and promoting community cohesion. Outlined below are some of our successes:

- **Merton School Improvement (MSI) Service** continued its programme of support and challenge to schools to identify, track and accelerate progress made by individual pupils from target groups. Identified secondary schools have been supported to implement English support targeted to **Bangladeshi** and **Asian-Other** pupils.
- **20% of Looked after Children (LAC)** achieved 5 GCSEs A*-C or equivalent (incl. English & Maths) in 2013-14 which is above the national LAC average of 15%.
- A range of commissioned preventative services continue to be available for children and young people with disabilities including family-based overnight **short breaks**, weekend clubs offering activities and excursions, a holiday play scheme for children with complex needs, and a parent carer support service and parent forum.
- The work within Transforming Families and the Youth Justice Team, in particular, meant that interventions could be provided as early as possible in order to ensure that escalations in a young person's behaviour and/or offending are dealt with as quickly as possible. Geographically, there has been a focus on areas in the East of the borough which are generally more deprived.
- The use of equality analysis is embedded in the service planning process and savings proposals have been accompanied by an assessment of the impact of proposed changes on the protected characteristics.
- We worked with key community representatives to support the development of Black, Asian and Minority Voice to provide a strategic voice for the borough's BAME community.
- The council has also worked with community representatives to revitalise the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender Forum to progress issues facing the community.
- Volunteer Merton, a new online portal that seamlessly links up volunteers with volunteer opportunities through a digital platform has been launched. This will make it much simpler and quicker to link volunteers to actual volunteering opportunities
- We have signed up to ValueYou: a new accreditation scheme to recognise individuals who have delivered over 100 hours of volunteering and offer them discount cards at local businesses.

4. Key issues we want to tackle

The aim of the Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-21 is to address key issues such as:

- bridging the gap between the levels of deprivation and prosperity in the borough particularly focusing on:
 - raising educational attainment for all children and young people and reduce attainment gaps for target groups including children with special education needs or disabilities, those who are looked after in care, specific BAME groups, specific groups of White boys and those who are excluded from school
 - tackling rising unemployment particularly among young BAME communities and disabled residents and supporting those who are long term unemployed back into work
 - Reducing health inequalities particularly the issues affecting some BAME communities, disabled and older residents.
 - Support residents who may be affected by mental illness or dementia
 - increasing education and economic opportunity in the east of the borough
- Improving understanding of the borough's diversity and foster better understanding between communities.
- Improving understanding of 'hidden' disabilities and the challenges that disabled residents face in all aspects of their lives. We aim to work in a cross-cutting way and take a holistic approach to more effectively address the needs of disabled residents.
- supporting those who do not usually get involved in decision-making to better understand how they can get involved and get their voices heard
- Supporting residents to access on-line access services
- Providing services that meet the needs of a changing population.
- employing staff that reflect the borough's diversity

5 Objectives and Indicators

Not everyone receives the same start in life and this can significantly shape their opportunities in life. As a council we recognise that understanding this difference is key to addressing some of the complex issues that create barriers and exclusion for some of our residents. Therefore we are committed to working toward:

- Everyone having an opportunity to fulfil their potential

- Individuals having choice and control to improve life chances and outcome¹
- Everyone having ways to tackle the barriers that lead to inequality

It is evident² that some families experience inter-generational disadvantage that results in individuals experiencing inequality throughout their lives. Some disadvantaged people often lack basic information and skills. The challenges of disadvantage is felt by a range of people including teenage pregnancy, those who experience difficulty in the transition from being a young people to adulthood, gypsies and travelers, the long-term unemployed, disabled people and young adults leaving care.

Equality Objectives

We have developed 6 objectives that aim to improve the life chances of our residents and create a more level starting point for all. The objectives are outlined below:

1. To ensure key plans and strategies narrow the gap between different communities in the borough
2. Improve equality of access to services for disadvantaged groups
3. Ensure regeneration plans increase the opportunity for all Merton's residents to fulfil their educational, health and economic potential, participate in the renewal of the borough and create a health promoting environment.
4. Encourage recruitment from all sections of the community , actively promote staff development and career progression opportunities and embed equalities across the organisation
5. Promoting a safe, healthy and cohesive borough where communities get on well together
6. Fulfil our statutory duties and ensure protected groups are effectively engaged when we change our services.

