London Borough of Merton

Report and Recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review of School Leadership Succession Planning

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Panel

March 2014

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We would like to thank all the officers and external witnesses who have taken the time to provide written and verbal information and discussed their ideas with us. All contributors are listed in Appendix 1 of this report.

Foreword by Councillors Akyigyina and Holmes, Co-Chairs of the Task Group

We chose to undertake a review of school leadership succession planning in the borough to acknowledge and raise awareness of the fact that we need to prepare for the potential shortage of suitable and qualified head teachers in the future, given the increasing numbers of heads that are due to retire in the coming years. We therefor wanted to ensure that our teachers and governing bodies, with the support of the council, was prepared for and undertaking succession planning.

Furthermore, in identifying the diverse communities we serve and the changing educational landscape, we considered how we might recruit head teachers from BME backgrounds to address under representation of this group in school leadership, in the borough, and also nationally.

Finally, we wished to consider how talent in schools might be identified and nurtured to ensure we have a responsive available workforce in our schools for key leadership positions. The task group were particularly keen that there were opportunities to increase leadership experience and capacity in our schools.

We found that schools and governors receive support from the council and the Merton Education Partnership and SWELSEP, and that schools actively encourage leadership experience for teachers and mentor and coach potential future leaders.

The task group consulted a range of representatives in this review, and in particular, focused on streamlining diversity into school leadership and succession planning. Our recommendations reflect these areas and seek to increase opportunities for potential leaders to develop, as well as better prepare and support governors and to publicise the role of head teachers to encourage more teachers to progress, to aid recruitment and retention.

We acknowledge that we must consult with schools on our recommendations and look forward to a dialogue with them on how we might better support them in their succession planning role.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that contributed to this review.

Executive Summary

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel set up a task group to review the way in which the council and schools were undertaking leadership succession planning. This issue was felt to be important because it touched upon a number of issues and challenges for schools today, these were:

- Changes in the educational landscape;
- The need for a representative workforce in such a diverse community;
- The increasing number of heads due to retire soon;
- The need to establish responsibility for succession planning; and
- The changes to leadership models in Merton schools which head teachers would be recruited to operate within

The task group agreed that the issue of a representative leadership base in schools in the borough would form a large part of their investigations. The task group engaged a range of stakeholders in this review in order to hear first hand what experiences head teachers and governors had of leadership succession planning and how future talent might be identified.

Expertise in this area was also sought through commissioning research and presentations from organisations such as:

- The National College for School Leadership;
- Institute of Education; and
- Inner Strength Consulting

The task group review considered the views of head teachers and governors, representatives from the Merton Education Partnership, the Head of Education and utilised the findings from research conducted by the University of Manchester to inform their recommendations. The focus of the task group recommendations are on:

- Tackling the underrepresentation of female and BME leaders;
- Ensuring sufficient mechanisms are in place to identify and nurture talent;
- Increasing the number of professional development and leadership capacity building opportunities; and
- Supporting governors more in their role in succession planning

The task group wishes to take forward these recommendations in consultation with schools, governors, SWELSEP and the Merton Education Partnership.

List of recommendations

All recommendations should be consulted on with schools, SWELSEP and the Merton Education Partnership.

Recommendations	Stakeholder/Responsible Team
Recommendation 1 – That Cabinet develop a council policy on succession planning which includes a number of principles and support mechanisms available to schools to support them in developing their individual school policies (paragraph 3.8).	Cabinet
Recommendation 2 – That Cabinet ensure that the corporate communications team run a campaign, as part of their work programme, which shares the good news stories from schools and the experiences of Merton head teachers, communicating how worthwhile the role is to prospective candidates (paragraph 3.8).	Cabinet
Recommendation 3 - That Cabinet include ensuring diversity in school leadership as a key commitment in the corporate equality scheme (paragraph 5.24)	Cabinet
Recommendation 4 –That Cabinet consult schools and the Merton Education Partnership on setting up refresher training for heads and governors on streamlining diversity in schools succession planning policies (paragraph 5.27).	Cabinet/Partnership
Recommendation 5 –That Cabinet establish a mentoring and coaching programme for teachers, aspiring heads and head teachers to support career progression and succession planning, in particular that female and BME coaches and mentors be employed to support aspiring heads in these groups (paragraph 5.27).	Cabinet
Recommendation 6 – That Cabinet commission the ISN to undertake a survey of female and BME teachers to identify issues and gaps to better support career progression and professional development opportunities for women and BME candidates (paragraph 5.27).	Cabinet
Recommendation 7 - That Cabinet ensure that the School Improvement Team offers pastoral support through the establishment of a confidential forum for aspiring candidates to enable them to talk about/highlight challenges and issues in schools, and to progression, which the team can then seek to respond to through policy and associated work streams (paragraph 5.27).	Cabinet
Recommendation 8 - That Cabinet explore the possibility of establishing a Future Leaders Programme for aspiring head teachers which may be match funded by schools or facilitated through other funding sources, for example, funding from the National College of Teaching and Leadership or the Merton Education Partnership. This Programme could act on a scholarship basis with the most talented prospective heads approached or nominated by schools across the borough to participate, offering a fast track programme to enable outstanding teachers to apply for headship sooner (paragraph 6.9).	Cabinet/Schools
Recommendation 9 - That Cabinet publicise the range of development	Cabinet/Partnership

programmes and available resources to support leadership development in schools that are led by the School Improvement Team and SWELSEP (paragraph 6.9).	
Recommendation 10 – That Cabinet ensure that workforce information is collected more frequently and shared across SWELSEP and Merton Schools to aid succession planning, in particular talent spotting and opportunities for progression (paragraph 6.9).	Cabinet/Partnerships
Recommendation 11 - That Cabinet invest in publicity materials to attract graduates and those who may be pursuing teaching as a second career to Merton. Promoting the borough as a great place to live and work, with investment in career development and progression opportunities (paragraph 6.9).	Cabinet/Partnership
Recommendation 12 - That Cabinet explore with schools the feasibility of establishing an advisory panel that is made up of community representatives to support governors on when appointing heads This would provide a level of challenge and support on issues regarding representation and ensuring heads are able to respond to demographic changes and working with diverse school population (paragraph 7.10)	Cabinet/Schools
Recommendation 13 – That Cabinet work with schools to encourage more BME candidates to take up school governor posts to work towards addressing under representation of women and BME governors (paragraph 7.10)	Cabinet/Schools
Recommendation 14 – Bespoke training for governors to refresh when appointment of a new Head teacher is coming up (paragraph 7.10)	Cabinet/Schools

Final Report of the Task Group

1.   Introduction

Purpose:

1.1   The Council's Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, at its meeting on 4th July 2013, agreed to establish a Task Group review of school leadership succession planning and appointed a small number of Members to the Task Group.

1.2   At the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 17th September 2013, Terms of Reference for the Task Group review were agreed. The overarching aims for the review were established as follows:

- To determine how Merton's schools promote representation of different ethnic groups in senior positions;
- To determine what constitutes a good head teacher;
- To determine how Merton's schools manage their talent-spotting process; and
- To determine how Merton's schools retain and promote existing talent within their schools.

1.3   The review focused on the corresponding terms of reference:

- Looking at where representation and succession planning is successful in other schools and London Boroughs and identify factors in their success
- Examining the support provided to existing and potential senior staff in Merton's schools and elsewhere.
- Understanding the image of senior school positions among school staff
- Identifying where Merton's schools' staff and senior staff are coming from (as far as is possible).

2.   School leadership succession planning – an overview

2.1   Members felt that this review, in acknowledging that school leadership was crucial to attainment, should consider what succession planning was being undertaken and what mechanisms for identifying and nurturing talented future leaders were in place. Furthermore, to establish what support the council provides to schools to identify the most effective model of leadership for their circumstances.

2.2   The National College for Teaching and School Leadership informed Members that they have shifted their focus to supporting school led leadership development to ensure that schools are effective in spotting, training and promoting a new generation of outstanding school leaders for the 0-18 education system. There is a shifting school landscape which requires leadership to be system led (rather than LA/diocesan led) and that consideration should be given by schools to networked or new configurations of schools, with alternative leadership models and responsibility for leadership at various levels throughout the school.

2.3   The task group heard that the international trend in school leadership is toward the devolution of school management, which makes decisions at school level progressively more important to the success of the system. Furthermore, around the world, school systems rely on self identification by potential leaders and

informal mechanisms by which candidates can be coached and given opportunities to develop within their schools.

The role of the Council in supporting school leadership succession planning

2.4   Members were informed that the council is part of the South West London School Effectiveness Partnership (SWLSEP). A strong aspect of the work of this group of Local Authorities is a "succession planning" programme. This support has included both universal succession planning to all aspiring middle and senior leaders through work with the SWLSEP group of London boroughs, and more targeted programmes advertised and promoted to teachers from a BME background.

2.5   The task group heard that the SWLSEP Aspiring Head teacher and Senior Leadership programme has been running for 6 years. Based on the report 'Diagnosing the Need' produced by Wandsworth LA in 2008, Merton has since worked with 74 teachers to develop their skills and confidence to apply for next steps promotion.

School Improvement Team

2.6   The task group were informed that the councils School Improvement Team offer schools a well informed service, including a team of school improvement advisors with a diverse range of skills, knowledge to improve pupil outcomes, provision and leadership.

2.7   Members heard that the School Improvement Team work with schools at all stages of their development, schools in need of improvement; good schools aspiring to be outstanding and outstanding schools seeking to improve even further. The following services are offered by the School Improvement Team in relation to school leadership succession planning:

- Senior Leadership Team and governing body training;
- Management advice on staffing structure and changes;
- Support for governors in the selection of new head teachers;
- Support for the appointment of senior staff;
- Joint monitoring and coaching for managers to develop expertise and consistency; and
- A range of bespoke leadership and management support and activities to address all areas of school improvement

2.8   The Merton Professional Development Team (within the School Improvement Team) offers bespoke training courses in leadership development. This is a shared service with Sutton Council. The Team provide a programme of leadership coaching and succession planning for middle and senior leaders, working with partners in the SWELSEP. A dedicated equalities and diversity service also offers advice to schools on strategic management of equality and diversity including strengthening leadership in this area.

3.   The challenges to succession planning

3.1   Members heard from a number of representatives and council officers during this review. They sought to understand what the challenges and barriers were to recruiting and retaining head teachers in our schools, as highlighted and discussed below.

3.2   The representatives the task group met, as detailed in Appendix 1, highlighted the need for innovative head teachers given the shifting landscape of schools and education, and the need to address the **increasingly short supply of heads**. The

National College for Teaching and Leadership explained that almost one-third of primary and secondary headships are re-advertised because no suitable candidate comes forward. Furthermore, 30% of heads are aged over 55 and 54% are over 50. As they retire over the next few years, the profession will be deprived of significant experience and expertise.

3.3 A Times Education Supplement survey found that 36% of heads are actively seeking retirement and 54% are considering leaving the profession. There is a role for schools and the Local Education Authority to play in proactively increasing the number of school leaders coming through by around 15 to 20 per cent over the next two or three years in order to maintain a healthy supply of good-quality candidates for headship. The age profile of the profession is therefore an important driver in ensuring succession planning is undertaken and effective.

3.4 The lack of candidates for headships has resulted in schools having to re-advertise posts. Members heard that 30 per cent of primary and secondary schools have to re-advertise their head teacher vacancies. There are shortages in key areas with re-advertisement rates at 38% for primary schools, 51% for rural and faith schools and 42% for special schools. Members were informed that the reasons for not attracting quality candidates to an area can be geographical, socio-economic, cultural or religious.

