

## Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

**Date: 8 September 2021**

Wards: All

**Subject: Update on the work of Safer Merton and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)**

Lead officer: Kiran Vagarwal, Head of Community Safety, Merton Council

Lead member: Cllr Agatha Akyigyina, Cabinet Member for Partnerships, Public Safety and Tackling Crime

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### Recommendations:

- A. For Overview and Scrutiny Commission to note the update on the work of Safer Merton including the focus on VAWG

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the work of Safer Merton in delivering the following service objectives:

*Table 1: Safer Merton service delivery objectives*

1	To deliver on the council's <b>statutory duty as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.</b>
2	To ensure our local approach to crime prevention and community safety <b>reflects local, regional and national policy and good practice.</b>
3	To develop and implement a partnership approach to <b>responding to Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG).</b>
4	To <b>respond to complaints of Anti-social Behaviour</b> , utilising all the tools and powers afforded to us under the ASB, Crime & Policing Act 2014.
5	To Support the Council's ambition to <b>build community resilience</b> by delivering Merton's Neighbourhood Watch Programme, developing and delivering Merton's Hate crime Strategy and supporting Merton Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB).
6	To develop a co-ordinated and <b>partnership response to violence.</b>
7	To manage and deliver an <b>efficient CCTV service.</b>

## 2 DETAILS

### DELIVERING ON THE COUNCIL'S STATUTORY DUTY AS SET OUT IN THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT.

- 2.1 The council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to:
- Have in place a Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
  - Establishing a local crime, disorder and substance misuse strategy
  - Follow an evidence based approach and assess performance
  - Conduct an annual community safety consultation
  - Implement a partnership process to share information to prevent, detect and deter crime (Section 115, information sharing)
- 2.2 Safer Merton continues to co-ordinate and manage the Safer and Stronger Executive Board (SSEB: the CSP of Merton Borough) which meets quarterly to provide strategic oversight and direction across the partnership and monitor the quarterly performance of the partnership in responding to crime and disorder. The SSEB is made up of the responsible authorities<sup>1</sup>. Appendix 1 of this report provides a summary of the crime data and performance for 2020/2021.
- 2.3 In February 2021, following the annual strategic crime needs assessment, (ensuring we meet the statutory requirement of the evidence-based approach) the SSEB agreed the following strategic partnership priorities:

*Table 2: Refreshed SSEB Strategic priorities (February 2021)*

	Priority	Description
1	<b>High Volume Crime</b>	Domestic Burglary and Robbery
2	<b>Anti-social Behaviour</b>	Multi-agency response, neighbourhood problem solving in locations experiencing persistent ASB, enforcement, supporting victims.
3	<b>Violence</b> (Excluding Domestic Violence)	Co-ordinated approach to drug and fire arm related violence, serious youth violence, knife crime, gangs, organised criminal networks, robbery, night time economy and public disorder, threats to life, criminal exploitation linked to gangs and county lines.
4	<b>Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)</b>	Direct support to victims, safeguarding children affected, bringing perpetrators to justice, raising confidence in reporting.
5	<b>Reduce re-offending</b>	Delivering the integrated offender management approach targeting the most prolific and persistent offenders.
6	Support the boroughs approach to <b>building community resilience, maintaining community cohesion and increasing confidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent – Counter Terrorism and radicalisation</li> <li>• Hate Crime</li> <li>• Supporting and developing Neighbourhood Watch</li> <li>• Supporting the Safer Neighbourhood Board</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, Public Health, Probation Service, Local Authorities

2.4 Safer Merton conducts a bi-annual public community safety consultation to ensure the SSEB considers the community voice as part of its assessment of local crime and disorder priorities and meets the statutory duty of the Crime and Disorder Act. The 2021 consultation went live in June 2021 and closed September 2021. The results will be analysed alongside the annual strategic crime needs assessment and presented to the SSEB in February 2022 as part of the annual refresh and review of the SSEB strategic priorities.

2.5 The SEEB also considers other council and partnership consultations including the annual resident survey, the police public attitude survey, Young Advisor's Consultation and the Children and Young People's Staying Safe Survey. Moving forward the SSEB will consider the findings of the Your Merton Survey as part of the SSEB 2021 annual strategic priority review.

**ENSURING OUR LOCAL APPROACH TO CRIME PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY REFLECTS LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL POLICY AND GOOD PRACTICE.**

2.6 Safer Merton continues to work with partners and across the council to reviewing our local approach to ensure it is in line with and responding to the new and emerging strategies, policies and legislation on crime and disorder. This includes the following:

- The new Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the statutory guidance issued
- The MOPAC Crime Strategy – due to be published December 2021
- The Home Office – Beating Crime Plan (2021)
- The Home Office - Violence against Women and Girls Plan (2021)
- Our response to the Safety of Women and Girls – Following the council motion in April 2021
- Probation reunification
- London Repository of Practice on Violence Reduction (Good Practice)
- London data base on information sharing agreements
- Conducting a self-assessment on our DV MARAC<sup>2</sup>, to ensure we are delivering good practice
- Developing our knife crime action plan to a violence plan to be in line with the London framework led by the London Violence Reduction Unit

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<sup>2</sup> Domestic Violence Multi-agency Risk Assessment meetings, responding to high risk DV cases, taking place every 3 weeks

## **DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG).**

2.7 Safer Merton continues to co-ordinate the partnership approach to respond to VAWG. This includes:

- The management of the VAWG Strategic Board (Quarterly meetings).
- Developing and delivering the annual VAWG action plan.
- Developing a new VAWG strategy (to be launched in April 2022).
- Running the three weekly DV MARAC<sup>3</sup> meetings.
- Continuing to raise awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and VAWG across the council, partnership and community.
- Ensuring we meet the policy and statutory requirements, specifically conducting Domestic Homicide Reviews (2 active at present) and co-ordinating the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Responding to the member's motion on the Safety of Women and Girls following the murder of Sarah Everard. Safer Merton has established a task group to consider how we develop safe and confidential opportunities for women and girls to share their experience with the Council and partners, providing insight and informing our work on reducing VAWG, addressing male behaviour and exploring the use of restorative justice as part of our response to VAWG.
- Commissioning and managing the delivery of front line services for victims of Domestic Abuse:
  - The Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (IDVA)
  - Running virtual weekly One Stop Shop drop in surgeries
  - Joint Commissioning of the complex needs IDVA service and refuge with Wandsworth, Kingston and Richmond
  - Refuge provision – 17 beds provided through Hestia
- Identifying and bidding for new funding opportunities

*Table 3: Funding bids submitted and funding secured to support our approach to VAWG*

<b>Fund Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>BID Amount</b>	<b>Result</b>
Perpetrator Fund Home Office (September 2020)	Funding for perpetrator programmes across Merton, Kingston, Richmond and Wandsworth	£500k	Unsuccessful.
London Crime Reduction Fund MOPAC (2021/2022)	Funding until March 2022	£23,406	Secured funding for a support officer for the DV MARAC until March 2022.
Safer Streets Round 3 Home Office (July 2021)	Targeting Safety of Women and Girls MOPAC gatekeepers of the bids to the Home Office.	£109,060	Unsuccessful. Three London Boroughs were successful.
Safety of Women at Night funding Home Office (August 2021)	Preventing crime that effects women at Night. November successful bids announces, funding has to be spent by March 2022	TBC	<i>Drafting bid at the time of writing this report.</i>
Covid Recovery Fund (2021/2022)	Secure an additional IDVA due to the increase in referrals	£45k	Additional IDVA secured from 3.5 to 4.5 IDVA's for Merton.
IDVA uplift Ministry of Justice April 2021	Submitted bid for 2 IDVA's to work in BAME and Health settings		Not successful.
IDVA MHCLG (2021/2022)	Complex needs IDVA, cross borough with Wandsworth, Kingston and Richmond	£100k across 4 boroughs	Secured additional funding for 2021/2022.
Domestic Abuse Act MHCLG (2021/2022)	Funding to support local authorities to implement part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021	£35,693	Successful Domestic Abuse post will be funded to focus on the housing duty in the DA Act 2021.
Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme Home Office (June 2021)	Funding to support work on perpetrators for 2021/2022	£290k	Unsuccessful September 2021 was bid deadline, funds were required to be spent by March 2022.

## **RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, UTILISING ALL THE TOOLS AND POWERS AFFORDED TO US UNDER THE ASB ACT 2014.**

2.8 The Merton Community Plan (2020-2026) sets out a commitment that Merton Council together with its partners will:

- Promote awareness of ASB, addressing complaints, informing residents of how to report ASB issues and provide evidence of their complaint
- Review and respond to every complaint
- Work with partners to support victims
- Take enforcement action where appropriate

2.9 Safer Merton continues to lead on the co-ordination and delivery of the multi-agency response to ASB, supporting the commitment set out in the Community Plan, this includes:

- Implementing the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), ensuring that the PSPO is monitored and a balanced approach to enforcement and engagement is in place. Appendix 1 of this report provides further details of the PSPO.
- Delivering a targeted multi-agency response to locations in the borough subjected to persistent ASB. The Locality Board meets every two months and oversees this. The locations that are overseen currently by the Locality Board are Mitcham, Graveney, Wimbledon, Morden Town Centre, and Raynes Park.
- Investigating reports received by the council, supporting victims of ASB and resuming site visits post the lock down. During the 12 months to September 2020, the Safer Merton team received an average of 124 reports per month, up from an average of 97 per month during 2018/19 and 65 per month during 2017/18. This higher level of demand on the ASB team has continued through 2021/22 quarter 1 with an average of 126 ASB reports per month during this period – with the month of June being as high as 149 reports.
- The Community MARAC<sup>4</sup> meets monthly to discuss high risk and persistent ASB cases. Since April 2021, the Community MARAC has discussed 30 cases.
- Working closely with the Rough Sleepers Group to ensure a coordinated response to rough sleeping (Merton's rough sleeping team has supported over 130 rough sleepers of which six are currently believed to be rough sleeping).
- Managing the partnership response to the Community Trigger<sup>5</sup>. During 2020/21 Safer Merton received nine Community Trigger applications. During the first five months of 2021/22 (April – August) nine applications have been received – equating to an annualised rate of 21 per year (an increase in the rate of Community Trigger applications of over 200%).

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<sup>4</sup> Multi-agency risk assessment case conference for high risk ASB cases

<sup>5</sup> Process under the ASB, Crime & Policing Act 2014, which allows members of the community to ask the Community Safety Partnership (SSEB) to review their responses to complaints of ASB, Safer Merton manage this process.