¹ Dimensions of equality as defined by the Equality Review published in 2007: longevity, health, physical security, education, standard of living, productive and valued activities, and individual and family life, participation, influence and voice, identity, expression, and self-respect, legal security.

² Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), (2010) How fair is Britain? equality, human rights and good relations in 2010: the first triennial review.

Marmot (2010). The Marmot Review: Fair Society, Healthy Lives. Strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010

6. Equality Analysis

An Equality Analysis (EA) is an assessment and improvement process that helps us to determine how the Council's policies, procedures, services, practices, or new proposals will impact on or affect different communities – especially those groups or communities who experience inequality, discrimination, social exclusion or disadvantage.

In Merton Equality Analysis is generally used to inform and or support the following:

- Savings proposals
- Growth
- Major policy changes around service access
- Service cessation
- Restructuring

DMTs are responsible for identifying which proposed changes require an Equality Analysis. This will ensure that the EA becomes embedded in all our processes.

Additionally officers are required to provide Cabinet Members with sufficient evidence about who the stakeholders are and how they will be affected by proposed changes.

7. How will performance be measured?

Leadership – responsibility and accountability

Merton's elected members have overall responsibility for the Council's Equality Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Equalities and Engagement has the executive responsibility for promoting equality and diversity across the partnership and all council services, including those delivered on its behalf by businesses, voluntary, community and faith organisations.

Our Corporate Management Team and Departmental Management Teams will have responsibility for the strategic implementation of the strategy. This includes making sure that equalities is central to all work done by the council, communicating and promoting the strategy to others inside and outside the council, setting out what we aim to achieve in terms of equality and diversity, and holding departments to account through performance reviews.

All managers must be familiar with the strategy and be responsible for ensuring equality and diversity is an integral part of any policy development, service design and delivery, employment practices; and procuring and commissioning of goods and services.

All staff including those we work in partnership with, and who are contracted or commissioned to work on our behalf, have a responsibility to promote equality, eliminate discrimination in their day-to-day work, and recognise and respect the different backgrounds and circumstances of people.

The strategy will be monitored through the governance structure outlined below:

Corporate Equality Steering Group is comprised of the CMT Equalities Champion (the Director of Children Schools and Families) and departmental representatives. The group will

take the lead in monitoring the delivery of the strategy's commitments and where necessary highlight issues of concern and make recommendations to CMT for further improvements.

Departmental Equality Steering Groups - each department has a steering group comprised of representatives from across the department. They will be responsible for local delivery of the corporate objectives and will review and revise the priorities based on assessment of service need

Departmental Management Teams - will be responsible for the delivery of the strategy through service, teams and personal development plans.

Corporate Management Team - will receive progress reports twice a year.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission - will receive an annual update on our progress towards achieving the priorities identified in the strategy.

8. Implementation Plan

We will develop a range of robust equality and diversity related performance indicators that we will use to help us monitor our performance. These will be outlined in an action plan outlining the priorities for each objective and the performance measures

APPENDIX II ACTION PLAN

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
Equality Objective 1: To ensure key plans and strategies narrow the gap between different communities in the borough			
1. To reduce health inequalities between different communities in the borough: Sustained halt in rise in the gap in life expectancy between least and most deprived areas within Merton, through improving life expectancy amongst the most deprived	2012/14 Male -6.8 yrs Female-5 yrs Baseline 2011/13 & target Male -7.9 yrs Female- 5.2 yrs	Health and Wellbeing strategy (2015-18)	C&H
2. Halt the widening gap in % of obese 10-11 year olds between east & west Merton, through reducing obesity in children in east Merton	Target 2015/16 – 2017/18 9.2% Baseline: 2012/13-2014/15 9.2% gap Trend in the gap between east and west Merton is increasing East: 23.6% obese West: 14.4% obese	Health & Wellbeing Strategy/ Merton action plan to prevent childhood obesity 2016	C&H

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>3. Reduce gap in % of obese 10-11 year olds between east & west Merton, through reducing obesity amongst children in east Merton</p>	<p>target 2016/17 – 18/19 8% Baseline: 2012/13 – 14/15 9.2% gap</p> <p>Trend in the gap between east and west Merton is increasing</p> <p>East: 23.6% obese West: 14.4% obese</p>	<p>Health & Wellbeing Strategy/ Merton action plan to prevent childhood obesity 2016</p>	<p>C&H</p>
<p>4. Increase active usage of libraries by 5% in the east of the borough amongst 11-16 year olds.</p>	<p>2015/16: 2270 active library users aged 11-16 years in the CR4 postcode.</p>	<p>Business Plan 2016-2021</p>	<p>C&H</p>
<p>5. Increase course take up by 25% in deprived wards by delivering a focussed employability and family learning offer.</p>	<p>2015/16: 52% of adult learners on employability and family learning courses were from deprived wards in academic year 2015-16.</p>	<p>Merton Adult Learning Strategy</p>	<p>C&H</p>
<p>6. Promote digital inclusion through activities that support the Customer Contact strategy</p>	<p>Proportion of completed online transactions for available services</p>	<p>Customer Contact strategy/Business Improvement</p>	<p>CS</p>
<p>7. Produce guidance and training for commissioners on the use of the Social Value Act including the development of a model approach for measuring and evaluating social value.</p>	<p>Quarter 3 2017/18</p>	<p>Corporate Services/Infrastructure & Transactions division/ Commercial services team</p>	<p>CS</p>

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
8. Work with MVSC to increase community giving to the VCS, in particular to support smaller groups with low/no income base - working with disadvantage and vulnerable groups.	Report to Compact Board Autumn 2017 with proposals	Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy	CS
9. Review the support offer to Merton's VCS organisations, in particular to smaller and informal groups	Revised commissioning objectives for VCS support in 2017/18	Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Strategy	CS
10. Financial Inclusion/Welfare Reform	Continue with existing council tax support scheme and local welfare support scheme for 2017/18. The local welfare support scheme will include referrals to the Food bank and continued part funding of a CAB Welfare Disabilities Advisor	% of council tax collection	CS
11. Continue to improve the educational outcomes for disadvantaged groups including LAC; SEN; and pupils eligible for Free School Meals or Pupil Premium	Education Outcomes at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years • Key Stage 2 • Key Stage 4 For disadvantaged groups of pupils	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019 CSF Departmental Equalities and Community Cohesion Annual Plan Annual School Standards Report	CSF

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>12. Challenge schools to improve attendance and reduce exclusions for all children.</p>	<p>School attendance in primary and secondary schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % attendance • % persistent absence <p>Exclusions in primary and secondary schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of permanent exclusions • % of fixed-term exclusions 	<p>Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019</p> <p>CSF Departmental Equalities and Community Cohesion Annual Plan</p> <p>Annual School Standards Report</p>	CSF
<p>13. Work with London Councils, as the borough lead for a pan-London employment project to address the following two priorities –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusive labour markets 2. Skills for Growth 	<p>Quarterly outputs provided by the contractor on</p> <p>Total participants and including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long term unemployed • over 50's • ethnic minorities 	Economic Development Strategy Refresh 2012	E&R
Equality Objective 2: Provide equality of access to services for disadvantaged groups			
<p>1. Adult Social Care - ensure equality of uptake of social care for all- in line with residents' needs -and take action through commissioning and provision decisions to improve equality of uptake</p>	<p>Annual analysis of pattern of service use by characteristics relating to need- including ethnicity</p>	Commissioning /service plans	C&H
<p>2. Housing –prevention of homelessness through advice and assistance</p>	<p>450 cases annual target</p>	Service plan	C&H

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>3. Engage BAME groups to inform adult learning and library service development, tailored to their needs.</p>	<p>A range of services are currently provided. Workshops will be used to direct where some of our future resources are placed.</p> <p>Run 2 workshops each year.</p>	<p>Merton Adult Learning Strategy</p>	<p>C&H</p>
<p>4. Disabilities and autism – to assess the need and picture of inequalities and inequity for people with disabilities and autism in Merton, and develop autism and disabilities strategies and action plans to tackle gaps in support, provision and access. These will take a pragmatic approach in recognition of existing financial constraints in the statutory sector, looking at optimising existing resources.</p>	<p>Needs assessments on autism and disabilities completed. Strategies and action plans developed for autism (by September 2017) and disabilities (by 31 March 2018).</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy Children and Young People's Plan 2016-19</p>	<p>C&H CSF</p>
<p>5. Provide an assisted collection for residents who otherwise may not be able to present their wheeled bin in accordance with standard policy</p>	<p>100% of those requesting assisted collection who meet the criteria set out in the standard policy to receive assisted collections</p>		<p>E&R</p>
<p>6. Continues to raise the issue of step free access at train stations such as Motspur Park, Rayne Park, Wimbledon Park Stations as opportunities arise</p>	<p>This falls under NetworkRail's jurisdiction. However, Merton will continue to raise this at the south London partnership meetings and at other stake holder groups.</p>	<p>Merton Local Plan & Local Implementation Plan</p>	<p>E&R</p>

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>7. work with TfL to ensure that all signalised crossings have the appropriate tactile and audible features & all other controlled crossings have the appropriate tactile paving</p>	<p>All controlled crossings on borough roads adhere to the regulation and are DDA compliant. TfL have recently completed their review and remedial works at all signalised junctions.</p>	<p>Merton Local Plan & Local Implementation Plan</p>	<p>E&R</p>
<p>8. Where possible, the Council endeavours to make the public realm accessible by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. ensure that the kerbs are dropped at key locations such as at junctions; B. de-clutter the footways and footpaths to improve accessibility C. ensuring that dropped kerbs at formal crossings and at some informal crossings have the appropriate tactile paving. 	<p>Attend quarterly meetings with the sub-regional mobility forums</p> <p>This is also measured through the annual monitoring of the Local Implementation plan</p>	<p>Local Implementation plan</p>	<p>E&R</p>
<p>9. Continue to work with BAME Voice, Merton Centre For Independent Living, the LGBT and Faith and Belief forums to disseminate and raise awareness in their respective communities of services and support on offered by the council and partners.</p>	<p>Hold regular or quarterly meetings</p>	<p>Voluntary Sector Strategy</p>	<p>CS</p>

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
10. Continue to target families living in areas of deprivation to utilise children's centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of total 0-4 year estimated Census 2011 population from areas of deprivation (IDACI 30%) whose families have accessed children's center services 	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019	CSF
11. Ensure that looked after children achieve long-term stability and permanency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of children adopted or subject of a special guardianship order • % of LAC in placement for at least 2 years • % of LAC at the end of the month with 3 or more placements 	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019 Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy	CSF
12. Ensure the timely delivery of Education, Health and Care Plans for children with special educational needs and disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % Education, Health and Care Plans completed within timescale 	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019	CSF
Equality Objective 3: Ensure regeneration plans and activities increase the opportunity for all Merton's residents to fulfil their educational, health and economic potential, participate in the renewal of the borough and create a health promoting environment.			

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
1. Merton Partnership to look at opportunities through the One Public Estate programme to review how the public sector collectively uses its public estate and supports the VCS to deliver increased social value.	Report to Merton Partnership on OPE opportunities Autumn 2017	One Public Estate programme	CS/ER
2. Continue to support young people into Education, Employment and Training	<p>Reduce the % of NEET young people</p> <p>Reduce the % of "not known" NEET</p> <p>Reduce the % of Care Leavers NEET</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019</p> <p>Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy</p>	CSF
3. Housing needs for vulnerable people and families to be considered as part of the affordable housing proportion of all planning applications (planning conditions s106)	Affordable housing supply and nominations policy between LBM and RPs.	Housing Strategy & Merton's Local Plan	E&R
4. We will work with Clarion-Latimer to promote access to local employment and apprenticeships opportunities via planning conditions and for Clarion's procurement for re-building the estates.	To be determined and monitored as planning conditions of the regeneration.	Merton's Local Plan & Estates Local Plan	E&R
Equality Objective 4: To encourage recruitment from all sections of the community, actively promote staff development and career progression opportunities and embed equalities across the organisation			