3.5 Furthermore, very few new candidates are putting themselves forward for the role of head teacher. Members learned that many potential candidates are discouraged by what they see as the overwhelming **demands of modern headship**. The impression of an overwhelming workload and level of responsibility are clearly acting as a deterrent to deputies, assistant heads and others, with the potential for headship making an application. Teachers and middle leaders say stress and the loss of pupil contact are also major deterrents to applying for headship.

3.6 Members met with Head teachers from Merton schools. They made it clear that their experience of headship was particularly positive. Their experience has shown that many teachers see the role as purely administrative, whilst deputy heads are effectively career deputies in that they have no aspirations to progress beyond this level. Therefore there is a mismatch between **how teachers perceive the job of head teacher** and the reality as seen from the point of view of our head teachers. Head teachers added that there was work to be done to share the positive experiences of schools and the work of head teachers, as well as the good outcomes and worthwhile activity that head teachers lead and deliver. Teachers may then be encouraged to take on this role.

3.7 The task group heard that the **length of time** that it takes to become a head teacher has also been identified as a deterrent. It can take around 20 years on average to attain a headship. Another reason for the short supply of potential head teachers is the varied practices in **identifying talent** and encouraging, mentoring and coaching future leaders. A number of existing heads have advocated shortening the pathways to headship. They argued that fast track opportunities should be promoted within and between schools and our successes should be celebrated publicly.

3.8 Members considered that local issues need solutions that are tailored to their context, and the best people to identify these solutions are those who know the context well. Nevertheless, this does not mean each school or area must work in isolation to address such challenges. The task group agreed that the SWELSEP was best placed to provide local support and guidance to address this deficit.

Recommendation 1 – That Cabinet develop a council policy on succession planning which includes a number of principles and support mechanisms available to schools to support them in developing their individual school policies.

Recommendation 2– That Cabinet ensure that the corporate communications team run a campaign, as part of their work programme, which shares the good news stories from schools and the experiences of Merton head teachers, communicating how worthwhile the role is to prospective candidates.

4.   Recruitment and Retention of head teachers

4.1   Members heard that retention of head teachers is easier than recruitment. With regard to recruitment, succession planning needs to be underpinned by a consideration of robust workforce data which provides a clear picture of the supply and demand of leaders in our schools.

4.2   The task group noted that retention is informed by understanding the interests and aspirations of experienced leaders, given that salary is not claimed to be the main reason heads stay in the role. Members heard that a survey undertaken by the National College for Teaching and Leadership in 2012 found that overall, teachers have high levels of job satisfaction and that there are high levels of aspiration among the Senior Leadership team. Therefore, the council needs to establish what support it can provide to understand the everyday issues that dissuade promising teachers from applying for headships.

4.3   Members heard that both recruitment and retention can also be aided by offering a combination of a reduced workload, new challenges to make a difference in diverse schools, professional development and opportunities for increasing fulfillment in the role.

4.4   Members also met with a number of head teachers from Merton schools to consult them on recruitment and retention. The head teachers in attendance had differing levels of experience and time in the role, as well as different paths into the profession. Members were pleased to hear that overall the experience of Merton head teachers had been positive, in terms of being exposed to opportunities for progression to gather leadership experience whilst teaching. Head teachers explained that they were actively encouraged and given opportunities to progress which in turn they have offered to their own teachers and Senior Leadership Team, identifying and nurturing talent in their own schools. They stated that encouragement and support were key for prospective candidates within schools.

4.5   Head teachers were very clear that a significant part of their role was identifying future leaders and encouraging and supporting their development. This should happen even if there is a chance that they will seek employment elsewhere due to opportunities for progression, or lack of, within that school, or indeed within Merton.

4.6   Members were pleased to hear that heads encourage their staff and try to build their confidence to prepare them for more senior roles. Members heard that often staff are reluctant when approached about progressing, due to the perceived workload involved and concerns about their ability to succeed. Furthermore, the length of time taken to secure headship was cited as a reason for many teachers not putting themselves forward for this role.

4.7   The task group heard, however, that there can be a relatively quick succession to headship with a middle leaders programme in place which provides training and development that enable headships to be secured within as little as 4 years. Head teachers also felt that the professional development opportunities and training and

development courses offered by the National College for Teaching and Leadership should be publicised and funded to allow more teachers to fast track to headship.

4.9   Members were pleased that head teachers felt supported by the council and that there are good relationships between schools in the borough. Head teachers highlighted the role that Councillors could play in selling the good work of schools to residents. It is encouraging to heads and Senior Leadership Team when a letter or visit is received from Councillors to thank schools for their good work.

4.10   The process of induction for new heads has also improved over the past few years. The fact that Merton is a small borough means that schools work closely with one another and this dialogue can aid talent spotting and opportunities for leadership experience. The task group heard that cultivating leadership skills among staff also required mentoring and coaching to be in place, not just within their school but also outside of the management team, to allow for confidential forum to discuss challenges and concerns.

Models of Leadership

4.11   Members heard that new models of headship are emerging to cope with the demands of modern school leadership. Sometimes they have evolved expressly to cope with the head teacher shortage, but schools also see these new models of headship as ways to open up career development opportunities and pathways for other staff to respond to the challenges of modern school leadership.

4.12   When a head takes on a SIP or other system leadership role, it gives deputies, assistant heads and others the chance to act up, take on more responsibilities and try out leadership roles for size, thereby preparing potential leaders and boosting their confidence and motivation. Knowing that there is an opportunity to develop a career as a head teacher beyond a single school also makes the role of head teacher potentially more appealing to young, ambitious teachers.

4.13   Working beyond the school in this way can also be invigorating for head teachers and therefore has implications for recruitment and retention. It can encourage successful heads to stay on at a school rather than moving to seek out fresh challenges in another school or organisation. As well as presenting opportunities for heads, leading beyond the school has a knock-on effect in terms of leadership development elsewhere in the school.

4.14   The task group noted that a rapidly changing educational landscape requires that Governors also play a key role in ensuring that the leadership structure in schools is up to the task. The complexity of the environments in which schools operate means that different schools will need to apply different leadership styles and models to meet their needs. It follows that the traditional model of one head teacher for each school may no longer be the most appropriate way of meeting leadership needs.

4.15   Members learned that the National College for Teaching and School Leadership had carried out research into three new models that have particular relevance to leadership succession: **federations, co-headship** and **executive headship**. Members considered three alternative leadership models which are outlined below:

Executive headship model

4.16   Hard federations normally led by an executive head teacher, who takes overall responsibility for all the schools. Each school within the federation may have a head of teaching and learning or head of school, who reports to the executive head. In some cases, a head teacher who is already leading a successful school

adds the leadership of another to their remit. Executive heads in this definition may be deployed in schools where leadership needs to be strongly supported because the school is not performing well. This may be for a fixed term where the partner school is facing difficulties for some reason.

Benefits of the Executive Headship Model

4.17   Development opportunity for a good head teacher to extend his or her impact and legacy through taking on the overall leadership of more than one school. Opportunities for potential school leaders to take greater responsibility within the executive head's own school while he or she works with another school. This is distributed leadership in action.

Federation model

4.18   A federation is a group of two or more schools that formally agree to work together to raise standards. One head teacher may oversee more than one school within the federation, hence challenging the tradition of every school having its own dedicated head.

- **Hard federations** – two or more schools under a single governing body and an executive head; and

- **Soft federations** – an informal arrangement in which two or more governing bodies share some elements of governance and set up a joint strategic committee with some delegated powers.

Benefits of the Federations Model

4.19   Smaller schools in particular may benefit from a wider leadership team giving greater support to the head. Development opportunity for a good head teacher to extend his or her impact and legacy through taking on the overall leadership of more than one school. Opportunities for potential school leaders to take a wider range of leadership roles within the line management structure of the group of schools.

Headship job share model

4.20   The role is shared between more than one person. Where two people share the role, they might both work full time, each with contracts for 0.5 head teacher and 0.5 deputy; or they might both work part-time, and together make up 1.0 head teacher role. In a step-up step-down co-headship an experienced head teacher approaching retirement may stay on to support and mentor a new, less experienced, head into the role. Working arrangements are tailored to meet the needs of the schools and the head teachers.

Benefits of the Headship job share model

4.21   The combined skills, experience and capacity of two talented people leading the school. This model can be an attractive option for leaders seeking a better work-life balance. An opportunity to retain the skills and experience of a head teacher nearing retirement during the induction period of a new leader.

4.22   Members considered the guidance produced by the National Governors Association and the National College for School Leadership which invites schools to consider the following when looking at the most effective leadership model for a school:

- Has a review of the leadership model for the school for the coming years been undertaken?
- Could one of these models help the school find, develop and keep good head teachers?
- Have the benefits of extending the responsibility of a head teacher beyond the school been identified?
- Is establishing a job share an opportunity to encourage interest from leaders who would otherwise not consider a full time headship role?
- Has collaboration with other schools been considered as a way to help build on the schools strengths and tackle shared challenges?

5. Streamlining diversity in school leadership (BME and Women)

5.1 Members explored how diversity, in particular encouraging women and candidates from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds to apply for headships, could be streamlined in schools leadership succession planning. Furthermore, how the council could support schools and candidates of diverse backgrounds in providing opportunities to gain leadership skills and experience.

5.2 The task group noted that both groups were still under-represented at senior level in proportion to the numbers in the teaching workforce as a whole. Members considered the black and minority ethnic leadership profile in the borough. Of the total 74 teachers in the borough SWELSEP have worked with, 29% have achieved headship or next steps promotion, and of that number 38% were teachers from a BME heritage (as the table below outlines):

Total no.	BAME Teachers	Total achieving promotion	BAME teachers achieving promotion
74	15	21	8
	15/24= 20%	21/74=29%	8/21=38%

5.3 Members were pleased to hear that the Merton School Improvement team has offered a range of support mechanisms for teachers from BME groups in achieving 'next steps' promotion. Within the programme delegates have had access to a number of initiatives focused specifically in encouraging staff from BME backgrounds to apply for Headship. This included workshops to support awareness building and a joint venture between Wandsworth and Merton councils.

5.4 The range of training and development opportunities offered by the National College for Teaching and Leadership, among others, are promoted to teachers. Officers acknowledged that further work could be undertaken by the Equalities Service within the School Improvement Team and that they were identifying and responding to training needs on an ongoing basis.

5.5 Members discussed their concerns about the under representation of senior leaders from BME backgrounds, both nationally and locally, and how this was an area that needed some solutions to be presented to ensure that the school workforce was reflective of the diverse populations in the borough. Members considered the following statistics in relation to the school leadership workforce nationally, including women and BME rates, noting that there are more male teachers going for headships than women, a smaller percentage of which are from BME backgrounds:

Heads workforce profile:

	Percentage of workforce	Percentage of BME
Nursery and Primary		
Male Heads	29%	1.5%
Female Heads	71%	*1.5%*
Secondary		
Male Heads	62%	2.6%
Female Heads	38%	4.4%

Deputy heads workforce profile:

	Percentage of workforce	Percentage of BME
Nursery and Primary		
Male Deputy Heads	19%	2.5%
Female Deputy Heads	81%	*4.5%*
Secondary		
Male Deputy Heads	51%	4.3%
Female Deputy Heads	49%	4.3%

BME Leadership – Presentation from the Institute of Education

5.6   Members were informed that the National College for Teaching and Leadership commissioned a report on Black and Minority Ethnic Leaders which identified a number of perceived barriers to leadership amongst BME teachers. These include:

- Experiencing racism at interview;
- Lack of confidence in applying for senior posts;
- Lack of confidence in applying for senior posts in large majority white pupil population schools;
- Disillusionment as a result of experiencing and witnessing racism;
- Concerns about maintaining a healthy work/life balance;
- Being over-represented in the most challenging schools;
- Exclusion from informal professional networks; and
- Lack of support from line manager and or senior leadership team members

5.7   The task group heard that there is an under-representation of BME groups in professional development programmes aimed at aspiring leaders. More needs to be done to offer bespoke programmes for BME groups or to provide more support. Investing in diversity is central to ensuring that BME candidates are able to provide leadership in diverse settings.

5.8   Members noted that the school system had become very fragmented over the last 30 years and that there has been an accompanying decline in local authority support. Therefore there needs to be some clarification on who is responsible for leadership preparation at the local level and what support is offered by councils.

5.9   It was proposed to Members that schools and local authorities needed to support one another to plan for leadership succession by considering the following:

- Focus on under-represented groups, looking at the landscape at the current make-up of the leadership and what needs to change;
- Ensure Head teachers are willing to talent spot and groom people for headship;
- Do more work to raise awareness of the barriers that aspiring leaders face

5.10   Members heard that whilst leadership development through training is important. A generic leadership programme may not lead to an equitable system. Members were advised that diversity in its broadest sense needs to be considered. Equally, the governing bodies of schools have a statutory duty to promote positive relationships between those from different groups, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality. Any training devised must contain an explicit focus on diverse contexts and leading for a more equitable system. This training is for teachers, heads and governors who all have a part to play, and should be underpinned by a clear strategy on streamlining equality into succession planning.

5.11   This strategy should also enable diversity in leadership planning by undertaking/offering the following:

- Bespoke leadership preparation;
- Conversations about barriers;
- Coaching and mentoring;
- Application and interview practice;
- Shadowing;
- Opportunities for leadership activity; and
- Internship

5.12   Members used this outline as the basis for thinking about their recommendations that would address some of the challenges surrounding under representation of BME and female leaders in Merton schools.

Research by NASUWT and the National College of Teaching and Leadership

5.13   Members considered the research undertaken by the National College for Teaching and Leadership and NASUWT, in partnership with the University of Manchester. This research considered the leadership aspirations and careers of black and ethnic minority teachers, in particular, the barriers to progression for BME teachers. The most interesting/concerning findings from this research are outlined below. Although the research was conducted in 2008, there were still important issues identified that the task group felt the council, schools and governors should be considering and addressing, where evident, in Merton schools.

Research Findings

5.14   **Research finding 1 - BME teachers are committed to teaching and ambitious to progress:** The research findings reject assumptions that the reason for the underrepresentation of BME teachers in school leadership positions is because of a lack of ambition. 43% of BME main scale teachers expected to be in a middle or senior management role within ten years. The motivations BME teachers most often cited for seeking a new post were: professional ambition; seeking a fresh challenge; leadership ambition; award of a qualification; and aspiration to be a

BME leader/role model. However, two thirds of BME teachers, more men than women, felt that they would need to change schools to progress their careers.

5.15   **Research finding 2 - The career experiences of BME teachers are not uniform:** There are significant differences between the career trajectories of teachers from each of the minority ethnic groups represented in the research study. Whilst there is strong evidence that, across the board, BME teachers were found to be underrepresented amongst the holders of leadership and headship posts within schools. The research concluded that some BME groups fare worse than others.

5.16   **Research finding 3 - BME teachers are under-represented in the school workforce and particularly underrepresented in senior leadership and headship positions:** This finding is evidenced in this report and was a key point that was made by all of the representatives Members met with during this review.

5.17   **Research finding 4 - Workload is a major factor inhibiting BME teachers' career aspirations and progression:** The reasons most frequently cited by BME teachers as inhibiting career progression ambitions were: workload/work/life balance; discrimination; lack of support; lack of role models; and lack of acceptance by staff, governors and the community being served. Of all the barriers to headship, workload was cited as the biggest factor for all BME teachers, irrespective of gender, phase or role.

5.18   **Research finding 5 -** *Discrimination at work is a key barrier in BME teachers' careers:* NASUWT learned that male BME teachers perceived discrimination as their greatest barrier compared to their female counterparts. For women, lack of self-confidence was the second most commonly cited barrier. The grounds of the discrimination teachers experienced included: ethnicity; gender; age; and faith. BME senior leaders were more likely to say they had experienced discrimination than were main scale BME teachers. BME middle leaders were also least likely to say they had experienced discrimination.

5.19   **Research finding 6 -** *BME teachers experience discrimination on a range of grounds -* Virtually all gender discrimination reported by senior leaders in this piece of research was by women. Discrimination on the grounds of gender was significantly more prevalent amongst senior leaders than main scale teachers and amongst women than men.

5.20   **Research finding 7 -** *Tackling negative stereotyping and discriminatory cultures are keys to success for BME teachers* - Of those BME teachers who said they had experienced discrimination when applying for posts, three fifths (59%) had encountered discrimination at the shortlisting stage, two thirds (66%) at the interview stage and one third (34%) at both stages. A large majority of BME teachers and school leaders (70%) said that they believed it is harder for BME teachers to secure leadership posts than for other teachers. Two fifths of BME teachers and school leaders believed that current school leadership cultures/policies are a barrier to BME teachers' career ambitions.

Conclusions from the research undertaken by NASUWT

5.21   The survey concluded that BME teachers are ambitious and committed to their jobs and careers (if not more so) than other teachers. Yet, despite this, they found that BME teachers are not confident that they are treated fairly when they apply for promotion or for headship. An entrenched cultural problem and institutional racism appears evident in schools and this operates to the disadvantage of BME teachers. The absence of systematic and high quality workforce data that is capable of

tracking the career trajectories and experiences of teachers by ethnic group and that could help to locate discriminatory practices is a major barrier to equality.

5.22   NASUWT argued that A key barrier to diversity and equality in school leadership is the absence of reliable ethnic monitoring data on the school workforce. The NASUWT believes that ethnic monitoring of the teacher workforce should be undertaken in a more systematic fashion at school, local authority and national levels to enable effective strategic planning. BME teachers' progress on the leadership scale in particular should be more effectively monitored.

