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# Public Protection Partnership Communications Strategy 2021-2023

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Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Hilary Cole Councillor Bill Soane Councillor John Harrison
Report Author:	Anna Smy
Forward Plan Ref:	N/a

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## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the JPPC of the review and update of the previously agreed Communications Strategy April 2018 - March 2020.
- 1.2 The report addresses communications for the operation of the service. It acknowledges that the Public Protection Partnership will need to have consideration of the impact of Wokingham Borough Council leaving the partnership, however, it does not cover the communications around the exit plan or development of the remaining Public Protection Service. This will be addressed through a separate communications strategy.
- 1.3 The report details how the Strategy will put in place or maintain areas of ongoing improvements of the service, in particular the lessons learnt from Covid and developments in ICT provisions.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The committee **APPROVE** the updated Communications Strategy for 2021-2023.
- 2.2 The committee **NOTE** the range of activities and subjects to be covered by the communications plan.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	The main expenditure continues to be the Lead Officer for Communications, costs associated with website hosting and materials. As projects are approved consideration of marketing costs and materials is included. This strategy does not require additional finance.

<b>Human Resource:</b>	The service employs a Lead Officer – Community Engagement to help lead the service in delivering a range of interactions with residents and businesses across the 3 authorities. The officer is the key link to internal communications teams as well as the wider media. This is a permanent role which will continue. In addition officers of the PPP will support the Lead Officer in attending events and providing content.			
<b>Legal:</b>	<p>The Inter Authority Agreement sets out the legal relationship and responsibilities within the service and requirements on each partner.</p> <p>It is a legal requirement of the PPP Inter Authority Agreement that the Bracknell Forest Stag, the West Berkshire Crest and the Wokingham Crest are always deployed across all marketing and promotional material including digital presence.</p> <p>The PPP Inter Authority Agreement states that a statement of acknowledgement – A shared service provided by Bracknell Forest District Council, West Berkshire District Council and Wokingham Borough Council – will be deployed across all marketing and promotional collateral including digital presence.</p> <p>This remains the case but will need to be reviewed in light of any amendments when Wokingham Borough Council leave the partnership.</p>			
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Communication is key to the success of our service. It is listed within the strategic risk register concerning the risk to reputation if communications are not dealt with appropriately. There is scope for management within each project or proactive activity.			
<b>Property:</b>	No implications.			
<b>Policy:</b>	The PPP's corporate communication objective, as set out under section 5 of the PPP Business Plan 2017, is: <i>The effective use of communication to protect communities and enhance the reputation of the Partnership and the Councils.</i> The PPP Brand Guidelines and Style Guide are instrumental to the success of achieving of this objective. These have been reviewed and remain the same with a small addition to the areas concerning correspondence.			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				

<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		✓		All of our communications needs to meet the needs of our residents, we offer a range of interactions including face to face, visits, telephone calls and written correspondence. Accessibility criteria are applied to communications and this is managed to ensure there are no negative impacts.
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		✓		There may be some minor benefits however overall it is neutral as we balance the messages and methods of delivery to reach our audience in the most appropriate way.
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		✓		There may a slight benefit from delivering webinars rather than meeting in person but overall there is a neutral impact.
<b>Health Impact:</b>				None (some messages may have a benefit however the strategy itself does not)
<b>ICT Impact:</b>	✓			The introduction of a customer portal with provide efficiencies within the service and
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		✓		There may be scope for the results of any monitoring to be provided on the website however during the project itself there will be limited need.
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>		✓		<u>Bracknell Forest</u> Value for money Economic resilience <u>West Berkshire</u> Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships <u>Wokingham</u> Changing the way we work for you
<b>Core Business:</b>				This work is linked throughout all the core business of PPP carried out in each authority

<b>Data Impact:</b>				None identified
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	Joint Management Board were consulted on 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2021 with the strategic managers within the service.			

## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The previous communications strategy sets out the plans for developing and growing the Public Protection Partnership as a relatively new service. The PPP was on target to meet its objectives with the website going live, a more prominent social media presence when the pandemic hit.
- 4.2 This report recognises there will be an impact on the PPP brand as Wokingham leaves the service but this will not impact on the delivery of effective and measured communications. We aim to continue to be responsive to the needs of our customers and learning from feedback and colleagues with the Communications Teams in each authority.
- 4.3 The service will be launching a new customer portal in 2022 which will allow residents and businesses to have more control of their interactions with the service. They can make complaints on line, check on licensing processes, check public registers and have more control of their interactions with the service.
- 4.4 Going forward the key focus is to maintain the level of following (on social media), interactions (such as Webinars and customer portal) and build on the positive relationships formed with the community during the pandemic.

## 5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 Since the Public Protection Partnership was formed in 2017 the brand and communications channels have evolved. A report in June 2018 which was presented to the Joint Public Protection Committee carried out early evaluations of some of its activities. This included a Newsletter about Rats which went to 400 residents, a presentation to 56 internal and external partners as part of a Community Safety Partnership Problem Solving Task Group (Learning Event) and produced the first Members Bulletin.
- 5.2 In June 2018 Officers were looking to develop a PPP Website which each individual authority would link through to. This is now in place with an average of over 6000 visits a month. The web pages have been invaluable during Covid with the frequently changing legislation/advice from Government, the team have been able to provide businesses and residents with updated advice very quickly. There was no PPP Social Media presence in June 2018, this has built up and developed significantly (Appendix C). Again the flexibility and speed to get messages to those who need it has really helped during the pandemic.
- 5.3 The Lead Officer role has been essential in developing the communications strategy and developing a presence. The previous strategy focussed on the role delivering

aspects of the strategy, the review has highlighted the need for this to be the responsibility of all staff as representatives of the service and the Councils. The officers have worked well with the Lead Officer and are sharing stories, providing data and ideas which can be seen in a more collaborative approach within the service and a broad range of topics shared externally. We have developed short videos by the animal wardens and the Victim Support Officer which provide more accessibility for the service.

- 5.4 The members bulletins have been very well received and have included some subject specific ones to showcase what the service is doing, demonstrate complex cases/investigations as well as celebrating the improvements to residents and businesses by the service's interventions. Appendix D shows an example of the bulletin during the pandemic. We will be continuing with this style going forward, however we will always respond to feedback or specific incidents or subjects which may arise through intelligence or request.
- 5.5 The approach of the previous Strategy (2018-2020) was to build the brand and develop our communications. Whilst there are still areas to develop further this strategy review has focussed more on consolidating the work carried out to date and ensuring the profile and variety of communications the service has. During the pandemic officers were attending meetings and representing the service and the authorities at local and regional levels and had positive feedback on their contributions and approach. This work was in addition to groups already attended and has created new networks and communication channels for officers and the service.

## **6 Other options considered**

- 6.1 To not have a communications strategy and deal with any interactions in a reactive capacity. This is not an appropriate use of resources, does not allow us to build on existing work, change or adapt.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The impact of the Covid Pandemic has highlighted the need for not only good but responsive and flexible communications. The service has been able to deliver on this and provide webinars, information and advice to not only the businesses and residents of the three Local Authorities but multi-agency groups as well as significantly improved internal profiles. The social media messaging has reached a significant number of people and this strategy will help us take this forward in a way which maintains our profile and brand as opposed to the previous strategy which focused on growing these areas.

## **8 Appendices**

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment  
Appendix B – PPP Communications Strategy 2021-2023  
Appendix C – Social Media reach 2020/21  
Appendix D – Members Bulletin (example during Covid 2020)

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## Background Papers:

Costings detailed in the Grant application

## Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

**Wards affected:** All (including Bracknell Forest Council and Wokingham Borough Council)

## Officer details:

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## Document Control

Document Ref:		Date Created:	24/05/2021
Version:	V1.0	Date Modified:	
Author:	Anna Smy		
Owning Service	Public Protection and Culture		

## Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

## Appendix A

### Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

<b>What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:</b>	There is no decision being made – they are noting the proposed project
<b>Summary of relevant legislation:</b>	
<b>Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes</li> <li>• Support everyone to reach their full potential</li> <li>• Support businesses to start develop and thrive in West Berkshire</li> <li>• Develop local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy Maintain a green district</li> <li>• Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships</li> </ul>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name of Budget Holder:</b>	Anna Smy
<b>Name of Service/Directorate:</b>	Public Protection and Culture
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Anna Smy
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	24/05/2021
<b>Version and release date (if applicable):</b>	

Is this a .... ?		Is this policy, strategy, function or service ... ?	
Policy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
<b>Aims:</b>	To review the proposed strategy in light of the changing way the service is delivering to customers and reflecting on the lessons learnt from Covid.

<b>Objectives:</b>	To have a clear strategy for the PPP to deliver on communications with internal and external customers
<b>Outcomes:</b>	An agreed strategy for the service
<b>Benefits:</b>	Improved communications to all More accessible service to all

**(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?**

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	None	
Disability	Web content and messages need to be accessible to all (e.g. appropriate font size, colour)	New portal for Tascomi needs to meet DDA requirements
Gender Reassignment	None	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	None	
Pregnancy and Maternity	None	
Race	None	
Religion or Belief	None	
Sex	None	
Sexual Orientation	None	
<b>Further Comments:</b>		

**(3) Result**

<b>Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
The strategy shows the approach of the service to managing communications, if officers do not follow this or use the wrong branding there may be documents in circulation which do not meet requirements for those with a disability.	
<b>Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>



There should be no adverse impact providing consideration is given to the protocols and guidelines associated with PPP communications.

<b>(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:</b>	
<b>EqIA Stage 2 required</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Owner of EqIA Stage Two:</b>	
<b>Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:</b>	

**Name:** Anna Smy

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021