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>1. Monitor progress with respect to the recruitment of apprenticeships as required through the Waste Collection and Environmental Services Contract</p>	<p>% of apprentices as a proportion of the total workforce operating on this contract within Merton. In total the Lot 1 contractor has committed to 25 apprenticeship placements being made across the contract for all SLWP boroughs.</p>		E&R
<p>2. Ensure that the procurement of Environmental services contracts, allow for the recognition of social value through the employment of special needs, apprenticeships and local long term unemployed</p>	<p>A commitment to implement the Contractors Voluntary Work Placement Programme (Veolia Re-start) is contained within the contract. This programme is run in conjunction with JobCentre Plus and Welfare to Work partners.</p>		E&R

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>3. Access to Apprenticeships:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Departments will work with HR to create opportunities for apprenticeships. 2. HR will work with managers to get maximum benefit from the Apprenticeship Levy by developing existing workforce. 3. The Council will continue to work closely with CSF to prioritise apprenticeships for its Looked After Children and Care Leavers. 	<p>HR will host quarterly apprenticeship awareness workshops for managers.</p> <p>% of apprenticeship levy accessed per workforce.</p> <p>Provide regular apprenticeship news stories and plan activities for Apprenticeship Day</p> <p>Set up quarterly meetings with Head of service to establish which young person/s would benefit from participating in an apprenticeship scheme and determine the support needed to ensure the young person fulfils their potential</p>	Workforce Strategy	CS

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>4. Increase the diversity of Senior Leadership Team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We cannot positively discriminate however we will ensure that our recruitment processes are adhered to for senior roles including the appointment of the best candidate for the role. 2. HR will ensure that the Council's Executive search consultants and recruitment team advertise the vacancies widely. 3. HR will monitor equal access to Learning and development opportunities including management and leadership development. 4. For an organisation to have a healthy, harmonious culture it needs a mission that unifies its diverse stakeholder community. Therefore, engagement with the relevant diversity interest group: customers, staff and partners. 	<p>Monitor recruitment on quarterly basis and report findings to CMT as part of the HR metrics report.</p> <p>Provide CMT with the end of recruitment summary</p> <p>Provide participation rate on a quarterly basis to identify trends and respond to these as appropriate.</p> <p>Increase rating by 5% in the staff survey in relation to development</p>	<p>Workforce Strategy</p>	<p>CS</p>

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
5. In developing HR policies and procedures – statutory requirement and best practice is incorporated	<p>Policies are agreed and staff are briefed and made aware of the new policies.</p> <p>Measure take up of briefing sessions.</p> <p>Ensure the policies are compliant with Equalities Act 2010.</p>	Workforce Strategy	CS
Equality Objective 5: Promoting a safe, healthy and cohesive borough where communities get on well together			
1. Increase the confidence of victims to report Hate Crime and Domestic Violence	<p>The performance measures remain tbc until year 1 priorities are confirmed and the strategic assessment is completed in January 2017</p> <p>Current performance is designed to increase reporting by 20% year on year for 2016-17. This will be subject to review in the new year when the strategic assessment is finalised and the MOPAC police and crime plan performance is confirmed</p>	Hate Crime Strategy Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy	E&R
2. Working in partnership to deliver the Prevent Duty and keep Merton a safe and cohesive borough	Hold monthly Prevent Case Management meetings	Prevent Delivery Plan	CS Lead

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
3. Working in partnership to reduce alcohol-related harm	Baseline Admission episodes for alcohol related conditions (broad)-1,858 rate per 100,000 population	Strategic Framework for prevention of substance misuse (September 2017) Local Alcohol Action Area	Public Health & E&R
4. Continue to celebrate diversity by promoting community cohesion activity such as Black History Month and LGBT History Month	Hold annual civic event for Holocaust Memorial Day and promote LGBT History Month and Black History Month events	Equality Strategy	CS/ER
5. Continue to work collaboratively to reduce bullying in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of primary and secondary schools graded 'Good' or better for personal development, behaviour and welfare by Ofsted 	CSF Departmental Equalities and Community Cohesion Annual Plan	CSF
6. Continue to work in partnership to reduce the number of First-Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice system and undertake targeted work to identify and support those at risk of offending and re-offending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of FTE to the YJS aged 10-17 Rate of proven reoffending in the YJS 	Children and Young People's Plan 2016 -2019	CSF
Equality Objective 6: Fulfill our statutory duties and ensure (relevant stakeholders are consulted) protected groups are effectively engaged when we change our services.			
1. Equality Analysis routinely undertaken to support the decision making process	Savings, growth and service reviews to include EAs	Equality Strategy	All

