



Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18

London Borough of Merton

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18

Contents

Foreword	3
What is overview and scrutiny?	4
Scrutiny achievements, 2014-2018	5
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	7
Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Panel	11
Healthier Communities and Older People Overview & Scrutiny Panel	15
Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel	18
Get Involved	20
Contact the Scrutiny Team	21

Foreword

To follow

Cllr Peter Southgate
Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Commission

What is overview and scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000. Merton operates a Leader and Cabinet model, where the Cabinet makes the executive decisions of the authority on behalf of local residents.

Overview and Scrutiny's main roles are:

- holding the Cabinet to account
- improving and developing council policies
- examining decisions before they are implemented
- engaging with members of the public
- monitoring performance of the council and its partners

Scrutiny can look into services provided by other agencies and other matters of importance to the people of the borough. Scrutiny has legal powers to monitor and hold to account local health services (Health and Social Care Act 2001) and to scrutinise crime reduction and community safety issues (Police and Justice Act 2006).

Principles

Overview and Scrutiny at Merton is:

- open to the public
- informed by methodically gathered evidence
- based on careful deliberation and discussion
- conducted in an appropriate manner

How Overview and Scrutiny works in Merton

Merton Council has an Overview and Scrutiny Commission, which acts as a coordinating body supporting three Overview and Scrutiny Panels with individual areas of responsibility:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Sustainable Communities

Commission and Panel meetings take place throughout the year and members of the public are welcome to attend. Dates, agendas and minutes for these meetings can be found on the council website:

<https://democracy.merton.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

More information about Scrutiny at Merton can be found at

<https://www2.merton.gov.uk/council/decision-making/scrutiny.htm>

or by phoning the scrutiny team on 020 8545 3864 or emailing scrutiny@merton.gov.uk.

Scrutiny achievements 2014-2018

Councillors involved in scrutiny have indicated that they have found this to be a rewarding and influential role, as highlighted from feedback from our last survey of scrutiny councillors, co-opted members and Cabinet members:

“I believe the overview and scrutiny function gives me the opportunity to learn from others by way of practice, policy, communication and link working, also an opportunity to identify where changes need to be made and practice and habits need to be changed.”

“The Task Groups are very good and enable in depth discussion on potential policy direction.”

“Cabinet continues to be responsive to suggestions from scrutiny when reviewing the budget”

Scrutiny has resulted in real changes in policies, service provision and council budgets over the last four years. Some of the highlights are set out below:

Improvements to local services

Over the last four years scrutiny has made recommendations that have had a significant impact on services provided by the council, its partners and other external organisations:

Care leaver accommodation

The recommendation of the Sustainable Communities Panel that a *House of Multiple Occupation* be piloted as an alternative option for care leaver accommodation has now been realised. This resulted from the Panel taking a workshop approach to focus exclusively on the issue of housing and specifically care leaver accommodation working in partnership with members of the Children and Young People Panel.

Energy Supply Company updates

Council officers continue to pursue the scrutiny task group recommendation that Merton should establish an energy supply company (ESCO). Discussions are ongoing with a housing scheme provider and as part of these setting up an ESCO is still being explored. It has been established that the business case for an ESCO is dependent on having a housing development opportunity as well as the necessary level of demand for energy and heating. Proving the business case therefore cannot be achieved until the development is more advanced.

Type Two Diabetes

The task group review on tackling type two diabetes in the South Asian community led to culturally appropriate services being provided for this group. This includes education sessions and ensuring NHS health checks are provided at a younger age.

The task group review also raised the profile of this important issue. This has contributed to the Health and Wellbeing Board identifying tackling type two diabetes as a priority area.

Brain injury

The Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the services available for people who had experienced traumatic brain injury. It became apparent during the scrutiny process that Merton had lower provision than its neighbours therefore Merton Clinical Commissioning Group decided that additional services will be provided in the Borough.

Childhood immunisations

A cross cutting scrutiny review on improving the rates of childhood immunisations in the 0-5 age group has led to successful outcomes. The review was conducted because Sutton and Merton had the worst immunisations rates in London and key partners including NHS England, the local authorities and the clinical commissioning groups did not have a joint approach to tackling this issue but worked in silos. As a result of the recommendations arising from the review and the positive manner in which they were received a strong partnership approach with regular meetings and a joint action plan was in place and overall there has been an increase in immunisations rates amongst the 0-5 age group

Holding external bodies to account

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is pleased that it successfully managed to scrutinise two key external bodies during this municipal year: Clarion Housing and Veolia UK. Merton transferred its social housing stock to Clarion in 2010 which was subject to an agreement lasting five years. Now that this has concluded, there is no obligation on Clarion to continue to participate in Merton's scrutiny process. Therefore, the Panel is pleased that it secured the commitment to attend this year and in future years.

