

JOINT PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on THURSDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2019 ROGER CROFT ROOM COUNCIL OFFICES MARKET STREET NEWBURY

Present: Chris Bowring, Hilary Cole (Chairman), James Cole, John Halsall (Substitute) (In place of Parry Batth), John Harrison and John Porter

Also Present: Paul Anstey (Head of Public Protection and Culture), John Ashworth (Corporate Director - Environment), Sean Murphy (Public Protection Manager), Suzanne McLaughlin (Senior Environmental Health Officer), Damian James (Chair of the PPP Joint Management Board), Clare Lawrence (Wokingham Borough Council), Kevin Gibbs (Bracknell Forest Council) and Stephen Chard (Principal Policy Officer)

Apologies for absence: Parry Batth

PART I

12 Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 June 2019 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

Publicity of the Joint Public Protection Partnership (PPP) – Sean Murphy explained that there had been much publicity in the local press and via social media. The PPP website had also been developed. The website contained links to relevant pages of each local authority's website.

Paul Anstey added that technological developments would help the PPP monitor its profile and the effectiveness of its campaigns. This would then be captured in the Key Performance Indicators.

Future Plan – Annual Air Quality Report – it was noted that the receipt of this report had been rescheduled to the December 2019 meeting. Sean Murphy advised the Committee that a funding bid had been submitted by the PPP to Defra to help fund air quality initiatives.

PPP Priorities 2019/20 – work was ongoing to establish whether aerial maps could be produced that would be able to identify buildings where action needed to be taken to improve energy efficiency. Companies were in existence who could provide this and thermal imaging cameras could be used. This was an area of enforcement for the PPP.

(Councillor John Halsall joined the meeting at 6.40pm).

Sean Murphy reported that a business case was being worked upon. Development in this area would help to enforce air quality requirements.

Any Other Business (Former Committee Members) – Paul Anstey would ensure that the action, to write to former Committee Members thanking them for their work on the JPPC, was completed.

13 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

14 Notice of Public Speaking and Questions

No public questions were submitted.

15 Future Plan

Members noted the list of items for the next Committee scheduled for 10 December 2019. However, it would be necessary to reschedule this meeting to January 2020 due to the General Election called on 12 December 2019.

An addition to the future plan was also noted: 'Accommodation'.

16 2020/21 Budget

The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 6) which set out the draft Revenue Budget for 2020/21 including fees and charges. The report sought approval for the draft budget and the draft fees and charges schedule prior to submission to the three councils in accordance with the Inter-Authority Agreement.

Paul Anstey explained that it was the intention to achieve a common position for the three individual councils. The JPPC needed to recommend a budget to the three councils.

This was discussed by the Joint Management Board and their recommendation was for a standstill budget based on the 2019/20 Revenue Budget but with salary related pressures factored in. No increases in supplies and services or contractual related budgets were proposed.

The total net Revenue budget for 2020/21 was proposed as £3.716M. This took into account:

- The annual cost of living rise at 2%
- Incremental rises effective from the 1st April 2020
- Increase in West Berkshire and Wokingham pension
- No inflationary rise had been applied to supplies and services

Clare Lawrence explained that the budget for Wokingham was subject to the final detail on pension deficit payments being confirmed.

Appendix E to the report outlined the proposed budget methodology for localised service disinvestment. This had been put together for future reference should the PPP elect to operate in a different manner. The methodology would operate as a rebate. It would not however impact on agreed budget percentages:

- Bracknell Forest: 25.76%
- West Berkshire: 40.00%
- Wokingham 34.24%

Councillor Hilary Cole gave her support to the methodology.

Councillor John Halsall felt that further detail was required on the budget, i.e. employee costs and service costs. There should also be clarity on expenditure against the PPP's objectives.

Sean Murphy explained that approximately 85% of the budget was spent on salaries. This was divided among the three authorities as per the above agreed percentages. The

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budget was split across ten cost centres. Sean agreed to circulate further detail in advance of the next meeting.

Clare Lawrence added that the standstill budget model was formed at the start of the shared service. The only variation to this had been the saving incorporated into the 2019/20 budget of £145k. No savings were proposed for 2020/21.

Councillor John Harrison queried whether a 'root and branch' review was scheduled of the PPP. Paul Anstey explained that a review would be held as per the timeframe set by the Business Plan. The Business Plan, which sat beneath the Inter-Authority Agreement, was a five year document. Performance reports outlined the progress made against the Business Plan. However, a review could be brought forward if Members had concerns over budgeting and/or delivery of the Business Plan.

Councillor Hilary Cole felt that it would be useful, particularly for new Members, to provide a briefing on areas including the background to the PPP and how it operated. She suggested this take place at the next meeting.

Paul Anstey directed Members to the detail of the proposed methodology. He reiterated that the purpose of the methodology was to offer Members a way to operate the PPP differently or resolve issues/make savings should this become necessary. The methodology outlined how costs could be removed if necessary. This covered the potential removal of high level elements of management; removing the cost of the core-offer; and removing contractual commitments, core supplies and consultancy. Assuming that all these costs were removed and the net budget formed the basis for local disinvestment, and assuming that the Committee approved the recommendation for a core standstill budget for 2020/21, then the available net amount for local disinvestment available for 2020/21 would be circa £1.7M. After applying the agreed percentages this would breakdown as follows:

- Bracknell Forest: £450k
- West Berkshire: £680k
- Wokingham: £570k

It was clarified that the methodology excluded licensing as the funding for this was ring-fenced.

Paragraph 3.3 of the methodology listed the areas of work that could be lost if savings were sought, i.e. a reduced level of food safety and food standards inspections. However, this also listed areas where activity could increase if funding allowed.

A reallocation of the funding would also be possible within each local authority, i.e. to alter the local offer by redistributing funds to a particular area of activity based on the priorities set within each local authority.

Councillor James Cole queried how the addition of a fourth local authority partner could affect the budget. Paul Anstey explained that, as per the Inter-Authority Agreement, the agreed percentages would need to be amended and a new agreement formed.

Councillor Hilary Cole gave thanks for this useful piece of work. It would likely become necessary to adjust/re-evaluate budgets in the future and the methodology would enable that.

Members then turned to the report's recommendations. Paul Anstey reiterated that the Committee was being asked to recommend the budget and the fees and charges to the three councils. There would therefore be the opportunity for further discussions.

For the fees and charges, Councillor James Cole noted that the flat cost recovery fee was proposed to be increased to £57.50 per hour for 2020/21. Councillor Halsall felt this was acceptable 'at the margins'.

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The Committee approved the recommendations outlined in the report, subject to an amendment proposed by Councillor Halsall that the outline methodology be approved 'at the margins'. This amendment was approved by the Committee. The refined report would be issued to the three councils.

RESOLVED that:

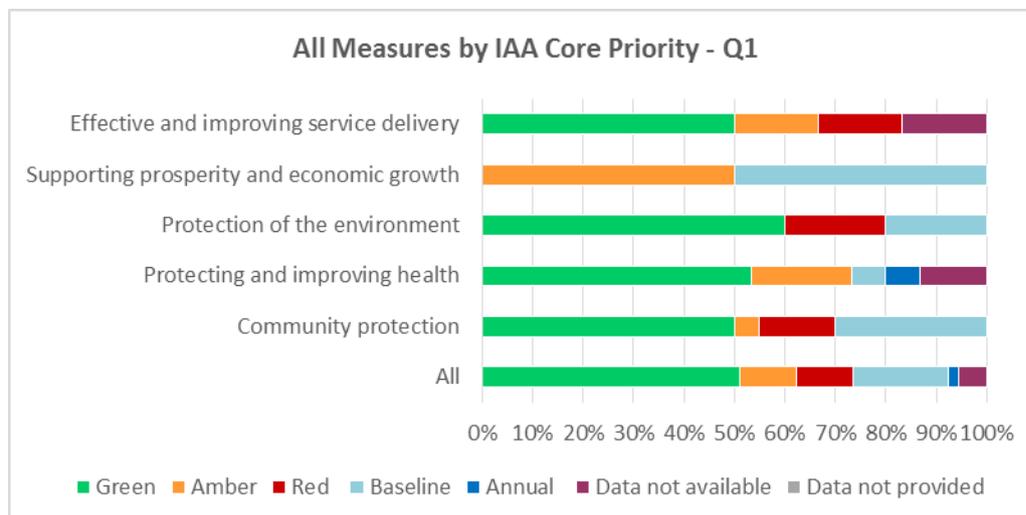
- **Consideration had been given to the draft Revenue Budget, including the fees and charges.**
- **The contributions set out in the report, along with the fees and charges, would be recommended to the three councils.**
- **The outline methodology for calculating rebates would be approved in the event of one or more partner authorities seeking local service reductions as set out in Appendix E, subject to the agreed amendment to be 'at the margins'.**
- **Sean Murphy would circulate further detail on the budget, i.e. employee costs and service costs, in advance of the next meeting.**
- **A briefing would be provided to Committee on areas including the background to the PPP and how it operated. Potentially for the next meeting.**

17 Quarter 1 Performance Information

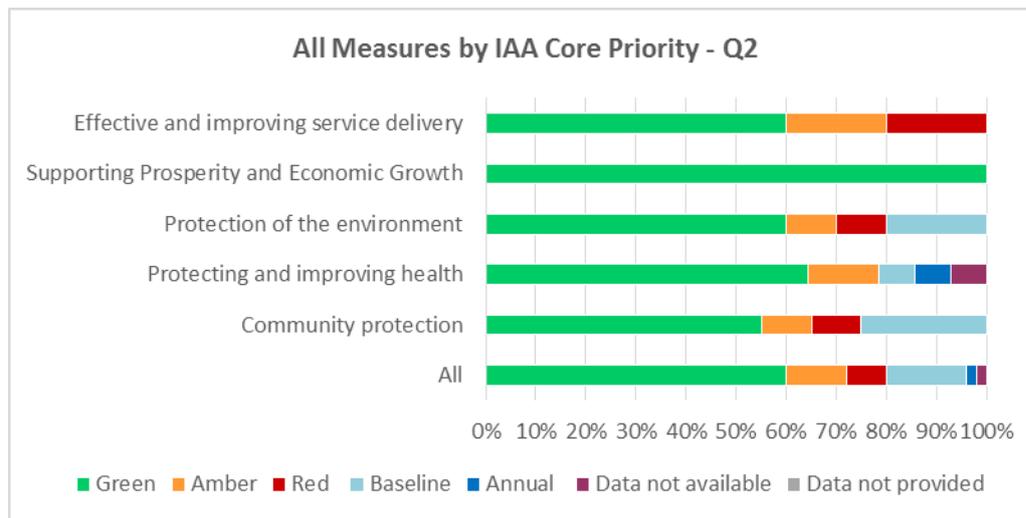
The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 7) which outlined the performance of the Public Protection Partnership for Quarters One and Two of 2019/20.

Suzanne McLaughlin, Principal Officer – Governance, highlighted the following points from the performance report:

- The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Measures of Volume (MOV) had been reviewed. This had resulted in some KPIs/MOV being updated. New KPIs would be reported from Quarter Three.
- Difficulties had been encountered with recruitment and it had been necessary to fill some posts with contractors/casual staff.
- A single case management database had been procured.
- The PPP recently launched its social media profiles to accompany the website.
- The budget was forecast to be 'on budget' at year end.
- Action plans had been produced where relevant in order to improve performance. For example, a new online scheme had been introduced to collate feedback from residents and businesses. It had been expanded upon to include Trading Standards consumer complaints and business feedback.
- A 'RAG' rating was included for Quarters One and Two which covered all measures by Inter-Authority Agreement Core Priorities:



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Councillor Hilary Cole queried progress in achieving individual targets. Paul Anstey explained that this report provided a summary of progress against individual projects and priorities, rather than the very lengthy and detailed report provided previously. An extensive list of KPIs was monitored by the PPP. Councillor Hilary Cole stated that the Committee needed to be aware of the progress being made against targets.