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>2. Refresh User Voice Strategy and ensure children, young people and families continue to impact continuous improvement for all services across CSF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure each CSF service commit to User Voice activity in annual Service Plans. • Report quarterly to Director's management team on annual action plan and programme of User Voice activity. 	CSF User Voice Strategy 2017 -2019	CSF
<p>3. Continue to consult with children, young people and parents in the development of services for children with SEN and disabilities in line with the expectations of the Children and Families Act 2014</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report quarterly to Director's management team. 	CSF User Voice Strategy 2017 -2019	CSF

Key activity	Performance Measure	Key strategy/Plan	Department/ Division
<p>4. Polling station review to be undertaken ahead of the council elections in May 2018</p>	<p>Seek to ensure that all electors in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.</p> <p>Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.</p>	<p>Electoral Commission Performance Standards for Returning Officers</p>	<p>CS</p>
<p>5. Target particular communities who have not responded or registered to vote:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to collect council tax and housing benefit data on a monthly basis in order to identify new electors, plus student data at the beginning of each academic year. Expand data mining in an attempt to gain access to registrars, blue badge, and libraries data to identify new citizens/residents. 2. Compare non responding properties to mosaic data in order to identify if there are particular communities under represented on the electoral register. 	<p>50% of all new monthly registrations through data mining.</p>	<p>Electoral Commission Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers</p>	<p>CS</p>

APPENDIX III – COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATION

Source	Comment	Response (in progress)
Corporate Services Equality Steering Group	HR should consider producing recruitment metrics to inform discussions with CMT and DMTs.	Incorporated into the action plan.
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	Narrowing the gap – we have to be careful here. The gap is widening and what is required is improving outcomes for the most deprived.	Noted and will be discussed with officers.
	Tackling Child Obesity is a complex area and an ambitious aim – how can we realistically make a difference? The home environment is important.	Noted and will be discussed with officers.
	Be cautious when looking at the gaps.	Noted and will be discussed with officers.
	Will our planning decisions ensure that we use sec 106 funding to encourage contractors to employ local people?	Noted and will be discussed with officers.
	Social Value Act – how realistic is it to have actions around this and we need performance indicators	Guidance to provide a framework for officers is being developed. Performance Indicators to be added.
	Is the action plan an ambitious wish list? How will the actions be monitored?	Action plan is linked to departmental service plans and will be monitored via CMT, OSC, JCC and DMTs.
Compact Board	Add Wimbledon Park station on the list of stations for discussion with TFL for step-free access – as that station lost out to Southfields before the Olympics.	Noted and will be discussed with officers.
	Report well received – strategy has the right balance.	
INVOLVE Leaders	How will managers across the organisation ensure that they engage with residents at the start of changes to service delivery and not at the end?	Feedback to be provided to CMT
	The report was well received	
	The report was well received.	