Merton's waste, recycling and street cleaning services are now provided through the South London Waste Partnership by Veolia UK. It was therefore important that when faced with performance issues it was willing to participate in the scrutiny process with its representative having appeared at two of the Panel's meetings.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission is responsible for the scrutiny of cross cutting and strategic issues, crime and disorder and issues relating to the council's "corporate capacity". The Commission acts as a coordinating body in supporting the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels and has responsibility for developing and keeping scrutiny under review.

Scrutiny reviews

Recruitment and retention of teachers

The task group was set up in order to investigate the difficulties that schools in Merton were experiencing with the recruitment and retention of teachers and how Merton Council and its partners could assist with this. The task group heard from local headteachers, newly qualified teachers and council officers as well as examining information about teacher recruitment and retention nationally.

The task group noted that good school performance has a positive impact on both recruitment and retention and were therefore encouraged by evidence of sustained improvement in performance in Merton schools and the high proportion of schools that have been rated "good" or "outstanding" by Ofsted.

The task group found that the council already has appropriate systems and structures in place for teacher recruitment. It has made recommendations aimed at using these more effectively and promoting them more widely to headteachers. Similarly, there is a range of benefits already on offer to teachers, so the task group has made recommendations to re-invigorate their promotion as well as encouraging governing bodies to organise activities that would promote staff health and wellbeing.

The cost of local accommodation was found to be a key factor affecting both recruitment and retention. The task group has made a number of recommendations that are intended to improve teachers' experience of the private rented sector, including the proposed introduction of an interest free loan to assist teachers with payment of rent deposits.

Shared and outsourced services

The Commission has continued to receive reports on progress made by Cabinet in responding to recommendations made by the scrutiny review of shared and outsourced services. The recommendations were intended to stimulate a more consistent and rigorous approach to selecting delivery models and challenging officers on the most appropriate model for each service.

The Commission has welcomed progress made on identifying different service models for a number of services and on the development of a draft toolkit and business case pro-forma. Members expressed disappointment that more had not been done to bring proposals for large or strategically important outsourced services to scrutiny at an early stage when there was still time to have some influence on their development.

Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive attended to set out their priorities for 2017/18, pressures on services and on housing supply in London and the financial challenges facing the council. The Commission asked them questions on issues including emergency procedures and building safety, commercial activity undertaken and planned by the council and how service performance was being addressed with Clarion.

The Commission commented on the annual report from Merton Partnership, particularly in relationship to use of the government's apprenticeship levy, SEN funding and the night time economy. Members suggested that all priority areas in the action plan should have measurable targets and a full set of data. A presentation on the findings of the residents' survey 2017 showed a positive shift against many of the measures. A notable concern was street cleanliness. Members agreed that they wished to see the survey continue on a biennial basis.

Equality and community cohesion strategy action plan – add after March 2018 meeting

The Commission has continued to receive updates on the customer contact programme and has been pleased with the increased level of use of online services. The Commission noted the delay in completion and the budget overspend. Members were assured that various Apps for reporting streetscene issues could still be used. Members were informed of the commercial discussions with the supplier and the options that were being considered for ongoing support and hosting for the technology.

The Commission was pleased to hear that the Registration Services had received positive feedback from the General Register Office. Members also welcomed the completion of works at Morden Park House that would enable the council to maximise income from its use for ceremonial and other functions.

Scrutiny of crime and disorder

(update on crime data and levels of policing after March meeting)

The Borough Commander has been asked questions on a wide range of issues including knife crime, Traveller encampments and the Eastern Electrics festival in Morden Park. *(Update after March meeting – Borough Command Unit and policing levels)*

A response to the MOPAC Public Access and Engagement Strategy was sent to express the Commission's support for the retention of a front office in Wimbledon, agreeing the need to debate the best way to resource policing in the borough but

questioning the wisdom of such large cuts to police budgets at a time of increasing terrorism and civil unrest.