- Working closely with our partners in public health to address street drinking with a focus on supporting the PSPO, engaging with street drinkers and delivering a balanced approach that includes support, diversion and enforcement. Work is currently underway to identify the individuals involved in persistent and Anti-social street drinking across the borough as well as the locations and times where anti-social street drinking is taking place most frequently.
- Holding multi-agency task and finish groups (TFG) to respond to complex and ongoing cases of ASB. At the time of writing this report Safer Merton have ten TFG's active.

**SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL'S AMBITION TO BUILD COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BY DELIVERING MERTON'S NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH PROGRAMME, DEVELOPING AND DELIVERING MERTON'S HATE CRIME STRATEGY AND SUPPORTING MERTON SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD (SNB).**

- 2.10 Safer Merton continues to support the co-ordination of Neighbourhood Watch, the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) and the partnership and community response to Hate Crime.

***Merton Neighbourhood Watch***

- 2.11 Safer Merton dedicates two officer days per week to manage Merton Neighbourhood Watch. A committee made up of four Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and a police officer oversee the scheme.
- 2.12 Regular crime figures and crime prevention advice is provided to the Neighbourhood Watch coordinators. There are currently 463 coordinators and approx. 21,499 members in our scheme. Appendix 3 of this report provides a list of the Neighbourhood Watches in Merton by ward.
- 2.13 A Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) funded project led by Merton Police Cadets to door knock to increase coverage in the borough in areas most affected by burglary will resume following delays due to lockdowns.
- 2.14 Merton Neighbourhood Watch Association have submitted a further bid to MOPAC for funding to replenish Merton's stock of bike marking kits following an increase in bike thefts during the pandemic.
- 2.15 Following the increase in scams over the pandemic, a scams talk was held online in February 2021 in partnership with Trading Standards. The talk was well attended by Neighbourhood Watch coordinators.
- 2.16 Key aims over the coming year are to maintain the breadth of the scheme and increase the number of watches in wards with less coverage, with door knocking by the police Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) resuming as lockdown restrictions ease. We also hope to relaunch the Junior Neighbourhood Watch scheme in Merton primary schools, a five-week programme teaching Year 5 pupils about community safety issues.
- 2.17 We continue to maintain links with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association, sharing best practice.

### **Merton Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB)**

- 2.18 SNBs are community based primary borough level engagement and oversight mechanism enabling communities to hold their local police services to account. The meeting takes place quarterly and chaired by a representative from the community. Senior members of the police, council officers and key community organisations attend the meetings.
- 2.19 MOPAC have confirmed SNB Community Engagement funding of £19,079 for 2021-2022. This funding will support small-scale community based projects to help cut crime and increase community confidence. The SNB will review the bids before the submission of the final application to MOPAC. Funding for 2020-21 supported six community based projects tackling crime, including a hate crime, Third Party Reporting Centre for Polish and Eastern Europeans and a Karate Club (youth project) in the Mitcham area.
- 2.20 One of the key functions of SNB is to ensure the borough delivers a stop and search community-monitoring function. The chair of Merton's Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group is a member of the SNB and provides an update on the work of the group.

### **Hate Crime**

- 2.21 Merton's Hate Crime Strategy Group continues to meet quarterly. The chair of the group is now a member of the Safer and Stronger Executive Board.
- 2.22 The Hate Crime Strategy Group have finalised their work plan for 2021-2022 and are looking to develop a new Hate Crime Strategy for 2022-2026.
- 2.23 The work plan is based around the following themes:
- **Coordination** - *Ensure that the response to Hate Crime is shared by all stakeholders, embedded into service plans, and coordinated effectively*
  - **Prevention** - *Preventing Hate Crime through a change of people's attitudes and proactive policing*
  - **Provision** - *Improve provision of specialist support and reporting centres*
  - **Protection** - *To provide effective response to perpetrators outside of and within the criminal justice system*
- 2.24 We continue to raise awareness that Merton is no place for hate and hate in any form will not be tolerated, this is done through regular community reassurance messages, articles in My Merton and social media.
- 2.25 The work to expand Merton's Third Party Reporting<sup>6</sup> scheme continues. This year AFC Wimbledon, Tooting and Mitcham FC and 10 Coaching Academy have signed up this year.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/crime-prevention-and-community-safety/hate-crime>





2.26 Hate Crime Advice Surgeries take place monthly. The community and voluntary sector including Tell MAMA, Polish Family Association and Merton CIL continue to provide their support.

2.27 The key work areas for hate crime in the year ahead includes:

- Hate Crime Awareness Week 2021 (9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> October 2021).

There will be a mix of online events and engagement stalls. The Hate Crime launch event will take place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and will focus on Transgender hate crime – *'Challenging Transgender Hate Crime – Free to Be'*

- Delivering a social media campaign based around pledging to lend your support for Hate Crime Awareness Week
- Continue to expand our 3<sup>rd</sup> party reporting scheme and support those organisations taking part
- Following an amendment to the DV Bill, Police nationwide have been asked to trial recording Misogyny as a hate crime

### **DEVELOPING A CO-ORDINATED AND PARTNERSHIP RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE.**

2.28 In September 2020, Safer Merton worked with partners to review Merton's Knife Crime Action Plan and transition the plan to a broader plan on violence, following the London Violence Reduction framework. The Safer and Stronger Executive Board, as part of their annual review of priorities (2021) added 'violence' as a strategic priority and agreed a local definition. The violence objective will include:

- Drug related violence
- Serious youth violence
- Fire arms related crime
- Gangs and organised criminal networks
- Robbery
- Night time economy and public disorder
- Threats to life
- Criminal exploitation linked to gangs and county lines