Source	Comment	Response (in progress)
Strategy Group	<p>It is important to have success criteria for the activity in the action plan.</p> <p>Need to ensure that young people get to comment on the strategy.</p>	<p>Performance Indicators do have success measures</p> <p>Participation Manager will be discussing the strategy with members of the Youth Parliament.</p>
Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minorities	<p>The strategy is good but what will be different this time? How will the outcomes be monitored?</p> <p>Concerns expressed about the lack of BAME staff senior manager roles.</p>	<p>Monitoring will be done as outlined in the strategy; JCC will also receive regular updates and have the opportunity to monitor progress.</p> <p>CMT to receive a report from HR</p>
Faith and Belief forum	<p>The draft was well received.</p> <p>"Key activity 3 about celebrating diversity is fine as far as it goes. However, a more pro-active approach in the way of more of a public education campaign about diverse groups, how we can more effectively live together and behave towards each other.. the counter argument will be, 'but that costs money.' But maybe it would save money on Key activities 1 and 2 which could be considered as 'locking the door after the horse has bolted'".</p> <p>Can 'My Merton' be used to publicise Nisa-Nashim? (Jewish Muslim Women's Network).</p>	<p>A way forward is to put out positive messages in 'My Merton' and talk about diversity, focusing on the contributions of various communities.</p>
Merton Centre for Independent Living	<p>Planning and design of refurbishment/development to include disability considerations from the outset.</p> <p>More effective and regular involvement of groups and engagement with residents required.</p> <p>Housing advice not always given in a sympathetic manner. A more sensitive approach is needed to understand their issues and anxieties.</p> <p>The east of the borough receives a poor level of service, e.g. the streets are cleaner in Wimbledon than in Mitcham.</p> <p>Disability is 'invisible'</p>	<p>Evereth Willis to meet with representatives to develop the new item for a future edition of My Development Control officers.</p> <p>Feed back to be given to Planning and Development Control officers.</p> <p>Feed back to be given to managers.</p>
	<p>Housing advice not always given in a sympathetic manner. A more sensitive approach is needed to understand their issues and anxieties.</p> <p>The east of the borough receives a poor level of service, e.g. the streets are cleaner in Wimbledon than in Mitcham.</p> <p>Disability is 'invisible'</p>	<p>Comment to be given to Head of Housing Needs and Strategy.</p> <p>Efforts are being made to bridge the gap between the East and the West.</p> <p>Noted and will be discussed with officers.</p>

Source	Comment	Response (in progress)
	Lack of awareness and understanding of 'hidden disability' such as chronic illnesses.	Evereth to speak to HR to liaise with MCIL to arrange staff briefings.
	Disability is not celebrated in the same way as LGBT History Month and Black History Month.	Council will support voluntary sector groups to promote community cohesion events in the borough.
	Child obesity will be difficult to achieve because of complex issues such as culture and too many fast food shops (in the east).	Considerations already incorporated in to the brief for the company conducting research.
	The website to access council tax reduction is not helpful and is cumbersome.	Comments to be passed onto officers.
	Will patients of the Wilson be able to register with G.P.s after the redevelopment?	Comment to be passed to the Director of Public Health.
Merton Centre for Independent Living	The Disability Health Needs Assessment needs to be added to the action plan and a Disability Strategy is needed.	Comment to be passed to the Director of Public Health.
	Disability issues are wider than social care and economic factors, e.g. transport, leisure and adult learning are also considerations.	Noted and will be discussed with officers.
	An Access Officer is needed to tackle cross-cutting issues.	The council does not have the resources for an Access Officer however officers will work in a cross-cutting way to deal with issues.
	Equality Impact Assessments are often flawed. Service reduction tends to affect groups that are already receiving targeted services. Engagement with residents is required at an early stage and not just once savings have already been identified.	Noted and will be discussed with officers.
	Health inequality – do we know what the gap is between disabled and non-disabled people?	Comment to be passed to the Director of Public Health.
	Adult Education – poor service provision for adults with learning disability	Comment to be passed to Head of Library & Heritage Services.

Source	Comment	Response (in progress)
	<p>Voluntary sector organisations are not supported to find suitable accommodation. These groups are informed that they need to pay commercial rents, but they are then not supported with funding to meet these costs. A proper strategy is needed.</p>	<p>Noted and will be discussed with officers.</p>
	<p>Merton is the 2nd lowest in London for accepting homeless cases. This is because the borough takes a hard line and is not as proactive as other boroughs with preventative measures.</p>	<p>Comment to be given to Head of Housing Needs and Strategy.</p>
	<p>A disability audit of the Civic Centre is required.</p>	<p>Comment to be given to the Head of Facilities.</p>
<p>Youth Parliament</p>	<p>Participation Manager to meet with members of the Youth Parliament to get their views.</p>	
<p>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Forum</p>	<p>Strategy well received. Thanks expressed for the council's support in refreshing the forum.</p>	
<p>Public consultation - IConsult</p>	<p>Same two comments also submitted via the Faith and Belief Forum.</p>	