
Public Protection Partnership Service Update and Q4 Outturn for 2022/2023

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	12 June 2023
Chair of Committee:	To be appointed at the meeting
Date JMB agreed report:	22 May 2023
Report Author:	Sean Murphy
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC4194

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the work of the Service in Q4 and to report the end of year performance outturn.
- 1.2 To seek authority to carry forward the revenue under-spend from 2022/223.

2. Recommendations

The Committee:

- 1.1 **NOTES** the 2022/23 Q4 data for the Public Protection Service.
- 1.2 **NOTES** the update on service delivery.
- 1.3 **AGREES** that the Bracknell Forest/ West Berkshire under-spend of £148k be carried forward to the 2023/24 financial year.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>The 2022/23 budget for the Public Protection Partnership was agreed at the September 2021 JPPC meeting.</p> <p>Throughout 2022/23 the Service continued to receive additional grant funding arising from the Homes for Ukraine Scheme as well as support for larger investigations. This income alongside other grants and a rebate on pension contributions contributed to the underspend set out at 1.10 below.</p> <p>There is now a clearly identified long term structural loss of licensing income in the order of £100K per annum from the 2019 base. Had it not been for the carry forward, vacancies and the additional grant funding the outturn would have been an overspend. Addressing the licensing income shortfall has been identified as a priority for 2023/24 in the Service Plan which was agreed at the January 2023 JPPC meeting.</p>

	<p>The base revenue budget for 2023/24 (agreed at the October 2022 JPPC meeting) stands at £3.3M with a projected licensing income of £600K along with other income totalling around £300K.</p> <p>In addition the service secured significant grant funding including £90K – Homes for Ukraine, £270K investigations, £129K Defra Air Quality, approx. £40K new duties and significant public health and community safety funding.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There are no direct personnel implications arising from this paper other than to note that there are still a number of vacancies at all levels of the service at year end.</p> <p>A great deal of work is going on to re-balance the service through the delivery of a workforce strategy focussed on a ‘grow our own’ ethos by investing in apprenticeships, post graduate professional qualifications and post-entry training for both new and existing officers. This workforce strategy is underpinned by the Training and Development Plan.</p> <p>A major challenge is that vacancies are not evenly spread across the service with areas such as licensing, private sector housing and investigations facing challenges whilst agency costs become increasingly prohibitive.</p> <p>Recently we have had some success with recruitment but the overall landscape remains challenging and the outlook is not positive. The way through will be our commitment to Apprenticeships and Training.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Inter-Authority Agreement charges the Joint Public Protection Committee with the responsibility to oversee service delivery and performance including financial performance. This report addresses this responsibility.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>We will continue to manage risk in line with the prevailing situation and corporate policies. The service maintains both a strategic and operational risk register.</p> <p>The strategic risk register is regularly scrutinised by the Joint Management Board (JMB) which meets fortnightly. The JMB considers the red risk action plans at these meetings</p> <p>The operational risk register is routinely monitored by the Principal Policy Officer Group with concerns being escalated to the Joint Management Team.</p> <p>Successful recruitment, and in particular those to permanent professionally qualified posts remains the greatest risk across</p>

	<p>PPP. Another significant risk is the ongoing challenges of implementing the new cloud based single IT system.</p> <p>Finally, as set out in the finance section the loss of income particularly from licensing is also a key risk to the Service.</p>			
Property:	There are no direct property implications arising from this report.			
Policy:	<p>There are no direct policy implications arising from this paper. It should be noted that the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) places a responsibility on the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) to determine service policies and priorities and also to maintain oversight of performance. This report addresses that requirement by setting out the current performance levels and the approach to ongoing service recovery.</p> <p>The revised service priorities were agreed at the March 2023 JPPC meeting. The Delivery Plan 2023 to 2025 will be agreed at the December 2023 JPPC meeting which will assist with monitoring progress against the priorities whilst providing context about how the priorities are being delivered on a day to day basis.</p>			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		✓		No implications
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		✓		No implications
Environmental Impact:	✓			There continues to be an unquantifiable environmental impact from the new service arrangements as travel has been significantly reduced. Longer term it is anticipated that this

			impact will be maintained as new ways of working are embedded in service delivery.
Health Impact:	✓		The proposals create no direct health impacts on staff. They do however set out community based health protection measures and initiatives.
ICT or Digital Services Impact:	✓		<p>The use of ICT on service delivery has been transformational. Telephone conferencing, MS Teams and Zoom are all embedded in the day to day running of the service.</p> <p>The JPPC will continue to meet in accordance with the decisions made by West Berkshire Council, as the host authority, about meeting arrangements. The Licensing Committees will be conducted under the meeting arrangements of their individual authorities.</p>
PPP Priorities :	✓		<p>This information sets out how the Service has maximised the use of resources to deliver against the JPPC priorities which were agreed at the March 2023 JPPC meeting and are set out below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alcohol and Tobacco Harm Reduction 2. Animal Welfare 3. Cost of Living 4. Environmental Protection 5. Food Safety and Standards 6. Health and Safety Enforcement 7. Housing Standards in the Private Rental Sector 8. Impact of Nuisance on Residents and Communities 9. Improved Air Quality 10. Licensing 11. Nutrition and Childhood Obesity 12. Service Improvement 13. Tackling Fraud 14. Unsafe Consumer Goods
Data Impact:		✓	None

Consultation and Engagement:	<p>There is regular engagement with staff as well as senior officer and Member briefings in each of the authorities that form the PPP. Induction training for new Licensing Committee Members will take place at the start of the new Municipal Year. Member Development sessions for all Members on the work of the Public Protection Partnership will take place throughout the year.</p> <p>Regular staff briefings and two whole team away days were conducted in 2022/23. The next whole team away day which will be focussing on safeguarding will take place in September 2023.</p> <p>The team have been engaged in a number of engagement events throughout the year including supporting Water Safety Partnership events in West Berkshire and Bracknell, landlord forums, attendance at school careers events, Thatcham Community Larder, presentations to schools particularly around vaping, participation in the Young Health Champions conference and partaking in violence against women/ask Angela joint partnership work with Thames Valley Police/ Community Safety Team /street pastors.</p> <p>Regular meetings also take place with the taxi trade in both authorities.</p>
Other Options Considered:	<p>None. It is a requirement of the IAA to report on the performance of the service.</p>

Executive Summary

- 1.4 The Committee is mandated by the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) to keep under review the Performance of the Public Protection Service. Throughout the financial year the Committee has received updates on aspects of performance and any emerging issues and priorities.
- 1.5 This report sets out the Quarter 4 (January 2023 to March 2023) and year end data including the financial outturn. Under the terms of the IAA any underspend can be carried forward. The Committee is asked to consider a proposal to carry forward the 2022/23 under-spend of £148k.
- 1.6 This report shows progress against key strategic areas of the business; Finance, HR, ICT, Property, Legal and Risk. The Quarter 4 and Year End performance data can be found at Appendix A to this report.

Finances and Resources

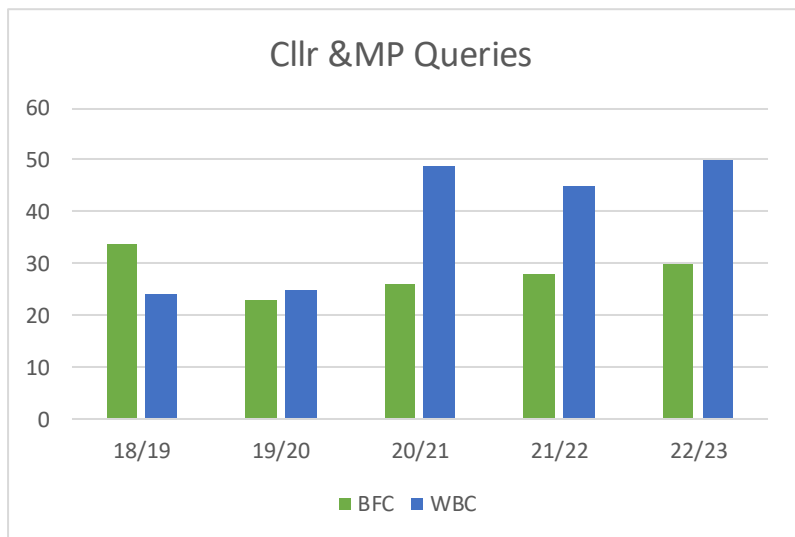
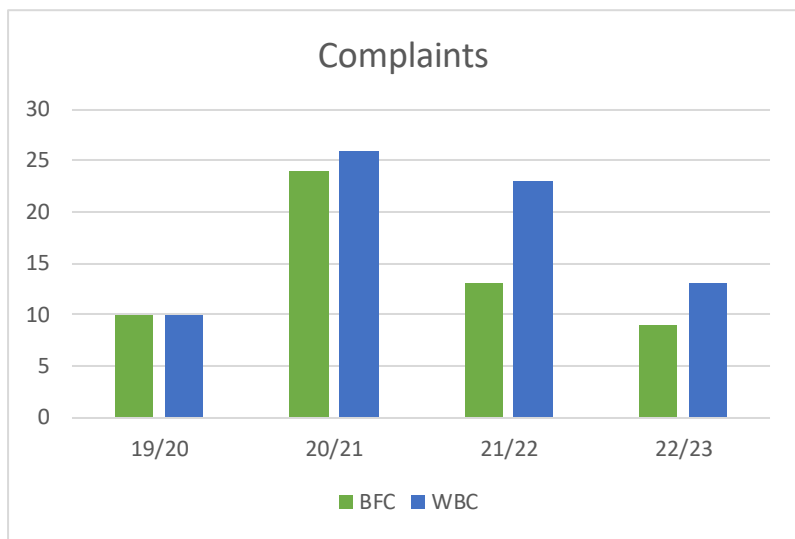
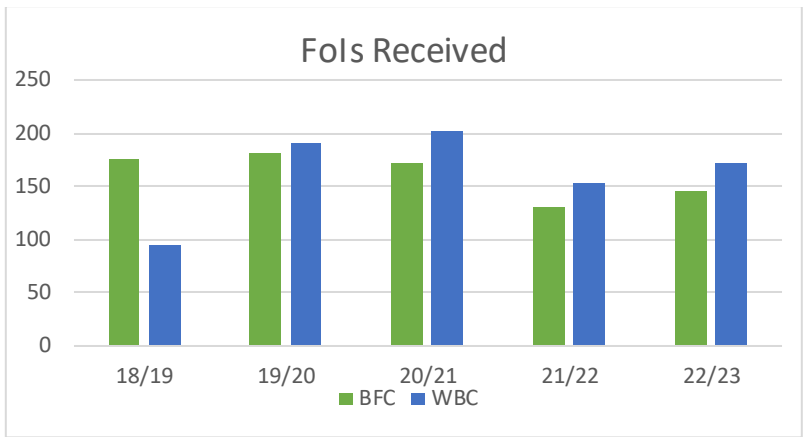
- 1.7 At the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) meeting in September 2018 it was resolved that only two of the original Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in the Inter Authority agreement would be retained. The first being 'Effective budget management and use of resources'. By using Project Management Methodology and the National Intelligence Model the Tactical Tasking Group and Joint Management Board have the ability to scrutinise resources to ensure the delivery is in the highest priority areas.

- 1.8 In terms of income during 2022/23 the Service secured in the order of £90K of grant funding for Homes for Ukraine work. This included Accommodation Checks and Welfare Checks and a contribution for the Public Protection Manager who oversaw the scheme for the first 12 months. Other grant funding included the Defra Air Quality project, and grants for level 2 and level 3 criminal investigations, database clear up, public health etc.
- 1.9 As of the 31 March 2023 the Service had an under-spend of £148K which is largely due to injections of grant funding to support investigations and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and a pension rebate.
- 1.10 A summary of the performance indicators is set out in the table below:

Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2022/23 Outturn
Revenue Budget (over/under) Target: 1%	(£100k)	(£100k)	(£80k)	(£148k)	(£148k) (4%)
Income (over/under) Target 3%	-	-£170k	-£150k	-£98k	-£98k 10.8%

Customer and Business Satisfaction Rates

- 1.11 The second KPI that was retained following discussions at the September 2018 meeting was that the PPP was required to maintain high levels of customer and business satisfaction. The Service has been looking at a number of ways to improve data capture on customer satisfaction for businesses and residents interacting with the service. All paperwork issued by the service now comes with a QR code that links to a short on-line survey.
- 1.12 During Q4 84.5% of respondents to these surveys described the service received as 'excellent' or 'good' and 15.5% as fair. There were no negative ratings. The year-end position is that 80% of users are satisfied with the Public Protection Partnership which exceeds the 75% target.
- 1.13 During Q4 the team dealt with a total of 100 Freedom of Information requests which took over 64 hours to process. The team also processed 22 queries from councillors, and the local MPs. Eight service complaints were received.
- 1.14 Comparator Data for the Past Years is set out in the graphs below:



Human Resources:

1.15 One of the key transformational challenges for the service in 2023/24 will be balancing the budget while delivering on an effective workforce strategy. The recruitment of qualified and experienced officers is problematic and likely to get worse and the use of agency staff is unsustainable in the context of the budgetary constraints.

- 1.16 The management team are therefore in the process of reviewing the service to create a structure that will deliver for the residents of all partner authorities for the next four years. A great deal of work is being undertaken to re-balance the service through the delivery of a workforce strategy focussed on a 'grow our own' ethos where we are investing in apprenticeships, post graduate professional qualifications and post-entry training for both new and existing officers.
- 1.17 A major challenge is that vacancies are not evenly spread across the service with areas such as licensing, private sector housing and investigations facing severe difficulties and high agency costs. However, in the last few weeks we have successfully recruited a Licensing Officer, 2 x Investigators, a two year contracted Lead Officer – Community Safety and Public Health and a Graduate Environmental Health Officer for the Housing Team. We are currently seeking to recruit a further Licensing Officer and an Environmental Crime Enforcement Officer.
- 1.18 We are also pleased to report that we have now successfully recruited to all four of the Trainee Regulatory Compliance Officer Posts within the service to support the 'grown our own' approach. All four employees are now in post and enrolled on the Level 4 Regulatory Compliance Officer courses funded through the Apprenticeship Levy.
- 1.19 In addition two Officers have started the Level 6 Apprenticeship in Trading Standards and another officer will be starting the Level 6 Apprenticeship in Environment Health in September 2023. We are also working towards having two officers enrol on professional Environmental Health qualifications. A number of Officers are also enrolled on leadership apprenticeships / courses.
- 1.20 The key staff training updates in Q4 are:
- Two officers from Environment Health completed and passed the three day Petroleum Licensing training course which will mean they will be able to provide support in 2023/24 and beyond to colleagues in Trading Standards . In future inspections for Petroleum Licensing and Pollution Prevention and Control for petrol vapour recovery for the same premises will be able to be carried out by one officer which will save resource.
 - Two Officers (including one of the apprentices) completed the Professional Licensing Practitioner's Qualification.
 - The Chartered Management Degree Foundation Course has also been completed by one of our Officers.
 - One Officer Completed a Level 4 Apprenticeship in Intelligence Analysis.

ICT

- 1.21 Officers are continuing to meet with the contractor regularly to resolve outstanding issues and they are allocating appropriate resources to resolve issues until we are satisfied. It is recognised that this process has taken longer than originally envisaged. We are also working with both West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest Councils
- 1.22 on how we preserve legacy data that we need that has not been transferred.
- 1.23 The Wokingham Trading Standards Data has now also been transferred to the new single system.
- 1.24 We are also participating in the Windows365 roll out at West Berkshire.

Property

The key property highlights are as follows:

- 1.25 Both Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire Councils have implemented arrangements built around a model of hybrid working. The 'home worker' hybrid status extends to all staff regardless of which building they are based in.
- 1.26 Hybrid working is proving effective. Staff are required to be in the office an average of two days per week. This will be monitored as it is seen as desirable that staff do work together on a regular basis.
- 1.27 Regardless of where staff are based accessible local delivery will always remain a key focus in-line with the partner Councils requirements.

Risk Management

- 1.28 The Committee is asked to note that the service maintains both a strategic and operational risk register. The strategic risk register is regularly scrutinised by the Joint Management Board (JMB) which meets fortnightly. The JMB considers the red risk action plans at these meetings.
- 1.29 The operational risk register is routinely monitored by the Principal Policy Officer Group (who meet fortnightly) with concerns being escalated to the Joint Management Team.
- 1.30 The key risks at this time are:
 - The inability to recruit and retain professional staff;
 - Loss of income;
 - The failure to implement the new single IT system effectively.

Operational Delivery – Measures of Volume

- 1.31 The key measures of volume data is set out in Appendix A to this report and the key highlights in terms of team activity is set out below.

Communication and Engagement

- 1.32 Since the last report to Committee:
 - Officers have dealt with 17 press enquiries and have issued six press releases, published 28 articles on the website and conducted five radio interviews.
 - We are continuing to populate a dedicated page on the PPP website for [resources for parishes](#), this includes useful links for residents and businesses as well as posters for them to display based on our services and how and when to contact us (see the example in Appendix E). We are also committed to working closely with the parishes on how best to disseminate information to them on current topics.
 - Q4 press releases included:

[Drivers Fined for Breach of Weight Restrictions](#)
[Microchipping of Cats Becomes Compulsory](#)

Illegal Vapes Seized

- In total there were sixteen articles over Q4 in which the Public Protection Partnership was mentioned in external news stories, including in some national press.
- The Communication Officer in PPP continues to work closely with West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest Communication Teams and liaises with them on a regular basis regarding our campaigns. We also share our press releases for their distribution, as well as both continuing to share relevant posts on each other's social media platforms.
- The Communication's Officer instigated and developed a three month vaping education campaign alongside other officers including Licensing and Trading Standards colleagues. The campaign included social media posts, BBC Radio Berkshire interviews, press releases, writing to all known retailers selling vapes and vape related products, visits to retailers, visits to schools, hard copy posters for schools and retailers and joint visits with Thames Valley Police and Trading Standards officers checking for under age sales and illegal vaping products.

