

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 24 June 2020

Wards: All

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

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

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

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

Recommendations:

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

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

2 DETAILS

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

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

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

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. None for the purposes of this report.

5 TIMETABLE

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

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

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

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

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

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

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

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

11 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. None for the purposes of this report.

12 APPENDICES :

Draft work programmes:

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

13 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1. None

Appendix A

Overview and Scrutiny Commission draft work programme 2020/21

Meeting date – 15 July 2020

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

Meeting date – 9 September 2020

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

Meeting date – 11 November 2020

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

Meeting date 20 January 2021 – scrutiny of the budget

Budget scrutiny round 2
Covid 19 update if any urgent business

Meeting date 17 March 2021

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

Meeting date 28 April 2021

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

Children and Young People draft work programme 2020/21

30 September 2020

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

4 November 2020

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

15 January 2021

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

10 February 2021

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

27 April 2021

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

Appendix C

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

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

Meeting date – 21 July 2020

Panel discussion on the final decision of the Improving Healthcare Together Programme.
--

Commissioning arrangements in South West London – Update on the new merged CCG's and the implications for Merton as a place.
--

Meeting date 2 September 2020

COVID-19 – How Adult Social Care is managing the response over the next 12 months and preparing for wave two. Including lessons learned from the early outbreak and work with partners, impact on specific communities within care homes and support to those who are shielding.
--

NHS South West London - response to COVID-19
--

Commissioning arrangements in South West London – Update on the new merged CCG's and the implications for Merton as a place.
--

Meeting date 3 November

Mental Health Services – Update on support provided to the community as a result of COVID-19
--

Draft Business Plan – budget scrutiny round one

Meeting date 11 January 2021 Scrutiny of the Budget

Draft Business Plan – budget scrutiny round two

Meeting date 09 February 2021

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

Safeguarding Adults Annual Report

Safeguarding Adults Reviews

Meeting date 26 April 2021

Agenda items tbc

Sustainable Communities draft work programme 2020/21

1 September 2020

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

2 November 2020

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

19 January 2021

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

23 February 2021

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

29 March 2021

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