2.29 A panel of officers from the London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), London Councils and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), reviewed all the plans across London including Merton’s plan and provided some positive feedback under the following themes:

*Table 4: Feedback provided by the London VRU on Merton’s Violence Reduction Plan*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Feedback</b>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong multiagency working</li> <li>• Good reference to the cross borough violence reduction steering group</li> <li>• Strong cross borough working across the SWBCU</li> </ul>
Analysis and Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlights varied work being undertaken by the borough</li> <li>• All essential actions complete</li> </ul>
Reducing Access to Weapons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive and outstanding multi-agency work being undertaken, particularly with external contractors, Veolia and ID-Verde</li> <li>• Actions are very detailed.</li> </ul>
Safeguarding and Educating Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of good practise around NEETs</li> <li>• Balance between Police/enforcement and Education/Social Care</li> </ul>
Working with Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive representation of young people on the Stop and Search Panel</li> <li>• Good linkages between Youth Centre staff and the Police</li> </ul>
Supporting victims of violence and vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good reference to the Trauma A&amp;E Suites</li> </ul>
Positive Diversion from Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great diversionary activity</li> <li>• Some multi agency collaboration</li> <li>• Good Gang Exit Schemes</li> </ul>

2.30 The London Violence Reduction Unit provided £50k funding in 2019/2020, £50k in 2020/2021 and a further £50k for 2021/2022. This was funding agreed annually. The key projects funded were:

- Designing out Crime improvements in Phipps Bridge
- Contribution to Contextual Safeguarding Lead based in Children and Family Services
- Analytical Support
- Crimestoppers Fearless Campaign – social media, partner toolkit, partner training sessions and schools work.

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC-TA0Z0JPa3ATCkz3XW\\_jF4kSZ-mtaKf](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC-TA0Z0JPa3ATCkz3XW_jF4kSZ-mtaKf)

(link to the fearless campaign)

2.31 Partners provide quarterly updates on actions, with 6 monthly updates provided to the SSEB. The following high-level indicators have been agreed for reporting to the SSEB and the Locations Board:

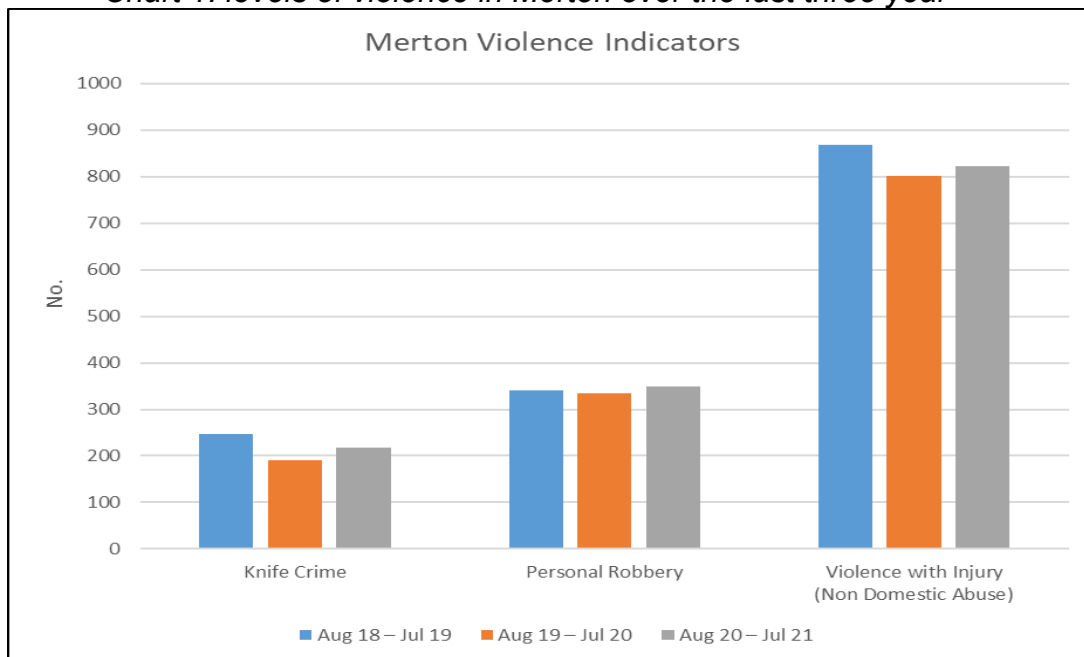
- To see a reduction in violence with injury (non-domestic)
- To see a reduction in personal robbery
- To see a reduction in knife crime

2.32 Like with many crime figures over the last 18 months, Covid and the associated restrictions and lockdowns have had some bearing on levels, particularly due to less people being out in public areas. We have therefore provided the last three years figures to show some levels of comparison. We will continue to monitor figures via the boroughs Locations Board and Safer and Stronger Executive Board as restrictions continue to ease.

*Table 5: Police recorded incidents for knife crime, robbery and Violence with Injury (VWI) non-domestic abuse*

	Aug 18 – Jul 19	Aug 19 – Jul 20	Aug 20 – Jul 21
Knife Crime	247	190	217
Personal Robbery	340	334	349
VWI – Non DA	869	801	823

*Chart 1: levels of violence in Merton over the last three year*



- Knife crime increased by 14.2% when compared to the previous 12 months, but did see a reduction of -12.1% when compared to two years ago.
- Personal Robbery has remained relatively stable over the last three years.
- Violence with Injury (Non Domestic) showed a 2.7% increase when compared to the previous 12 months however saw a -5.3% reduction when compared to two years ago.

2.33 In July 2021 the London VRU announced the availability of further funding for the sum of £31,250 for boroughs to choose one intervention from the violence

reduction plan to undergo an evaluation. Following consultation with partners Merton have agreed to evaluate the designing out crime improvements in Phipps Bridge.

- 2.34 In July 2021 the London VRU invited boroughs to apply for a preventative critical incident grant to the amount of £5,000. We were successful in our application and we hope to use the funds to enhance our work with Crime Stoppers and look to purchase a deployable CCTV camera to use in violence hotspots.

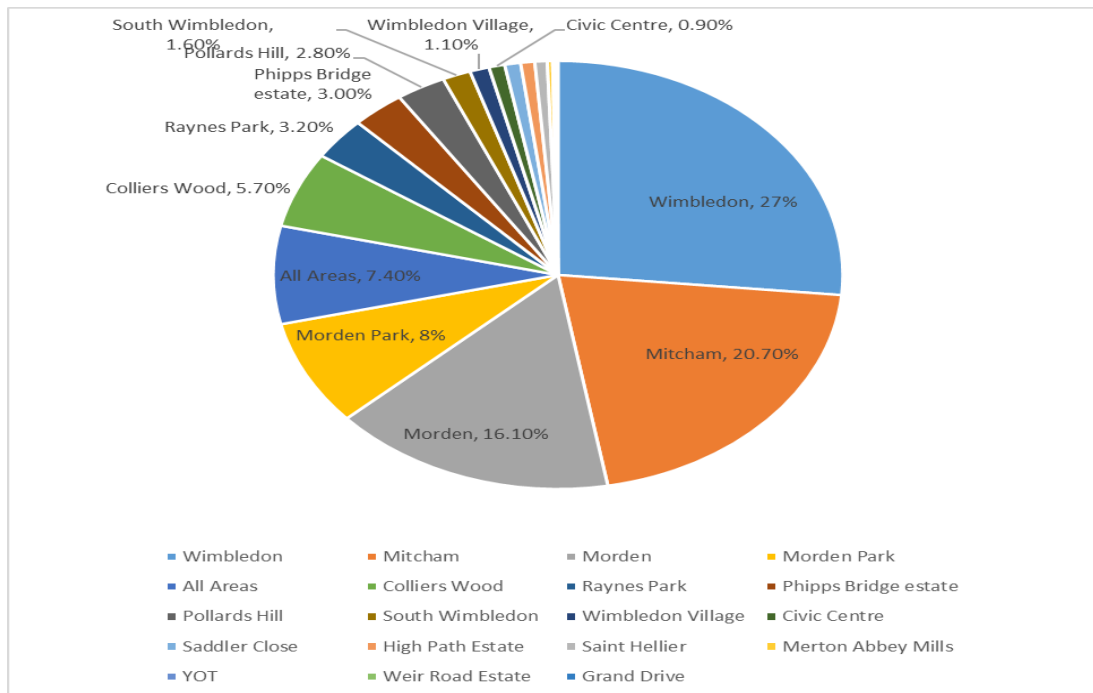
### **MANAGING AND DELIVERING AN EFFICIENT CCTV SERVICE.**

- 2.35 Merton CCTV service, based within Public Protection and Safer Merton service, operates 24 hours a day every day of the year. The service commenced in 1994 with a mere four cameras and one operator and operational 14 hours a day.
- 2.36 In 2021, we now have some 212 public space cameras. Seven CCTV operators proactively monitor the cameras, supported by a CCTV Manager. All operators work shifts to ensure that the service is covered 24/7. All of our cameras are overt<sup>7</sup> as the service has no covert asset within it.
- 2.37 Operating the CCTV suite is a complex process. The operators can view between 48 and 96 cameras at any one time on the monitor wall as well as nine on the desktop monitors.
- 2.38 Each camera is constantly recording footage onto council servers where imagery is stored for 31 days before being written over. Images across the borough are sent to the Civic Centre via two modes of communication – broadband cable, and wireless technology.
- 2.39 We continue to enhance the functionality and reliability of CCTV across the partnership, building on the relationships with all partners and other council departments, especially those working in enforcement.
- 2.40 Work with Neighbourhood Watch and other key community groups is also essential to increase engagement and awareness of CCTV within our communities as we know that, CCTV presence can assist in providing reassurance and decreasing fear of crime.
- 2.41 The Synergy 3 CCTV system allows us to closely monitor the types of incidents, by day of the week, time of the day, location, and many other indicators that help us to determine where to deploy the cameras in the most efficient manner.
- 2.42 Between 1st of April 2021 and 23rd of August 2021, the CCTV service has captured 1,909 incidents. Chart 1 below shows a breakdown of where these incidents captured took place.

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<sup>7</sup> Overt – the public are cameras in place and recording

Chart 2: Location of incidents captured by Merton CCTV between April 2021 and 23 August 2021



2.43 The council has agreed an investment of over £1million from Merton CIL and Capital to, further upgrade the CCTV system, network and cameras. This upgrade will take place from 2022 to 2024 and includes the upgrading of 150 CCTV public space cameras from analogue to High Definition (HD) quality and upgrading the transmission method by introducing a hybrid fibre-wireless solution that will reduce the dependence on BT and Virgin Media fibre rental and provide savings.

### 3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. There are no alternative options as this report is for information and update only

### 4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. Not applicable

### 5 TIMETABLE

5.1. Not applicable

### 6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report as this report is for information and update only.

### 7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. No specific matters relating to this as the report is for noting.

### 8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Domestic violence and abuse and hate crime can have major implications on community cohesion and equalities. One in 20 residents are affected by domestic abuse. The partnerships work in supporting victims, taking action against perpetrators, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and ensuring that our communities understand the work we are doing on this subject is vital in achieving our ambitions for more victims to report and for more friends, family and/or neighbours to report matters of concern. Hate crime remains under reported therefore; our work to raise awareness and encourage reporting remains a priority.

**9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Safer Merton in partnership with all council departments, continue to ensure that the council remains compliant with our duties under the Crime and Disorder Act.

**10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. As a response to the ongoing Covid-19 concerns, Safer Merton and our partners, have evolved organisational business, continuity plans to cope with the challenges, which this virus and the lock down has placed us under.
- 10.2. There will be a continuous review of the services provided as lock down eases with the aim of re-instating face-to-face support.

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

- 11.1 Appendix 1 : 2021/2022 Crime Performance
- Appendix 2: Further information on Merton’s Public Space Protection Order
- Appendix 3: Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators and membership by ward

**12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NONE

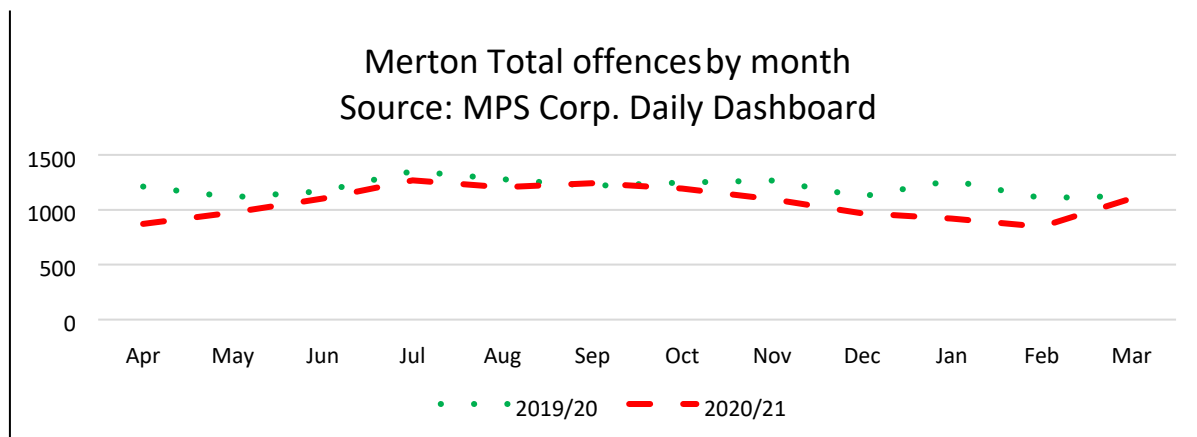
## APPENDIX 1 2020/2021 CRIME PERFORMANCE

Source: <https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/year-end-crime-statistics-20-21/>

### Overall crime

Various stages of the lockdown over the year affected crime in Merton like everywhere else. Overall crime was down 11% at 12,903 offences. Figge's Marsh, Cricket Green and Colliers Wood had the highest levels of offences. The bulk of the reductions occurred during lockdown 1 in April/May 2020 and the further restrictions imposed at the start of 2021.

Graph 1: Merton total notifiable offences recorded by the police per month



### Merton Crime rates compared to other London Boroughs

For the 12 months to the end of July 2021, the Metropolitan Borough Command Unit dashboard shows Merton as being the:

- 4<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 32 London boroughs for total notifiable offences (1.99 per 1,000 population).
- 4<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 32 London boroughs for violence with injury (0.17 per 1,000 population)
- 5<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 32 London boroughs for violence without injury (0.4 per 1,000 population)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest out of 32 London boroughs for residential burglary (0.09 per 1,000 population)
- 7<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 32 London boroughs for robbery (0.05 per 1,000 population)

### Strategic Priority 1: Volume Priorities of Burglary and Robbery

Of our two volume crime priorities, Personal Robbery was down 6% whilst Residential Burglary was down by 46% with five wards seeing reductions greater than 60%. These five wards were Cricket Green, Graveney, Longthornton, Merton Park and Lower Morden. Personal robbery decreased by 6%. Figge's Marsh the highest ward averaged three robberies per month.

### Strategic Priority 2: Anti-social Behaviour

The pandemic also had a large impact on demand in respect of ASB for both police and the council ASB team. The police received more than 7,500 ASB related calls double

the previous year's total. A great many of these related to perceived breaches of covid19 regulations. The Merton Council ASB team saw new cases rise 49% to over 1650.

Graph 2: Number of ASB cases responded to by Safer Merton – annual comparison

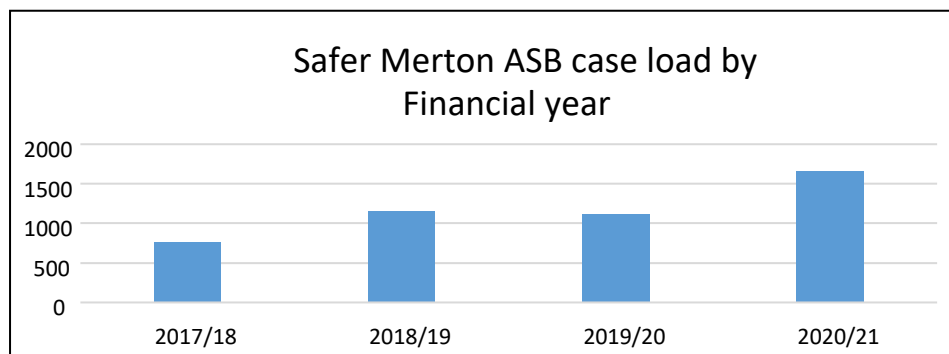


Table 1: Break of ASB reports received since April 2021<sup>8</sup> by ward.

Ward	ASB reports
Hillside	58
Cricket Green	47
St Hellier	42
Graveney	40
Merton Park	39
Ravensbury	38
Lower Morden	36
Trinity	34
Figges Marsh	33
Cannon Hill	31
Longthornton	27
Colliers Wood	25
Raynes Park	23
Wimbledon Park	23
Abbey	22
Pollards Hill	21
Merton	19
West Barnes	19
Lavender Fields	16
Dundonald	15
Village	12

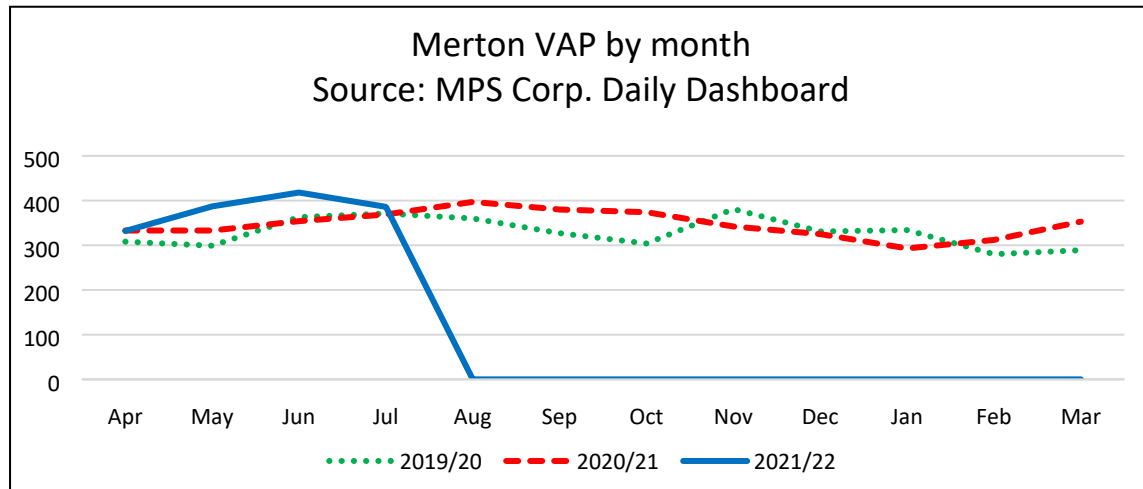
<sup>8</sup> Up to 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2021



### Strategic Priority 3: Violence against the Person (VAP)

The broad violence against the person category was up by 6% compared to the previous year. Low-level, non-injury reports drove up the reports for violence.

Graph 3: Number of Violence against Person reports recorded by the police



### Theft

There was a reduction of all forms of theft, however, with the exception of pedal bike thefts that rose by 10%. Overall, the theft category was down 29% and vehicle crime was down 22% compared to the previous year.

### Strategic priority 4: Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence related crimes were up by 6% compared to the previous year.

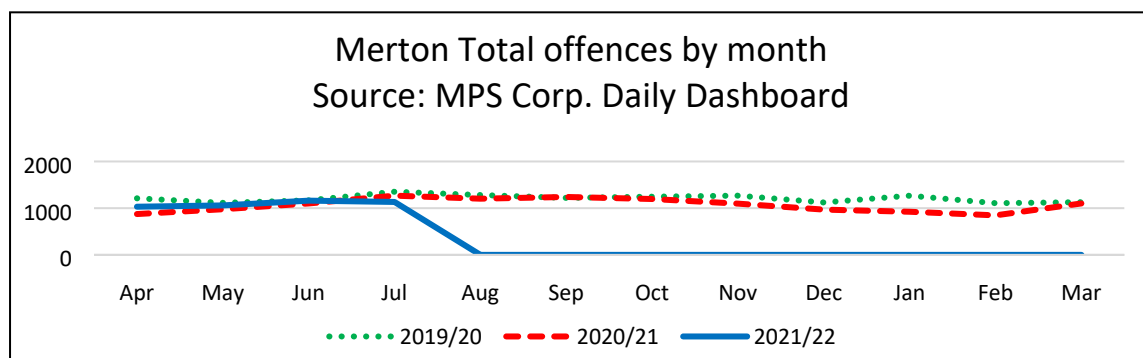
### Strategic Priority 6: Hate Crime

Hate crime flagged reports increased by 9% over the financial year driven mainly by a surge in reports following the George Floyd murder in late May 2020.

### 2021/2022

The first 3 months of the new financial year have seen offence levels chart a course above those of pandemic affected 2020 but below those of 2019.

Graph 4: Merton total notifiable offences recorded by the police for 2021/2022



## **Community Consultation**

It is worth noting that the majority of surveys are over a year old and we will await the findings of both the 2021 Safer Merton and Merton Annual Residents Survey as well as the Your Merton Survey that will be available later this year. For the purposes of this report, we have used the last available consultation data.

Encouragingly, the majority of residents feel safe in their local areas. However, both the community safety survey and the Annual Residents Survey (ARS) carried out in 2019 highlighted the differences in perceptions between wards in the borough.

The ARS survey highlighted that that people felt less safe in the east of the borough. The ARS survey also highlighted that ASB related issues as well as drug dealing and groups hanging around were a problem for those living in the Ravensbury ward. Ravensbury was also top for ASB in the 2017 survey.

Interestingly both our survey and the ARS highlighted that burglary was of concern for residents in the borough, as it has been for many years.

The survey also raised violent crime as a problem potentially influenced by the increasing media coverage of knife crime across London.

Source: <https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/year-end-crime-statistics-20-21/>

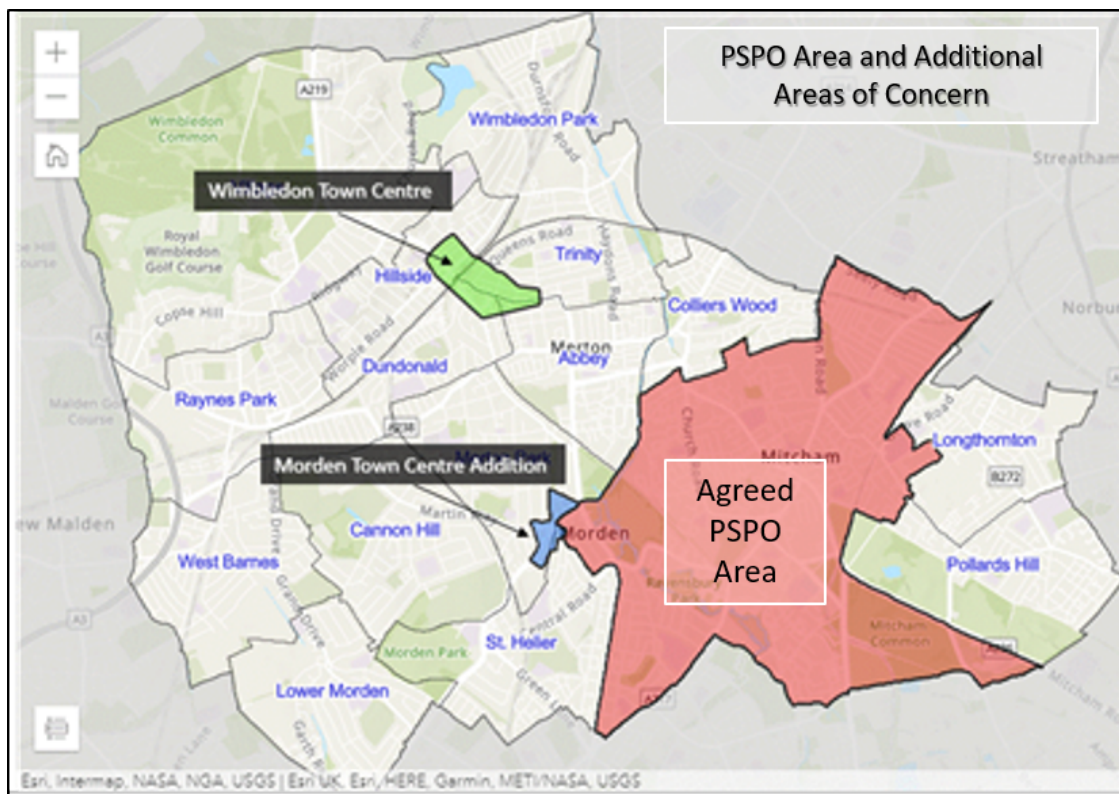
## APPENDIX 2 Key points of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

Merton has one PSPO in place targeting street drinking related anti-social behaviour in the wards of Cricket Green, Figges Marsh, Graveney, Lavender Fields and Ravensbury (see map 1 below for details). The order was made on 13/10/2020, with the PSPO coming into force at 0001 hours on 21/10/2020. It will remain in place for two years until October 2022. The PSPO will continued to be monitored by Safer Merton.

Work to review anti-social behaviour data to identify further areas where a PSPO can be considered or the expansion of the current PSPO continues. The figures are relatively low so we are working to increase input from partnership agencies as well as looking for additional quantitative and qualitative data sources to provide the level of evidence required to support a PSPO.

The PSPO Engagement and Enforcement Group meets regularly to ensure an evidence based and coordinated partnership approach to tackling anti-social behaviour linked to street drinking is in place and there is a clear balance across engagement, support and enforcement.

Map1: Areas covered by Merton's Public Space Protection Order



For additional information on the PSPO please see:  
<https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/crime-prevention-and-community-safety/public-space-protection-order>

**APPENDIX 3: Neighbourhood watches and number of members per ward (August 2021)**

	<b>Number of members</b>	<b>Number of watches</b>
Abbey	993	24
Cannon Hill	1871	67
Colliers Wood	656	13
Cricket Green	1294	23
Dundonald	800	12
Figges Marsh	1564	26
Graveney	1598	26
Hillside	746	24
Lavender Fields	691	18
Longthornton	925	17
Lower Morden	1916	66
Merton Park	783	19
Pollards Hill	699	14
Ravensbury	1548	27
Raynes Park	479	13
St Helier	405	13
Trinity	1746	17
West Barnes	1641	18
Wimbledon Park	450	7
Wimbledon Village	694	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>21499</b>	<b>463</b>