Target	2021/22 Outturn	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2022/23 Outturn
Facebook – No of New Followers *		53	48	90	74	2246 followers
Facebook – No of Posts	464	89	73	98	98	358
Twitter – No of New Followers	67	7	11	4	7	384 followers
Twitter – No of Tweets	451	65	46	95	105	311
Website – No of Visits	85,293	30,887	23,540	16,942	17,503	88,872
Website – No of News Articles	142	29	15	38	28	110

1.33 It is recognised that the number of posts and articles generated by the service is lower than in the previous year. This is for a number of reasons:

- There were still a number of Coronavirus and public health posts being communicated out in 2021/22, which saw a peak in activity and messages that needed to be relayed.
- Officers were dealing with the backlog caused by the pandemic which had meant a temporary halt to the Communications Group. This was recently reinstated and now meets at least once a month to identify how the work of the various teams can be promoted. The impact of this group can already been seen in the increase in activity during March despite the onset of the pre-election period during this quarter.
- Focus on signposting for self-referral. The number of visits to the website has increased by around 3,500 which may be as a result of the improvements to the pages throughout the year to improve the customer journey and continued improvement in signposting and self-service.

1.34 During Q4 there were a number of face to face engagement events that the team participated in:

- The Service attended the Hungerford Town Council Annual meeting where we were able to talk face to face to residents about the work the service undertakes.
- Officers attended school careers events at Trinity and Theale Green Schools where they promoted the work of the partnership and provided information on apprenticeship opportunities within the Service as well as the wider Council.
- Taxi Trade Liaison Group meeting with the trade in West Berkshire was held in January 2023.
- The Communications Officer attended a number of meetings in Q4 with regards to the Water Safety Partnership (WSP). The officer is now taking the lead on centralising the communications for the whole group and liaising with the other agencies involved to develop a strategic communication plan for WSP messages. The officer has also instigated, and continues to populate, a centralised resource page for the WSP on the PPP website. The PPP will be supporting a number of events on behalf of the WSP over the summer months.
- During Q4 Officers provided presentations at four schools-St Bartholomews, I College, Willink and Reading Girls school about vaping.
- Officers provided training and resources to a further three football teams under the [smokefree sidelines](#) project.
- Officers participated in a task and finish group for both the schools vaping policy document and the South East Regional E Cigarette Position Statement-both which were then consulted on.
- Officers took part in the Bracknell Forest Obesity Agenda project and provided data on food premises and types of food business in the Bracknell Forest areas by parish.
- In February the Team provided vape training to school nurses and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PHSE) staff in conjunction with the National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT) and alcohol action training with The Alcohol Education Trust.
- In March staff took part in the Young Health Champions conference, providing alcohol and vaping information on health harms. They also attended the Berkshire West Tobacco Control Alliance on the 21st March, when 2023-24 projects were discussed and agreed to by partners.

1.35 PPP continue to run the Community Larder in Thatcham every Wednesday afternoon and now have over 100 members of the larder and nine regular volunteers. They have now started a craft group running from the larder this year, in addition to a book swap, chair exercise class and baby items provision. This is an opportunity to provide local residents with advice.

1.36 Looking ahead to the start of 2023/24 a schedule has been developed of existing summer events (fetes etc.) across Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire that will be attended by PPP Officers. We will promote and signpost the work of the PPP and WSP safety messages at these events. We are also working on an Animal Warden Summer event, offering free microchipping and dog welfare advice. The annual electric blanket testing work undertaken in partnership with Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue will take place at the end of summer 2023 / early autumn.

1.37 Extending our community based delivery of the service is a priority for PPP going forward.

Community and Trading Standards (including Customer Services)

1.38 During Q4 the Team has been very busy and some of the highlights are set out below.

- The team have taken on two new doorstep crime investigations and made another seizure of non-complaint vapes from a retail outlet which is now also being investigated. The Trading Standards team have a significant number of ongoing investigations including counterfeiting, illegal vapes, doorstep crime, unsafe firework storage and enviro-crime
- The scams team continues to work to deliver a number of scams awareness events across the districts to vulnerable groups, fit call-blockers and challenge banks under the banking protocol to effect refunds for vulnerable consumers. One recent referral from Thames Valley Police identified a scams victim who is also had a hoarding disorder so officers from across Community and TS are working together to support the victim in all aspects.
- Two additional No Cold Calling Zone (NCCZ) have been introduced in efforts to prevent unwanted door step calls. (Gadd Close Wokingham (6 February) and Amber Close Wokingham (27 March)).
- One officer has set up a very successful home authority (HA) relationship with a local company who assist mainly vulnerable consumers to recover their money from traders who have installed spray foam insulation, solar panels and anything else high risk. They do this on a no win no fee basis. This allows for more practical information sharing which has been particularly useful. They have been encouraging all of the people who report problems to them to also log it with our partners in Citizen's Advice so that Trading Standards are aware of the consumer and the trader. Recently the director called to say he was very concerned about a vulnerable consumer who had rogue traders in his home at that very moment. The PPP officer then contacted Bath Trading Standards colleagues who immediately visited the consumers address with police officers and took the owner of the business away in handcuffs. Bath Trading Standards are now going to investigate the company who removed the foam and then reinstalled it at a cost of £12,000.
- Duty rota work continues as business as usual, whereby officers from CTS are assessing and responding to daily complaints reported to the team. Two unusual Trading Standards related cases of note saw a complaint about an illegal dog fertility clinic as well as one of the largest UK's suppliers of hedge trimmers seeking advice from the PPP on the interpretation of the relevant legislation on whether their new UK plugs will meet UK safety standards.
- On the matter of hedges, environmental enforcement officers had issued a high hedge notice on the owner of a high hedge that was causing a significant detriment to their neighbour by restricting natural light to their property. The compliance period ended on the 30th January 2023, and despite multiple efforts to engage with the high hedge owner to reduce the height, the service has had

to resort to carrying out works in default and is expecting the work to be completed in May.

- The Support with Confidence Scheme that the service manages for West Berkshire and Wokingham Adult Social Care goes from strength to strength. There are now 71 accredited care providers and 10 further at application stage. More about the scheme can be found here: [swc-client-leaflet-a5_20.pdf \(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk\)](https://www.publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/swc-client-leaflet-a5_20.pdf)
- Another case of note within the Community Team involved a historic recurring complaint regarding rats and bird noise from a property. A Noise Abatement Notice was issued to require the owner to abate the noise nuisance from ducks and a Prevention of Damage by Pests Acts was also issued which required the property owners to clear and treat the back garden. The owners have now cleared the garden themselves and relocated all of the ducks. The Council undertook the pest control as works in default and recharged the costs back to the source resident. The neighbours are now able to sleep better and do not have the risks of pests entering their property.
- From March 2022 to 31st April 2023 the service managed the Homes for Ukraine Scheme for West Berkshire providing assistance to 500 guests and over 200 hosts. In Q4 we organised and delivered an event to mark the anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine as well as a thank-you event for hosts. This is in addition to the housing and welfare checks set out below.
- From October 2022 to 31st March 2023 the Service hosted the West Berkshire Cost of Living hub providing advice to all residents as well providing tailored support for 703 residents and families in critical need of support. This (like the Homes for Ukraine scheme) also involved Chairing the delivery group and co-ordinating joint working with statutory and voluntary sector partners.

Upcoming projects:

- Operation Willow is underway and is designed to address illegal landlord activities relating to tenant fees and charges. A business advice email is being prepared to be sent to lettings and estate agents with non-compliant websites, such as those not indicating which redress scheme they belong to, not displaying tenant's fees or a client money protection certificate. Enforcement visits will follow in the coming months to those who persist in not complying.
- Operation Tanoak. The team are preparing a list of premises to visit in the next quarter to ensure compliance with the Tobacco and related Products Regulations as we have seen a surge in businesses selling vaping products which do not comply with UK legislation.

1.39 The new Botulinum Toxin and Cosmetic Fillers (Children) Act 2021 came into effect so the team are putting together a plan of how we can advise local businesses to ensure they comply with the new requirements.

1.40 The Underage Sales test purchasing programme has now been finalised, and will focus on the sale of alcohol and vapes to underage persons. This work will also be extended to include fireworks in October and November.

Commercial (Food Safety and Health and Safety)

1.41 Some examples of activity undertaken during Quarter 4 included:

- A convenience store was visited and a severely overcrowded warehouse area was found and with evidence of mouse activity. The Food Business Operator co-operated fully with intervention. The warehouse area was completely cleared overnight and thoroughly cleaned. New shelving was installed to provide off the ground food storage making for easier cleaning and checking for pests. The FBO arranged a pest control contract which is now in place and premises left in good condition.
- Improvement Notices for Food Hygiene and Health and Safety were served at a different convenience store. Packaged food was being stored outside exposed to weather, dirt and pests. Lighting was being supplied by make shift electrical wiring and extension leads. Both notices were complied with.
- A Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Notice was served on business in possession of a product of animal origin that had not gone through the required import checks at the Border Control Point. The notice required the product to be exported before it could be allowed back into the UK. The notice was complied with.
- A second hand store was found not to have any documented electrical installation checks of their hard wired electrical system. The business has co-operated fully with the intervention from officers and have appointed a contractor to provide an electrical installation condition report.
- A Health & Safety Improvement Notice was served on a Club requiring them to take action to prevent errant golf balls landing on an adjacent residential property. The Notice was appealed by the Golf Club. The Notice was defended and the appeal was withdrawn at the same time that the Club erected substantial ball stop netting. This removed the need to go before a Tribunal
- A recent Voluntary Closure of a food premise. A routine inspection was carried out in early March 2023. The standard of cleanliness was very poor in the kitchen. This was brought to the attention of the owners and they agreed to voluntarily close the kitchen with immediate effect. The business was permitted to open the following day after an extensive clean of the kitchen.
- A restaurant and associated takeaway premises, sharing the same kitchen and owned by the same person, simultaneously closed following an inspection by an officer from the PPP commercial team because of a spate of food hygiene contraventions including thick dirt and old food debris to floors, walls and fixed equipment such as walk in chillers and ovens and also to food preparation areas and utensils. In addition evidence of poor maintenance of equipment and facilities was noted. The premises were allowed to re-open a few days later after a scheduled revisit identified that critical improvements had taken place, such as the provision of hot water, an extensive structural clean up and the disinfection of surfaces and equipment

Licensing (Including Applications and Licensing Governance)

1.42 In addition to the business as usual activity the team has undertaken the following:

- violence against women/ask Angela joint partnership work with Thames Valley Police, Community Safety Team and the Street Pastors continues to develop as part of our safeguarding and safer streets priorities;
- continued attendance at Pubwatch meetings;
- lack of resource already identified has meant the team have been robust in prioritisation in the face of a high volume of service requests and issues raised;
- Joined the restart up of the Berkshire Licensing Liaison Group where joint working at major events was discussed and agreed to engage where possible- e.g. Ascot.
- Final meetings of each Licensing Committee in the Municipal Year took place.
- An appeal against a licence revocation was launched in the Magistrates Court but subsequently withdrawn.

1.43 The following licensing panel meetings have taken place in Quarter 4:

Type of Application	Premise	Outcome
Bracknell Forest		
Application to Renew a Street Trading Consent	B & B Plus Kebabs, Crowthorne Road North	granted a new 6-month Street Trading Consent, to run from the date when the currently closed layby pitch, from which the business traded, was re-opened and available to use.
West Berkshire		
None		

Private Sector Housing

1.44 In addition to business as usual activity the team has also undertaken the following work during Q4:

- The team have been very busy over the last few months dealing with service requests relating to private sector housing. In particular there has been a lot of focus in damp and mould where the widely reported tragic death of Awaab Ishak the toddler who died from mould inhalation. The team have provided lots of advice to landlords and residents and in some cases required works to be done.
- The team served a prohibition notice on an unlicensed HMO after discovering a range of issues that gave rise to safety concerns. This involved working with other agencies to re-house the eligible residents including one elderly couple.

- Over 2022/23 the team conducted 340 housing checks across Bracknell and West Berkshire to ensure the properties were suitable for hosting Ukraine guests and families.
- The team continues its inspection programme of prior approval commercial to residential conversions. Working with the fire service and building control we are seeking to ensure that relevant housing and fire safety standards have been complied with in the conversion process.
- Another area of focus for the team is suspected unlicensed HMO's. A list of properties to visit has been established and those visits are underway with a number of new applications being made. This work is ongoing and it is anticipated that many others will be brought within the licensing regime in due course or notices served.
- We are also dealing with a number of unlicensed caravan sites and again action will be taken as appropriate. We inspected 100% of caravan sites due for inspection in 2022/23.
- Finally we have instructed a Housing Condition Survey in West Berkshire which is currently being undertaken.

Environmental Quality

1.45 The team have continued to undertake work to protect the health and wellbeing of our residents through focused projects, planned inspection programmes and responding to complaints. Some key activity undertaken during Quarter 4 included:

- All Pollution Prevention and Control inspections for the year 2022/23 were completed. The new 'cloud based system' module has been set up.
- The West Berkshire Contaminated Land Strategy Review was finalised and agreed by JPPC at the March 2023 meeting and has now been published.
- Private Water Supply annual return to the Drinking Water Inspectorate for West Berkshire was submitted on 25th January ahead of the 31st January deadline and was approved.
- A review of the nuisance impact of a large event was carried out and reported on.
- The odour abatement notice served on a commercial premises was complied with by relocation.
- Event monitoring for summer 2023 preparations commenced including some new events at existing locations.
- DEFRA Air Quality Grant project work continued. The PM2.5 monitoring at schools near the Air Quality Management Areas was completed in Q4 with no exceedances of the new Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023. An update on this work is included in a separate report on this agenda.

- Behavioural Change anti idling work saw the signage installed in Q4 with a review of its effectiveness due in 2023/24 Q1. Education in schools will take place in 2023/24 Q1.

Joint Case Management Unit (CMU) and Acquisitive Crime

- 1.46 The unit continues to be busy working with PPP and partner authorities including Wokingham. Cases are now progressing through the Courts which has allowed some of the backlog of cases built up during the Covid 19 pandemic to be dealt with. Significant delays are still being seen with trials being listed in the Crown Courts which has further been impacted this year by strike action. The financial investigation team is extremely busy working on a number of level 2 and 3 cases for PPP and Reading Borough Council.
- 1.47 The Financial Investigation Unit are currently conducting thirteen money laundering / confiscation investigations under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. This team also works to support Reading Borough Council in financial investigations including trading standards and corporate fraud. Officers are authorised by the National Crime Agency as are the Supervising Officers (Joint Case Unit Manager and Public Protection Manager)
- 1.48 The Acquisitive Crime Investigation Team are conducting a significant number of high value fraud / unfair trading investigations, many with multiple suspects and multiple victims with losses running collectively into £M's. This team concentrates on level 2 and 3 investigations where there are victims across the region and beyond as well as in the PPP area. The team also supports other investigations being conducted as required.
- 1.49 The PPP workload of the CMU team and the financial investigators is currently as follows –
- PPP cases in the Court system – 29
 - PPP cases CMU are advising on at investigation stage – 11
 - Additional cases in the court system for partner authorities – 18

Summary of JPPC Activity during the 2022/23 Financial Year

- 1.50 The JPPC met four times during the 2022/23 financial year with meetings taking place in June 2022, October 2022, January 2023 and March 2023.
- 1.51 In addition to considering the quarterly performance reports, annual Air Quality Status submissions to DEFRA, considering the annual report of the Water Safety Partnership and signing off the revenue budget (including the proposed fees and charges) the Committee:
- Reviewed its priorities in June 2022 and March 2023 to reflect the end of the Covid-19 pandemic and discussions with Members about emerging issues.
 - Reviewed the Communications and Engagement Strategy;
 - Recommended updates to its Terms of Reference to West Berkshire's Full Council to approve;
 - Adopted the PPP Private Sector Housing Policy;

- Considered the Bracknell Forest Council's Contaminated Land Strategy and recommended that the Council's Executive adopt the Strategy which they did;
- Agreed the revised performance monitoring framework for the JPPC;
- Adopted the revised Workforce Strategy and Training and Development Plans;
- Agreed the annual Service Plan;
- Considered the outcome of the inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioners Office which focussed on the PPP's use of surveillance tools, such as CCTV;
- Agreed West Berkshire Council's revised Contaminated Land Strategy.

1.52 The following documents are proposed for review in 2023/24

Item	Renewal
Communication and Engagement Strategy 2023-2025	June 2023
Enforcement Approach to Sale of Age Restricted Products 2023-2025	October 2023
Delivery Plan 2023-2025	December 2023
Service Plan 2023-24	March 2024
Public Protection Partnership Priorities 2024/25 to 2026/27.	March 2024

Appendices

APPENDIX A – 2022/23 Measures of Volume Summary

APPENDIX B – Q4 Communication And Engagement Summary

APPENDIX C – Q4 Compliments

APPENDIX D – Comparison of licences issued in 2019 and 2023

APPENDIX E – Spring Parish Council Poster

Background Papers:

None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

Wards affected: All Wards

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