The Manager of Merton Refuge outlined the services and support provided by the Refuge. The Commission also received a report setting out progress that had been made on tackling violence against women and girls, including domestic violence. Members who subsequently visited the Refuge to speak to service users, their children and staff were impressed by the facilities and services provided.

Add info on Safer Merton report to March 2018 meeting

Call-in

One call-in request was received by the Commission in 2017/18:

Residual waste container size

The Commission heard a call-in further to pre decision scrutiny on this issue by the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel, in January 2018. Cabinet's decision was that the standard size of wheeled bins for both residual waste and paper/card should be 180 litres, with 240 litre and 140 litre alternatives to be an option for larger and smaller households respectively.

The call-in signatories and invited witnesses raised considerations relating to consultation processes, resident views, the consideration of different options and the assisted collection scheme. Commission members expressed varying views about whether the proposals were sufficiently flexible and whether consultation specifically on size should have been undertaken. The Commission voted to uphold Cabinet's decision.

Finance and performance monitoring

The financial monitoring task group has continued to monitor quarterly financial management reports. In particular, it has scrutinised the forecast overspend, capital programme and lack of progress on achieving savings in some service areas. It has scrutinised a number of areas in depth including asset management, the Wimbledon tennis championship, the council's approach to commercialisation, and the service and financial position of the council's CHAS company.

Scrutiny of the budget

The draft business plan, medium term financial strategy and proposed budget savings proposals were examined in detail, alongside equality impact assessments for each of the savings. The Commission examined progress made with savings that had been agreed in previous years and commented on the size of the capital budget, given that it was underspent in the past.

The Commission made a recommendation to Cabinet in November 2017 in relation to the proposed use of reserves to balance the budget, the predicted shortfall in savings from previous years, the vacancy rate and use of agency staff, and the longstanding and persistent pressures in adult social care as well as the unfunded costs of supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children and those with no recourse to public funds.

A further recommendation was made to Cabinet in January 2018 noting the substantial budget gap predicted for 2020/21 and beyond, recommending that officers should be encouraged to be entrepreneurial and pursue innovative solutions (subject to an acceptable level of risk), and that Cabinet recognize the importance of effective and appropriately planned project management to ensure projects are achieved on time and maximize potential savings from those projects.

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Areas of responsibility: scrutiny of issues relating to children and young people. This includes education, children's social care, child protection and youth services.

Councillor Dennis Pearce, Panel Chair: "It has been a pleasure this year to scrutinise a service that has received such a positive outcome from its Ofsted inspection and it is good to note that the cross party working of this Panel was complimented as part of Ofsted's report. It is also important to note that this year we have worked in partnership with the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel to bring attention to the issue of care leaver accommodation, reflecting that this is an issue that needs to be addressed across Departments. It is important to acknowledge this valuable way of working. We have also continued to grow in our role of scrutinising children and family health and wellbeing. This remains new to the remit of the Panel but one in which we are growing in confidence".

Scrutiny reviews

Prevent task group

The decision to form this task group was set against the background of the four terror attacks that happened between March and June 2017; the Panel wanted to reassure itself that Merton's schools are successfully implementing the duty and doing everything possible to prevent Merton's young people from becoming radicalised and doing so in a way that doesn't cause stigmatisation of individuals or communities. Recommendations include looking at the role of the wider Merton community in helping prevent radicalisation amongst Merton's young people and Merton's schools continuing to share their best practice to support each other in fulfilling the duty. The report will be presented to Cabinet on 26 March before the action plan comes to the Panel in the new municipal year.

Care leaver accommodation

Members of the Children and Young People Panel were pleased to support the work of colleagues on the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel when it took an in-depth look at accommodation for care leavers. It is evident that there are issues that sit across Panels and it is beneficial for us to work collectively and in partnership with officers from several departments across the Council. The officer response to the detailed reference that resulted from the workshop was welcomed by the Panel. The Panel pleased that this has already resulted in a *House of Multiple Occupation* being piloted to provide alternative accommodation for care leavers.

User voice rapporteur scrutiny review

Discussion of possible options in response to the recommendations in the review due at the meeting on 14 March 2018.

Routes into employment for vulnerable cohorts

This task group reported in February 2017 with the action plan for the implementation of the recommendations being presented to the Panel this year. Members have asked officers to clarify why it is not possible to ensure through standard terms that contractors and service providers offer apprenticeships for Merton residents. A further review of progress against the recommendations is due within six months.

Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny

Ofsted inspection

The Panel dedicated a whole meeting to looking at the outcome of the Ofsted single framework inspection and comparing this to the performance of other London boroughs. This emphasised that Merton is in the top 10 of local authorities nationally for its provision of children's services. Highlights include that managers and social workers know their children well, Merton's systematic model and approach to safeguarding is regarded as robust by Ofsted, the approach to care proceedings is credited with being the best out of boroughs using the South West London courts and the adoption service received a rare outstanding judgement.

With the help of Kathy Bundred, Children's Improvement Adviser for the Local Government Association, Merton's success was quantified and highlighted as one of a small number of authorities judged to be doing well in the provision of children's services. The session also focused on features of authorities with children's services judged good or higher providing the Panel with a framework for future scrutiny of the service.

Harris Wimbledon Secondary Academy

The Panel has continued to work with officers to review progress on the delivery of Harris Wimbledon and to understand the associated issues. This has been achieved through regular updates from the Cabinet Member for Education, information in the Department Update Report, member questions asked through matters arising and through a dedicated item. Members focused on admission criteria, demand for the new school and how the needs of Merton Abbey Primary are being accommodated through the shared use of the site. Members resolved to ask Cabinet to seek formal written reassurance from the Elim Church that under its management, Merton Hall lettings will enable the venue to remain for the use of all the community and that lettings will be fully compliant with equality legislation. It was reported to the Panel, at its meeting in January 2018, that Elim had confirmed in writing it will be offering the church site to the local community for groups and individuals to hire when it is available and that there would be no restriction on those groups accessing services, meetings and clubs etc. No bookings will be taken that conflict with the Constitution of Elim's charity.

Merton Safeguarding Children Board

The Panel received the annual report of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB). Members used the session to understand how the board will sustain its focus on improvement, what support is provided to young people with a custodial sentence, what is being done to address knife crime and how the service ensures

the child's voice is heard.

Corporate parenting

The corporate parenting annual report was received by the Panel with the focus on improving placement stability for Merton's very complex young people highlighted along with the challenge of child sexual exploitation.

Health and wellbeing strategies for children and families

Officers from Public Health and colleagues from the Clinical Commissioning Group provided the Panel with an update report on health and wellbeing strategies for children and families. This focused on activity to address and progress being made on childhood obesity as well as looking at Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Members sought to understand satisfaction with the CAMHS service. This is a new area of responsibility for the Panel and one in which it is growing in confidence. During this year, training has been provided for Panel members on those areas of the public health strategy that relate to children and young people.

Think Family

The Panel benefited from a briefing on the Think Family initiative which recognises and promotes the importance of a whole-family approach, working across children's and adult's services.

Performance monitoring

Performance monitoring data

The Panel has continued to review progress against a basket of agreed key targets (Key Performance Indicators) with Councillor Mike Brunt continuing in the role of performance monitoring lead for the Panel. However, access to this data has been limited this year by the implementation of the new Mosaic information management system by the Children, Schools and Families Department. This situation has been carefully monitored by the performance monitoring lead and the Panel. Data is again starting to become available for the last Panel meeting of this municipal year.

Education, Care and Health Plans

Having carefully monitored performance in provision of Education, Care and Health Plans (ECHPs), the Panel requested a deep dive session to improve its understanding of why the 20 week statutory target wasn't being met and what further work was in hand to improve performance. This established that whilst the target wasn't being met, the number of tribunals had notably decreased and that performance was on track to transfer all existing SEN statement to ECHPs by March 2018. The Panel also learned how the ECHP process was being streamlined to achieve the 20 week target including getting requests to the assessment panel quicker.

Schools annual report

Due at the 14 March meeting.

Financial monitoring

Members used the two budget and business planning sessions this year to explore how the costs of Harris Wimbledon will be covered, look at how budgetary pressures are monitored, explore how efficiencies are being achieved by keeping staff sickness and use of agency staff to the lowest possible level and discuss additional opportunities for the Children, Schools and Families Department to generate income.

The Panel resolved that it wishes to receive financial information on a more regular basis through the Department update report. This is to allow any significant financial items to be understood earlier (to be picked up in the next municipal year through the work programme). The Panel passed a reference on the budget and business plan: 'Recognising the excellent progress already made by the Children, Schools and Families Department in revenue generation, officers should explore additional opportunities for revenue generation in the same way as they are exploring opportunities for cost savings'.

Call-in

No call-in requests were received by the Panel in 2017/18.

Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

This Panel has responsibility for the scrutiny of issues relating to health, public health and adult social care. This includes promoting good health and healthy lifestyles, mental health issues, and reducing health inequalities for people of all ages.

Councillor Peter McCabe said *“The role of this Panel is crucial in bringing democratic accountability to the local health economy. Over the past year this panel played an important role in speaking up on behalf of local people and most importantly seen changes to local services as a result.”*

Responding to local issues

South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust - proposed change to diagnostic autism spectrum disorder.

The Chief Executive of South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust attended the Panel to address public concerns that they would no longer provide diagnostic Autism Spectrum Disorder Services for children. The Panel were informed that there had been a significant increase in the demand for this service therefore it was under review but no immediate changes would be made to the current provision.

Personal Independent Payment process

The Chief Executive of Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) reported that there had been a number of re-occurring issues when supporting people through the Personal Independent Payments process (PIP) . This included inaccessible medical centres and appointment cancellations. A local resident also spoke about the difficulties they had faced with this process. The Department for Work and Pensions submitted a report but were unable to attend the meeting. A further meeting will be held in March.

Merton Clinical Commissioning Group – changes to some services

Last year Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (MCCG) consulted with the Panel about proposed changes to some services. It was reported that they were facing significant financial challenges meant that they had to review current provision. Proposed changes included ending availability of gluten free products on prescription. The Panel expressed concern about plans to restrict the provision of IVF services and asked MCCG to conduct a full 90 day consultation. However having consulted with scrutiny committees across South West London MCCG decided not to go ahead with the proposal.

Financial Monitoring

Budget and Business Plan 2017-18

The Panel considered the budget for 2017-18. The Chief Executive of Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) addressed the Panel in regards to the Adult Social Care Budget. She expressed concern that not all the proposals had been subject to consultation. The Director for Community and Housing reported that many of the draft savings were still under review and a consultation would take place if significant service changes were proposed.

Scrutiny of key partners

South West London and St Georges NHS Trust – update following CQC inspection

The Acting Medical Director from South West London and St Georges NHS Trust attended the Panel to discuss progress with making improvements since the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection rated the Trust as Inadequate. The Panel were informed that significant progress had been made. The Panel asked a number of questions about specific services as well as areas of concerns expressed by their residents. The Panel were satisfied that the Trust were addressing the issues raised by the CQC inspection

Epsom and St Helier University NHS – 2020-2030 vision

Epsom and St Helier University NHS Trust attended the Panel to discuss their vision for 2020-2030. The Trust highlighted that there are significant challenges with their current estate which is spread across two sites and requires significant rebuilding and regeneration. The Panel were keen to emphasise their support for maintaining all services on the St Helier site.

Services for people who have experienced traumatic brain injury

The Panel considered the services Merton provide for people who need support and rehabilitation after an incidence of brain injury. The Panel met with clinicians at St George's Neuro-rehabilitation Centre, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, Merton Safeguarding Adults Manager and the Assistant Director for Adult Social Care. The Panel were informed that while there were areas of good practice, provision for Merton residents was lower than neighbouring boroughs, especially within the psychological services. As a result of the scrutiny by this Panel, MCCG agreed to increase service provision in the borough.

Scrutiny reviews

Tackling Loneliness in Merton

The Panel commissioned a review to look at how to tackle loneliness amongst older people. The topic was suggested by the school council at Abbotsbury Primary School.

The task group met with the British Red Cross, Libraries Manager, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, Street Pastors, Voluntary Sector Organisations and Adult Social Care colleagues. The task group found that there are services available but it can be difficult to identify people who are lonely. Recommendations sought to try and raise the profile of this issue across existing strategies and to develop an agreed list of organisations that people who are facing loneliness can be referred to.

Tackling Type Two Diabetes in the South Asian Community

The Panel conducted a task group review looking at how to reduce the high levels of type two diabetes in the South Asian community, of which there is a higher prevalence than in other ethnic groups. Since this task group has been completed, the Health and Wellbeing Board has identified type two diabetes as a priority. The Panel received an update on the progress with implementing the recommendations and were pleased to find that there has been significant progress and a range of projects will be taking place in the community as part of the wider strategic framework for diabetes.

Scrutiny Review of Homeshare Schemes

The Panel commissioned a task group to consider if a Homeshare scheme would be beneficial in the borough. Homeshare brokers a relationship between older people who have a spare room with a younger person who will give around ten hours of support with tasks around the home. The task group found that although Homeshare schemes exist in Merton, they do not have any links or referral arrangements with the council.

A Homeshare scheme could help to address some of the council's priorities such as tackling loneliness amongst older people and access to housing for young people. The task group found if there are stringent safeguarding measures in place, a scheme of this nature could be beneficial for Merton residents. Adult Social Care was asked to lead on taking this work forward.

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Areas of responsibility: scrutiny of issues relating to housing, environmental sustainability, culture, enterprise and skills, libraries and transport.

Councillor Abby Jones, Panel Chair:

Scrutiny reviews

Air Quality Task Group

This task group has operated alongside the development of a council led air quality action plan, focusing on air quality issues around building sites as there is potential for enforcement through building control. Recommendations include that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the scope of any reviews to parking levies as these are seen as one of the tools available to influence behaviour change and inform decisions around car purchases. **Action plan comes to Panel for review: 20 March 2018.**

Strategic issues and pre-decision scrutiny

The Panel has undertaken pre-decision scrutiny on a range of strategic issues and Council priorities. These include:

Performance monitoring

Financial monitoring

Scrutiny of external bodies

Different approaches

During the municipal year the Panel has employed a number of different approaches to support it in effectively scrutinising

Visits

Veolia ride-along

Conducted by Cllr Sargeant in June 2017, this was undertaken to identify issues to

be addressed in preparing for the new service rollout in Merton in autumn 2018. The ride-along took place in Kingston and involved the Cllr talking to two waste teams and riding along with a third. The success of real time reporting and monitoring of the Veolia on-board computer (the Echo system) was noted as was the adaptation in the service provided for the 5% of residents requiring assistance. Planning for the new service rollout was highlighted as key.

Merton College Adult Learning

In January 2018, Cllrs Anderson, Holden, Jones and Makin visited Merton College to look at the adult learning provision following a change in venue and commissioning model. Members noted the quality of the facilities available, the breadth of provision and the level of participation despite the concerns expressed following closure of the Whately Avenue site.

Performance monitoring

Call-in

The Panel has heard two call-ins during this municipal year:

Call-in	Outcome
Proposal for improving parking facilities in selected borough parks	The Panel resolved to accept all proposals within the report and ask the Cabinet Member to conduct a review in 12 months to ensure the changes are delivering the intended outcomes. This recommendation has been accepted by the Cabinet Member (due October 2018 onwards).
Decision to award the construction works for Merton Hall	Not to refer the decision back to Cabinet and therefore the decision was upheld and took immediate effect.

Get involved

The involvement of local residents, community organisations and partners is an important part of the scrutiny process and councillors are committed to responding to the views and concerns of residents.

Getting involved in scrutiny is one of the best ways to influence decision making at the council, as councillors will hear your experiences first hand. There are a number of ways you can get involved in the work of scrutiny at the council:

Suggesting an issue for scrutiny

The council's website contains an online form which can be used to make suggestions on issues and topics for future scrutiny:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/scrutiny/scrutiny-getinvolved.htm>

Suggestions may also be made in writing, by email or by phone to the Scrutiny Team – contact details overleaf.

All suggestions received will be discussed by the relevant scrutiny Panel and the person who made the suggestion will be contacted to let them know what has happened to it.

Attending meetings

All scrutiny meetings are open to the public except where confidential information has to be discussed. A list of meeting dates and agenda items can be found on the council's website. <http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/committee.htm>

If you would like to attend a meeting simply come along to the meeting venue or, if you want more information, contact the Scrutiny Team – details overleaf.

Providing information and views

Members of the public can send in written views or speak on issues that are under discussion at the Overview and Scrutiny Commission or one of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Information on current task group reviews and any deadlines for submission on information can be found on <http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny> or by contacting the Scrutiny Team – details overleaf.

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 three standing Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

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

In writing:

Scrutiny Team
Corporate Services
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
Surrey SM4 5DX

By emailing:

scrutiny@merton.gov.uk

By phoning:

Julia Regan – Head of Democracy Services
020 8545 3864

Stella Akintan –Scrutiny Officer
020 8545 3390

Annette Wiles – Scrutiny Officer
020 8545 4035

For further information about overview and scrutiny at Merton please access our web pages using the following address <http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny>

This page is intentionally left blank