

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

JOINT PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13 JUNE 2022

COUNCIL CHAMBER COUNCIL OFFICES MARKET STREET NEWBURY

Councillors Present: John Porter, Thomas Marino, Peter Heydon (Substitute) (In place of John Harrison) and Graham Bridgman (Substitute) (In place of James Cole)

Also Present: Sean Murphy (Public Protection Manager), Stephen Chard (Democratic Services Manager), Moira Fraser (Principal Officer – Policy and Governance), Damian James (Chair of the PPP Joint Management Board) and Thomas Rhys Dunn (Principal Policy Officer – Digital Democracy).

Apologies for absence: Councillor John Harrison and Councillor James Cole

PART I

1 Election of the Chairman

The Clerk to the meeting (Stephen Chard) opened the meeting and requested nominations for the role of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

Councillor Peter Heydon nominated Councillor Thomas Marino, which Councillor Graham Bridgman seconded.

RESOLVED that:

- **Councillor Marino duly elected as Chairman of the Joint Public Protection Committee for the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.**

Councillor Marino expressed his thanks to the outgoing Chairman Councillor John Harrison.

2 Appointment of the Vice Chairman

Councillor Marino nominated Councillor Harrison as Vice Chairman which was seconded by Councillor Porter.

RESOLVED that:

- **Councillor Harrison duly elected as Vice Chairman of the Joint Public Protection Committee for the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.**

3 Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th March 2022 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Matters Arising

Moira Fraser provided an update on behalf of Jon Winstanley who had been asked to raise the possibility of installing defibrillators alongside water safety cabinets. The matter

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had been raised with the Water Safety Partnership (WSP) and Mr Winstanley would come back with a definitive answer for the Committee post the next WSP meeting.

In regards to Officers discussing the possibility of Bracknell Forest being represented on the Water Safety Partnership, Moira Fraser stated that the request had been accepted.

In response to the question from Councillor Harrison regarding the differences between the 2020 and 2021 air quality data, Moira Fraser confirmed that this information was circulated to all Members of the Committee on the 8th June 2022.

Councillor Bridgman raised a point of order stating that the Minutes and the Matters Arising should not be combined into one agenda item. They should be separated out into two items. Councillor Marino agreed that this item should become Item 5.

Councillor Heydon asked, with the increased uptake in the use of electric powered vehicles, had there been any consideration of what impact this might have on air quality emissions.

Sean Murphy replied that there were different pollutants associated with vehicles and he anticipated that over time, as electric vehicles become more prevalent, then emissions would start to fall in some areas. In particular, he expected the pollutants that were associated with the burning of fossil fuels to fall significantly over time.

Councillor Bridgman raised that there was only an update provided for one of the three matters arising and that it had been made clear at previous meetings that the Committee expected to see something in the update column. He also raised that they were shown with the meeting date of the 13th June 2022 rather than the date of the previous meeting.

5 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

6 Notice of Public Speaking and Questions

No public questions were received.

7 Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was noted.

8 Priorities Update - Emerging Issues

Sean Murphy introduced the report (Agenda Item 9). He reminded Members that in June 2021 the Committee considered the Strategic Assessment of priorities for 2021 to 2023. The current document set out the changes made since the initial Strategic Assessment, as well as setting out some of the emerging issues which the Committee might wish to be considered. It included a draft set of proposals in relation to the performance data for 2022/2023.

Councillor Marino stated that Appendix B, which had been marked as 'to follow' on the agenda, had already been circulated to Members on the 10th June.

Councillor Porter asked, in relation to section 7.1, whether enforcement checks would also be taken for online purchases.

Sean Murphy confirmed that online vendors would also be included in the enforcement programme.

Councillor Bridgman asked Sean Murphy to expand on the work being undertaken around making information publicly available, such as food hygiene ratings.

Sean Murphy replied that the food hygiene information for the scheme was entered into a national database which was issued by the Food Standards Agency. However, there was

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also something that could be looked at locally in relation to food promotion, including recognising those businesses that had high ratings, as well as supporting those with low ratings to improve. Officers were exploring the information which could be made more readily available to the public as part of the Communications and Engagement Plan.

Moira Fraser raised that some local news outlets, such as Bracknell News, did publish the data from the Food Standards Agency and the PPP was aiming to be more proactive in putting out its own publicity around the data.

RESOLVED that:

- **The developing issues set out in this report had been reviewed.**
- **The Strategic Assessment and Service Priorities for 2021/23 be amended to reflect these developments.**
- **Authority be granted to the Public Protection Manager to agree the performance framework for the forthcoming year, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee.**

9 PPP Communications and Engagement Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25

Sean Murphy introduced the report (Agenda Item 10). He stated that the PPP used the National Intelligence Model, which was built around the three aspects of prevention, intelligence and enforcement. The prevention and intelligence aspects relied on good communications to get information to business and communities to help prevent them becoming victims of harm and to gather intelligence on issues. In relation to enforcement, highlighting action could bring value as acting as a deterrent in raising awareness of the issue at hand.

The paper before the Committee was an update to the existing Plan which had been revised in light of the revised partnership arrangements. The report outlined technological advances and procedural changes that could be used to enhance communication and engagement, and sought to ensure that the current plan reflected the agreed priorities for the PPP.

Moira Fraser also provided an update on some of the engagement work that had been done recently by the team, including with residents. Sean Murphy added that the last few years had proved challenging for engagement due to Covid restrictions. However, there was a comprehensive programme of engagements and events planned with the public and traders.

Councillor Bridgman welcomed the report. He noted that West Berkshire had a corporate communications plan and asked whether the PPP Plan tied into the Local Authorities' communications plans.

Sean Murphy confirmed that they did work with the local communications teams and had a set of protocols and agreements as to how they undertook certain actions. A particular example was local enforcement activity which was often publicised through the local communications teams. He would ensure that this updated strategy was shared with those teams following this meeting.

The importance of having a well worked out communications strategy was noted as was the case that the PPP had done well in achieving this over the past two years. Communications needed to be maintained with all elected Members to ensure that they were well versed in the work that the PPP was doing so that they could speak with confidence on it.

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Sean Murphy agreed with this point and added that a further benefit of working closely with elected Members was that they could provide very good insights into some of the local issues which the PPP was responsible for dealing with.

RESOLVED that:

- **The Communications and Engagement Plan for 2022-2024 be approved.**

10 **Public Protection Partnership Service Update and Q4 Outturn for 2021/22**

Sean Murphy introduced the report (Agenda Item 11) which updated the Committee on the work of the Service in Quarter Four and provided the year end performance return. Mr Murphy stated that it was a fundamental role of the Committee to oversee the performance of the PPP, in addition to setting the priorities of the PPP.

The Partnership finished the last financial year with an underspend of £220,000 and it was for the Committee to decide if this underspend should be carried forward. It was the recommendation of the PPP to carry it forward so the backlog of work could be cleared, particularly in relation to food hygiene inspections. It was noted that a proportion of the underspend (34%) would be transferred to Wokingham Borough Council.

It was queried whether a proportion of the inspections that had been missed would be covered by this year's inspections and therefore did not need to be inspected twice, or was it the case that the underspend needed to be carried forward to cover a backlog of inspections? The potential impact on safety if the underspend was not carried forward was also queried.

Sean Murphy replied that it was correct that inspections were carried out against a risk profile and that some of those inspections would have been missed indefinitely or were no longer required. He added that there was a backlog of inspections that still needed to happen and this work was currently being supported by agency staff. If the underspend was not carried forward then it would be necessary to reprofile activity in some areas.

Councillor Bridgman commented on the case of a fly tipper in Bracknell who was fined £325 and queried if this was a sufficient deterrent.

He sought clarity on the recommendation in relation to carrying forward the underspend and asked if the word 'mitigating' should not be changed to 'promoting'. Sean Murphy confirmed that this would be more appropriate.

Councillor Bridgman therefore proposed an amendment to the resolution to change the word 'mitigating' to 'promoting'. Councillor Porter seconded the proposal and the amendment was passed unanimously.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- **Noted the 2021/22 Q4 data for the Public Protection Service.**
- **Noted the update on service delivery.**
- **Noted the role the Public Protection Service was playing across the Councils with respect to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.**
- **Agreed that the Bracknell / West Berkshire under-spend be carried forward to the 2022/23 financial year with a view to promoting service recovery.**

11 **Terms of Reference**

Councillor Marino introduced the Terms of Reference stating that they had been revised following the withdrawal of Wokingham from the Partnership and in line with best practice.

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Councillor Bridgman noted that the current format of the Terms of Reference would be revised prior to insertion into West Berkshire Council's Constitution.

Councillor Bridgman raised that now the Committee was four Members, whether the quorum for the meeting should be reduced to two Executive Members and asked if officers could reflect on this after the meeting.

Councillor Marino requested that officers also consider whether it would be appropriate to increase the Committee's membership which would allow the quorum to remain unchanged.

12 Any other items the Chairman considers to be urgent

None raised.

(The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and closed at 7.43pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature