

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 13 November 2019

Subject: Local Democracy Week scrutiny exercise on the climate emergency

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

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

Contact officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services,
julia.regan@merton.gov.uk, 0208 545 3864

Recommendations:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

- A. discuss and comment on the joint Youth Parliament and Merton Council scrutiny exercise (see Appendix A)
 - B. agree to forward the report and recommendations for consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on 9 December 2019
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Commission is asked to discuss and comment on the scrutiny exercise that was carried out with Youth Parliament members during local democracy week – report of the meeting is set out in Appendix A.
- 1.2. The Commission is asked to agree to take the recommendations of the scrutiny meeting forward to Cabinet.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Following the success of the joint scrutiny exercise with the Youth Parliament during Local Democracy Week last year, the Commission and the Youth Parliament have both agreed to hold another such event this year with the theme to be chosen by the Youth Parliament.
- 2.2. This year's event was held on Tuesday 15 October 2019 to address the question posed by the Youth Parliament - "what is Merton council doing to address their responsibilities on climate change in order to secure the future of our young residents?"
- 2.3. The objectives of the event were to:
 - give young people some experience of and insight into the council's scrutiny processes
 - reach agreement on recommendations and future action in respect of work on the climate change action plan, including the involvement of young people in this work
- 2.4. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment, Councillor Tobin Byers, spoke at the start of the event. He welcomed the choice of topic and said that the younger generation had led the way on

raising the profile of climate change so that it is now accepted as a high priority. He outlined the public consultation process and the role of the climate emergency working group and invited the youth parliament representatives to advise on how best to involve young people in this work.

- 2.5. The council's Climate Change Officer, Dominique Hill, gave a presentation setting out the council's approach to the climate emergency, progress to date and future plans. A member of the working group, Tom Walshe from Sustainable Merton, joined in the ensuing discussion.
- 2.6. The discussion was wide ranging and included many suggestions from the young people. A full report of the meeting is set out in Appendix A. The recommendations are listed below for ease of reference:
- 2.7. RECOMMENDATION 1: that Cabinet should ensure that the council shares air quality street maps with schools so that they could be used to inform the development of school travels plans in relation to identifying cleaner air walking and cycling routes to school
- 2.8. RECOMMENDATION 2: that Cabinet should identify the most appropriate way for the council to facilitate the provision of educational programmes on cleaner air routes for schools and parents.
- 2.9. RECOMMENDATION 3: that Cabinet should work with commercial providers to ensure there is an adequate supply of dockless hire bikes for use by Merton residents.
- 2.10. RECOMMENDATION 4: that Cabinet investigate the feasibility of using an open air Film Merton event as an opportunity to turn all light sources off for a short period of time (perhaps at the start of the event) so that attendees could look at the stars.
- 2.11. RECOMMENDATION 5: Cabinet should use My Merton to promote the practice of putting things that you don't need out on a table in front of your home for others to take – for example fruit, vegetables, books...

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Commission members may choose to make an alternative response to the report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Not applicable.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. Not applicable.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no property or resource implications at this time.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. None for the purposes of this report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None for the purpose of this report.

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

Appendix A – report of the joint Youth Parliament and Merton Council scrutiny exercise, 15 October 2019

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None