5.23   Furthermore, NASUWT concluded that practical support is also needed to enable teachers to progress in their careers. For example, support targeted at individuals could help to mitigate various barriers to progression - including boosting self-confidence through the establishment of support networks for teachers, mentoring opportunities and access to information and guidance. An entitlement to access high quality leadership development opportunities is also needed.

5.24   Members explored how recommendations could be made that would enable these barriers to be overcome, acknowledging that some of the issues identified, and the findings from the study, suggest that there is a need for cultural change and greater awareness and adherence to equalities and diversity legislation and policy. The task group acknowledged that cultural change does not happen overnight but that the task group could make recommendations and ensure that the council, whilst encouraging schools and governors, embed equalities and diversity in succession planning and the recruitment and retention process through its own policy, the School Improvement Team and is role in the SWELSEP and the Merton Education Partnership.

Recommendation 3 – That Cabinet include ensuring diversity in school leadership as a key commitment in the corporate equality scheme.

Women in leadership roles – Presentation from Inner Strength Consulting

5.25   The task group also considered the barriers and challenges to women accessing school leadership roles. Members received a presentation from Inner Strength Consulting (ISC) who support women to achieve their career aspirations by providing mentoring and coaching.

5.26   Research presented by ISC highlighted the following barriers to women becoming head teachers:

- Concerns around balancing work and domestic/family responsibilities;
- Partner's career taking precedence;
- Concerns after taking a career break;
- Concerns about the viability of maternity leave;
- Lack of confidence in applying for senior posts;
- Lack of interview skills;
- Lack of career planning;
- Negative perceptions of headship;
- Lack of information concerning educational developments following a career break such as a maternity leave; and
- Experiencing sexism at interview

5.27   Such challenges need to be addressed to enable a diverse workforce that is responsive to our changing demographics and educational landscape.

5.28 Furthermore, the task group expressed the need to consider diversity issues in relation to teachers/head teachers with disabilities and making the profession more accessible to them.

Recommendation 4 - That Cabinet consult schools and the Merton Education Partnership on setting up refresher training for heads and governors on streamlining diversity in schools succession planning policies.

Recommendation 5 - That Cabinet establish a mentoring and coaching programme for teachers, aspiring heads and head teachers to support career progression and succession planning, in particular that female and BME coaches and mentors be employed to support aspiring heads in these groups.

Recommendation 6 – That Cabinet commission the ISN to undertake a survey of female and BME teachers to identify issues and gaps to better support career progression and professional development opportunities for women and BME candidates.

Recommendation 7 – That Cabinet ensure that the School Improvement Team offers pastoral support through the establishment of a confidential forum for aspiring candidates to enable them to talk about/highlight challenges and issues in schools, and to progression, which the team can then seek to respond to through policy and associated work streams.

6. Recognising and nurturing talent – Future Leaders

6.1 Members noted that expanding the number and range of opportunities available to aspiring heads, teachers and those in the schools Senior Leadership Team, were critical to overcoming some of the challenges they had learned of, fostering greater interest in leadership at earlier stages in teaching careers. Providing an opportunity to try out a leadership role, whether on a strategic project or in assuming responsibility for a key area, allows teachers to understand leadership in a school setting in its day to day reality, which head teachers found invaluable when teaching.

6.2 When the Task Group met with Head teachers this point was reinforced. Most of the head teachers in attendance had been given similar opportunities which they felt were invaluable and enabled them to grow in confidence and develop skills to equip them to apply for headships early in their careers. Head teachers explained that the local authority needed to make headship more attractive by talking up how worthwhile the profession is and also selling/promoting the borough as a great place to live and work and that the council is an investor in professional development for teachers.

6.3 Members considered what needed to be offered by Merton to attract the right candidates. The National College for Teaching and Leadership identified the following benefits which Merton should consider offering/facilitating:

- Talk up headship – 9/10 heads say it's a great job;
- Offer appropriate salary and benefits package;
- Address wellbeing & workload issues;
- Consider new leadership models and flexible working arrangements;
- Be flexible about desired teaching commitment;
- Identify clear goals for school improvement;
- Offer attractive CPD options – especially coaching and mentoring; and
- Shorten the pathway to headship

6.4 The task group heard that for those en route to senior posts, leadership preparation is more important than ever. This is particularly the case now that career paths have widened and the profession is attracting more mature entrants, with teaching as a second career. Schools need to have a more proactive approach to spotting talent and should be active in planning leadership development opportunities for staff, accessing national provision such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), Fast Track and Future Leaders.

6.5 Members were informed that the NPQH is the mandatory qualification for head teachers and prepares candidates for headship in accordance with the National Standards for Head teachers (DfES, 2004). Anyone with a body of experience of leadership at the whole-school level can apply for a place on the 15-month programme.

6.6 The task group were informed that Head teachers share information with other schools as part of talent spotting. It was also felt that successes should be celebrated to highlight the good experiences of headship publicised to, in turn, encourage more teachers to consider progression.

6.7 Members heard from head teachers that they felt that there was also a role for the council in promoting a future leaders programme and considering what this programme might offer. It was proposed that schools might match fund a development programme for middle leaders and that any funding available through the National College for Teaching and Leadership, or other sources such as the Merton Education Partnership, be explored. This programme may also attract candidates to the borough.

6.8 Head teachers were in agreement that opportunities to recruit people for whom teaching is a second career should be identified in seeking to attract new candidates, acknowledging the range of skills and leadership capabilities that they bring to the role. The Councils communication department could play a role in publicising the borough to prospective candidates.

6.9 The task group were clear that the future leaders in Merton Schools needed to be identified and supported much earlier and professional development and fast track leadership opportunities were central to this. Members felt that a Future Leaders Programme that could be delivered by the council in partnership with schools, SWELSEP and the MEP should be explored. This could offer a pot of funding which a delegated committee chaired by an Elected Member, with responsibility for considering applications for the programme. This would provide a mechanism by which head teachers could nominate outstanding teachers, or teachers themselves could apply. In addition, a certain proportion of the funding could be for equalities and diversity training and a dedicated scholarship for an outstanding teacher from a BME background.

Recommendation 8 – That Cabinet explore the possibility of establishing a Future Leaders Programme for aspiring head teachers which may be match funded by schools or facilitated through other funding sources, for example, funding from the National College of Teaching and Leadership or the Merton Education Partnership. This Programme could act on a scholarship basis with the most talented prospective heads approached or nominated by schools across the borough to participate, offering a fast track programme to enable outstanding teachers to apply for headship sooner.

Recommendation 9– That Cabinet publicise the range of development programmes and available resources to support leadership development in schools that are led by the School Improvement Team and SWELSEP.

Recommendation 10 - That Cabinet ensure that workforce information is collected more frequently and shared across SWELSEP and Merton Schools to aid succession planning, in particular talent spotting and opportunities for progression.

Recommendation 11 –That Cabinet invest in publicity materials to attract graduates and those who may be pursuing teaching as a second career to Merton. Promoting the borough as a great place to live and work, with investment in career development and progression opportunities.

7.   Role of Governors in Succession Planning

7.1   Members consulted with governors to gather their feedback on their role and what additional support they require to enable them to undertake their role in succession planning successfully.

7.2   Members heard that governor training is delivered by the National College for School Leadership and local support from the council and schools has been helpful. In particular, the support given internally by schools to aspiring leaders has been positive and their have been instances when teachers and heads have progressed to a headship and have been offered encouragements, challenges and opportunities to learn and grow in post. It was noted by one Governor that mentoring also continues between Heads who have trained and coached aspiring heads and who have gone on to lead their own schools. This has ensured mutual support that is both pastoral and built on friendship and is common in Merton schools.

7.3   However, the task group were informed that the Merton Education Partnership (MEP) have recently looked at support for Heads and one area that has been considered weak is that of pastoral care. This was recognised by and the partnership along with the need for trust, support and challenge to be fostered.

7.4   Governors agreed that they and their schools should encourage leadership opportunities where drive, qualities and potential are evident and from whatever background. Once appointed, the same support and pastoral care is vital in building friendship and accountability groups among colleagues. Members heard that a good example of this is the Mitcham Town Co-operative which has continued to grow and be highly valued by local Head teachers who work together and offer mutual support across the cluster. There are two other Cluster groups in Merton who are looking at this model for the future.

7.5   It was commented upon that the National College for Teaching and Leadership is producing some excellent material at the moment on school leadership. In particular the training for Governors who are Chairs or aspiring Chairs. The training and information available was found to be really useful. This material was identified as being of real benefit to governing bodies if worked through.

7.6   The Task Group also consulted a Governor at a Merton school to ask about her experiences and the support needs of governors. The following issues were highlighted from her experience as a governor:

- Difficulty in recruiting new governors;
- No refresher training throughout time as a governor on diversity in succession planning;
- Level of responsibility and accountability of governors means that it is a difficult role to recruit to as many volunteer as parent governors without any real background in education;

- Governors are often not prepared for the requirements placed on them when OFSTED inspections are undertaken;
- Lack of BME governors
- Need for on going awareness raising for governors on their role in succession planning;

7.7 It was also noted that many governors are involved in the recruitment process but that the existing head has the final say on any appointment. The possibility of involving more community representatives as an advisory Panel to Heads and Governors in the recruitment process was welcomed. Furthermore, the governor was unaware of any school succession planning policy in the school where she was a governor.

7.8 Members heard that governors encourage talent spotting and opportunities for teachers with potential for headship to gain experience in their schools but also to move around. Furthermore, retention may be aided by surveying heads in Merton schools to determine why they chose Merton.

7.9 It was also proposed that a buddy scheme between schools for new governors was worthwhile and that a mentor for new governors would be helpful to support development in the role. This is not in place at the moment based on her experience.

7.10 The opportunities for teachers to move around to gain experience was also discussed with regard to the expansion plans of the council to meet demand for school places in the borough.

Recommendation 12 – That Cabinet explore with schools the feasibility of establishing an advisory panel that is made up of community representatives to support governors on when appointing heads This would provide a level of challenge and support on issues regarding representation and ensuring heads are able to respond to demographic changes and working with diverse school population.

Recommendation 13 – That Cabinet work with schools to encourage more BME candidates to take up school governor posts to work towards addressing under representation of women and BME governors.

Recommendation 14 - Bespoke training for governors to refresh when appointment of a new Headteacher is coming up.

8.   Concluding Remarks

8.1 Our recommendations impact on identifying and nurturing the next generation of leaders. As part of this process, Members felt that the council should continue providing support to schools and the good work being undertaken by the School Improvement Team and SWELSEP. However, Members felt that the absence of a statement or policy on school leadership succession planning for the council needed to be addressed. This could provide a set of guiding principles for schools to utilise when establishing their own succession planning policies.

8.2 Local authorities should support aspiring leaders and gather robust data to inform the succession planning policy which responds to the scale and nature of the challenge that this review has noted. There is also a need to work in collaboration with head teachers, identify alternative leadership models, where beneficial, and to work with governors to improve recruitment and selection and put in place more systematic talent identification processes.

8.3   Furthermore, work needs to be undertaken to explore how training and development programmes can be funded and how mentoring and coaching can become more widely available to aspiring heads. A Future Leaders programme with a number of associated work streams which would look at rolling out coaching and mentoring to teachers aspiring to headship, either self-nominated or by their head teacher, could partner external coaches and ensure a more formal mentoring scheme with heads from other schools in the borough.

8.4   With the Future Leaders Programme a number of outstanding teachers could get the support and access they require to funding for their professional development through a competitive scholarship process. The applications would be subject to a rigorous application process and aim to retain those awarded the scholarship through an agreement to enable talented aspiring heads to be retained in Merton Schools. This scholarship would cover practice based training, placement opportunities, leadership projects and responsibilities and study, possibly offering accreditation towards an MA in Education. Existing partnership relationships with local universities could be utilised in determining how this programme may be taken forward.

8.5   A particular focus of this task group review was also the need to prioritise addressing the challenges and barriers faced by women and people from BME backgrounds to ensure that they are able to progress and that the school workforce is representative of the demographic changes in the borough. The solutions identified cover corporate equalities policy, training for schools and governors, mentoring and coaching opportunities, a confidential forum to raise and address issues and a dedicated scholarship for BME candidates. This, Members feel should go some way to making some important changes and extending opportunities to candidates from BME backgrounds that may ensure that in the future the number of BME headships has increased. The task group acknowledged that this was an incremental development but hoped that it had identified a number of options that would act as a step forward.

8.6   Furthermore there is a need to encourage more BME governors in schools and for governors to be appropriately supported and trained to undertake their role in succession planning effectively.

8.7   The task group wished to express thanks to the CSF department, SWELSEP, Merton Education Partnership and the staff at Merton schools for all the good work they are already doing in this area and ask that succession planning continues to be afforded significant resources and priority to ensure that we have a workforce now and in the future that is able to meet the challenges that our shifting educational landscape and demographic changes are creating. Furthermore they agreed that consultation with schools should be undertaken on all agreed recommendations by Cabinet.

9.   What Happens Next?

9.1   This report will be presented to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 26th March for the Panel's approval.

9.2   The Panel will then send the report to the Council's Cabinet meeting in June 2014 for discussion and to seek agreement to the recommendations presented.

9.3   The Cabinet will be asked to provide a formal Executive Response and Action Plan to the Panel within two months of the submission of the report to its meeting in September 2014. The Cabinet will be asked to respond to each of the task group's recommendations, setting out whether the recommendation is accepted and how

and when it will be implemented. If the Cabinet is unable to support and implement some of the recommendations, then it is expected that clearly stated reasons would be provided for each.

9.4   The lead Cabinet Member (or officer to whom this work is delegated) should ensure that other organisations, to which recommendations have been directed, are contacted and that their response to those recommendations is included in the Executive Response and Action Plan.

9.5   The Panel will seek a further report six months after the Cabinet response has been received, giving an update on progress with implementation of the recommendations.

Appendix 1

Whom we spoke to -

External Organisations:
Rosemary Campbell Stephens – Institute of Education
Maureen Bailey – Inner Strength Consulting
Tim Blanchard – National College of Teaching and Leadership
Head teachers at Merton Schools
A Governor from one of - Merton schools
Kevin Vickers - Merton Education Partnership

Officers:
Jan Martin, Head of Education
June Crame, Merton School Improvement Governor Support

Cabinet Members:
Councillor Martin Whelton

This form should be completed in line with the Equality Impact Assessment guidance available on the
intranet
The blue text below is included to help those completing the template and should be overwritten.

EqIA completed by: (Give name and job title)	Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer
EqIA to be signed off by: (Give name and job title)	*Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services*
Department/ Division	Corporate Services, Democracy Services
Team	The Scrutiny Team
EqIA completed on:	
Date of Challenge Review (if you have one):	N/A
Date review of this EqIA is due (no later than 3 years from date of completion):	TBC

What are you assessing? (Tick as appropriate)

✓ **Policy:** *A policy is an adopted approach by the Council to a specific issue or position, usually in the long term. It provides a set of ideas or principles that together form a framework for decision making and implementation.[1] A policy may be written or unwritten, formal or informal. For example, the Corporate Equality Scheme.*

☐ **Strategy:** *A strategy sets out the activities and actions that have been identified as most likely and cost-effective to achieve the aims and objectives of a council policy e.g. the Consultation Strategy.*

☐ **Procedure:** *A procedure sets out the way in which practices and actions are to be undertaken at an individual level in order to achieve the policy in local situations, for example using a flow chart approach. Procedures also outline who will take responsibility on a day to day basis for decisions in the implementation of the policy.[2] For example, this procedure for carrying out an EqIA.*

☐ **Function:** *A function is an action or activity that the Council is required to carry out for example emergency planning arrangements.*

✓ **Service:** *A service is a facility or provision made by the Council for its residents or staff for example the Library service or Translation service.*

1. Title of policy, strategy, procedure, function or service

> A Scrutiny Review of Adult Skills and Employability, undertaken by scrutiny councillors on the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel (supported by the Scrutiny Officer).

2. For functions or services only: Does a third party or contractor provide the function or service? If so, who?

>

3. Who is the policy, strategy, procedure, function or service intended to benefit?

>

4. Who else might be affected?

>

5. What is known about the demographic make up of the people you have included in your answers to questions 4 and 5?

>

6. Have you already consulted on this policy, strategy, procedure, function or service? If so, how?

>

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[1] See the Council's Policy Handbook http://intranet/policy_handbook_final_agreed_nov_07-2.doc
[2] As above

7. How will you measure the success of your policy, strategy, procedure, function or service?

8. How often will the policy, strategy, procedure, function or service be reviewed?

9. When will the policy, strategy, procedure, function or service next be reviewed?

10. Please complete the following table and give reasons for where:
    (a) The policy function or service could have a positive impact on any of the equality
    (b) groups. The policy function or service could have a potential negative impact on any of
    (c) the equality groups.

Think about where there is evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, concerns or priorities in relation to this policy, strategy, procedure, function or service.

Equality group	Positive impact		Potential negative impact		Reason
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Gender (inc. Transgender)	✓				
Race/ Ethnicity/ Nationality	✓				
Disability	✓				
Age	✓				
Sexual orientation				✓	
Religion/ belief				✓	
Socio-economic status	✓				

11. Did you have sufficient data to help you answer the above questions?

✓ **Yes**

☐   **No**

12. Is a full Impact Assessment required?

☐ **Yes**

✓ **No**

EqIA signed off by:	Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services.
Signature:	
Date:	