It was anticipated that the core priority 'Supporting Prosperity and Economic Growth' would be 100% delivered by year end, but some 'amber' and 'red' performance was indicated in the above graphs.

Members agreed that additional detail was required. It was felt useful to present areas reporting as 'green' to highlight the many areas of good performance. Exception reports were needed for KPIs reporting 'amber' or 'red'.

Councillor James Cole highlighted that it was useful to note the progression being made between Quarters One and Two, and felt this should be retained in future reports.

Councillor Hilary Cole summarised that further work was needed on the level of detail contained in the report. She did however give thanks for the work undertaken in producing this Q1 and Q2 report.

Paul Anstey proposed to circulate options for Member feedback on how performance would be presented in the future. This would be used to inform the Quarter Three report.

Councillor John Porter queried the cost implication of employing contractors/casual staff. Paul Anstey explained that a Workforce Strategy had been discussed by the Joint Management Board. Permanent recruitment would be progressed, assuming a stable budget was set for 2020/21. Damian James added that this was a difficult industry to recruit to nationally. He praised the successful 'grow your own' approach employed in the PPP.

Sean Murphy further added that contractors/casual staff were used for more routine day to day work. Longer term projects were undertaken by permanent members of staff.

Sean Murphy then went on to advise that some posts had gone out to advert, including trainee posts. The PPP would aim to develop some officers via the trainee route which had been successful previously. Officers could progress via career grading. This approach was aided by the Apprenticeship Levy. Apprentices/trainees were being recruited and developed. Paul Anstey added that the responsibility for training and development across the PPP sat with a lead officer.

Councillor Hilary Cole praised the 'grow your own' approach.

Councillor James Cole queried how retention compared with other local authorities. Paul Anstey explained that the majority of leavers from the PPP had achieved a promotion to

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another local authority. Feedback from exit interviews was analysed, with any issues acted upon.

RESOLVED that:

- The report be approved.
- Options would be circulated for Member feedback on how performance would be presented in the future. This would be used to inform the Quarter Three report.

18 Any Other Business

PPP Working Arrangements

Councillor John Halsall raised concerns with regard to the working arrangements of the PPP. He was concerned that both the Chairman of the JPPC and of the Joint Management Board were from West Berkshire.

He felt that the vision for the PPP differed from that held for services in Wokingham. The intention in Wokingham was to operate a locality service external to the PPP with the intention of operating a Wokingham service for Wokingham residents. He considered that the PPP should provide specialist services as and when necessary. If this alternative arrangement could not be progressed then Wokingham might choose to withdraw from the PPP.

Sean Murphy explained that this was the first time that both chairmanship roles fell within the same local authority. These roles were rotated annually.

Councillor James Cole described his efforts in making Hungerford Town Council (a Town Council in his Ward) aware of the PPP and its services. They had been unaware of the PPP. Councillor Hilary Cole felt that this was likely to be the case across the PPP area until parishes/communities had a need for a service. Councillor James Cole felt that it would be useful to understand the benefit of providing a more local service to residents.

Sean Murphy felt that the PPP's working arrangements were compatible with locality/neighbourhood teams.

Councillor Halsall felt that the PPP needed to work for all three areas, with the ability to be tailored to individual local authorities. Sean Murphy explained that officers were clear that they worked for the three local authorities. Clare Lawrence added that different levels of service were provided in the different local authorities. She did not feel there was a conflict between the PPP and the operation of locality teams.

19 Date of next meeting

The next meeting, scheduled for 10 December 2019, was postponed due to the General Election called on 12 December 2019. The meeting would be rescheduled to January 2020.

(Post meeting note: the next meeting had been rescheduled to Thursday 30 January 2020, 6.30pm in the Bracknell Forest Council Chamber).

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 7.55pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature