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# PPP Strategic Priorities 2024 - 2027

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<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Joint Public Protection Committee
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	7 October 2024
<b>Chair of Committee:</b>	Cllr Iskander Jefferies
<b>Date JMB agreed report:</b>	23 September 2024
<b>Report Author:</b>	Sean Murphy
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	JPPC4619

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## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the priority setting process.
- 1.2 To approve methodology for setting priorities and to identify key local priorities identified by Members.

## 2. Recommendations

The Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTES** the outcome of the priority setting discussions with partner councils.
- 2.2 **RESOLVES** that the MoRiLE (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement) methodology forms the basis of operational risk.
- 2.3 **RESOLVES** that those matters identified as priority areas for the councils set out at in paragraph 5.10 be weighted accordingly in risk / priority calculations.

## 3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	<p>The service provisions set out in the Strategy will be met from the base revenue budget or from specific grants.</p> <p>Where appropriate, grants such as support for public health related work, national and regional campaigns and support for activity associated with legislative changes or investigations will be sought and used to deliver some of the key work streams set out in this report.</p> <p>Working with other authorities as part of shared working arrangements to deliver efficiencies and effectiveness will also feature as a key priority.</p>
<b>Human Resource:</b>	<p>Re-prioritisation of the Service within the methodology proposed may see staff assigned to different work areas within the terms of their roles. Some roles are highly specialised limiting the opportunity for re-deployment to other areas. There will also be</p>

	<p>a requirement for any changes to drive changes through the Training and Development Plan to identify more staff in priority areas.</p> <p>Joint Management Board will consider the most effective structure to deliver against the priorities.</p>
<b>Legal:</b>	<p>The functions delegated to the Joint Public Protection Committee by the Councils have their basis in statute. In this respect many are statutory duties placed on the Councils. In some areas (such as food safety and standards, health and safety etc.) there is a high level of prescription about how elements of the Service are delivered.</p> <p>The Council's apply the Code for Crown Prosecutors in respect of all enforcement matters.</p>
<b>Risk Management:</b>	<p>Project Management Methodology will enable early identification of operational risks. The bi-weekly tactical tasking meetings are used to allocate resources to high-risk areas.</p> <p>The Service has a Strategic Risk Register which is considered by the Joint Management Board (JMB) on a monthly basis and the Operational Risk Register is discussed on a monthly basis at the Principal Officer's meeting.</p> <p>The Service is currently carrying a number of red risks at Strategic and Operational levels. These primarily track back to staffing levels. The Service is currently carrying 6FTE vacancies including the Strategic Manager for the Joint Case Management Unit and the Private Sector Housing Team Manager. Beyond this there are three more posts due to come vacant in the coming months including one senior Trading Standards Officer, one Environmental Health Officer and one Enforcement Officer. On top of the 6.7FTE deleted posts this is a significant risk to service delivery.</p> <p>Some mitigations are in place with some casual staff being employed but budget pressures have meant some posts have had to be held and others have not been recruited to despite attempts to do so.</p>
<b>Property:</b>	<p>No implications specifically arising from these proposals. The issue of accommodation and rationalisation of accommodation remains a priority for the Service. As Bracknell and West Berkshire move to a rationalised property strategy and have implemented new working styles the Service is focussed more on central delivery to drive efficiencies e.g. licensing applications, customer services etc.</p>

<b>Policy:</b>	It is a key responsibility of the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) as set out in the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) to set the strategic direction and priorities for the Service.			
	<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?		x		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	x			<p>One of the stated aims of the IAA is the protection of the environment and this aim has been re-affirmed as one of the local priority outcomes in the revised Assessment.</p> <p>Building Safer Communities, Improved Living Environment, Protection of the Environment, Promoting Animal Welfare, Safety in the Workplace and a Safer Food Chain should contribute to improvements to the local environment.</p>
<b>Health Impact:</b>	x			<p>One of the stated aims of the IAA is Protecting and Improving Health.</p> <p>Local priority outcomes include the reduction of harm in young people, improved living environment and protecting and informing consumers.</p>
<b>ICT or Digital Services Impact:</b>				The PPP's website and social media platforms will be used to promote the Service's Priorities.
<b>PPP Priorities:</b>				To be agreed if the report is adopted.

<b>Data Impact:</b>			<p>The Partnership is committed to its duty under the General Data Protection Regulation and other data protection laws and guidance provided by law or from the Information Commissioner.</p> <p>All personal data held by the Service will be handled in accordance with our <a href="#">Privacy Statement</a>.</p>
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>The report was considered by Corporate Board and Operations Board in West Berkshire and at CMT and the Executive Briefing in Bracknell Forest before being presented to the Joint Public Protection Committee.</p> <p>In addition an all Member event was held in early September in Bracknell Forest to discuss member priorities</p> <p>The Strategic Assessment has been shared with colleagues in Wokingham Borough via the Joint Management Board and internal Public Protection Managers at Wokingham have been briefed in full.</p>		
<b>Other Options Considered:</b>	None		

## 4. Background

- 4.1 At the meeting of the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) in June 2024 the Committee considered and approved the PPP Strategic Assessment for 2024/27. This document was an evidenced based assessment of demand consisting of reactive demand including service requests, licensing applications, intelligence reports etc, and proactive demand based in statute law such as food safety and standards inspections. The Assessment, which is an organic document will be updated in line with legislative changes and will be updated following the King Speech (see Appendix A). The latest version can be found here: [20240617-ppp-strategic-assessment-24-27.pdf](https://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/20240617-ppp-strategic-assessment-24-27.pdf) ([publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk](https://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk))
- 4.2 It was determined at the meeting of the Committee in June 2024 that the Service should undertake a consultation with partner authorities to identify those local priorities in order that adjustments could be made on a risk-based basis to identify those local priorities. This has now been done although considerations around budget are ongoing that could drive re-prioritisation as could staffing levels and vacancies. The Committee will be kept up to date through the regular quarterly service briefings.
- 4.3 The next stages will be to adjust the work programme in line with the identified priorities as well as to adjust the training and development plan and workforce strategy to ensure the right staff with the right training are in the right place to deliver. This may require re-profiling some vacancies to different roles and will almost certainly see an expansion of our 'grow our own' approach given the challenges of recruitment.

## 5. Operating Model

- 5.1 The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) is a shared service delivering Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards functions on behalf of two authorities (Partners), Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Council. It also has a shared service with Wokingham Borough Council for trading standards and related elements of the Service including case management, intelligence and financial investigations.
- 5.2 The Strategic Assessment considered by the Committee in 2024 set out all identified demands on the Service and included them under a range of strategic themes:
- Building Safer Communities
  - Improved Living Environment
  - Protecting Consumers from Fraud
  - Reducing Harm in Young People
  - Protection of the Environment
  - Protecting & Informing Consumers
  - Promoting Animal Welfare
  - Safety in the Workplace
- 5.3 The operating model for the Service is to be intelligence led. Through the effective use of intelligence from a variety of sources including Members, parish councils, businesses and residents and partner agencies officers then seek to protect the community with a range of preventative and enforcement activities as well as responding to emerging issues and demands.
- 5.4 This has allowed the Service to be both agile and responsive. Linked closely to this are the community engagement strategy, workforce strategy and training and development plan that ensure the Service is delivering the right activities through an appropriately trained and competent workforce.

### **Balancing Resources and Risk**

- 5.5 Very few council services (if any) are able to conduct every activity to a level which is desirable or to which the residents may wish to receive them. In the case of public protection residents receive many services that they may not have regular regard to including licensing activities, food safety and standards, air quality, contaminated land, planning or work around animal health and welfare. Whilst there is a degree of direct public engagement with the Service over these key work areas there are areas for which there is much higher demand such as domestic and commercial nuisance, pests, unfair trading, environmental crime etc. Nevertheless, all form part of a matrix of protections.
- 5.6 The Service has been well supported by the partner councils since its foundation. However, the gap between demand and resource has widened. Some of this arises from loss of capacity redeployed during Covid whilst other has arisen by new policy focus arising from government or locally. These include areas such as product safety, vaping products and sales, offensive weapon sales, changes in the Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) licensing regime and the requirements around animal licensing.

The Team also has occasional short-term projects such as the visits to funeral directors required by government.

5.7 In the context of resource constraints, the Service needs to prioritise activity based on risk. The model used by the Service in this respect is the Management of Risk in Law Enforcement Model (MoRiLE). More on MoRiLE can be found here: [www.college.police.uk](http://www.college.police.uk) This model takes account of three attributes as follows:

- **Harm:** Individual; Community; Public Expectation; Environmental; Financial; Organisational; Economic
- **Likelihood:** Frequency; volume
- **Organisational:** Capacity; capability

5.8 With respect to enforcement this model is very effective and would naturally take the Service in the direction of those areas of highest risk / impact e.g. doorstep crime, category 1 housing risks and health and safety breaches. There are areas of lower risk that nevertheless remain high on the priorities of communities including anti-social behaviour (ASB), nuisance and environmental crime. This has been demonstrated with the relatively high engagement with the consultation of the nuisance policy which appears elsewhere on this agenda. The model is capable of weighting these factors. In order to establish these community factors engagement of elected members has been critical.

5.9 At an operational level resource is managed through a Tactical Tasking Group process (TTG) that looks at priority jobs and resourcing need as well as cross-cutting issues. TTG meets fortnightly and urgent matters are tasked between meetings.

### **Engagement with the Councils**

5.10 Engagement sessions have taken place with officer / members in each authority to identify local priorities. There was much commonality with some local variation. In summary the priorities identified included:

**Private Sector Housing:** with focus on Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO), poor housing standards, unlicensed HMO's, damp and mould, registered providers and caravan site standards.

**Food Safety and Standards:** with focus on achieving the food safety and standards inspection programmes and delivering against any backlog of inspections.

**Protecting Consumers from Unfair Trading and Fraud:** with focus on high value and prevalent crime prevention and detection as well interventions to support victims using the cross-cutting safeguarding theme.

**Community Matters:** with the emphasis on ASB, domestic and commercial nuisance, licensing, dog fouling, pests related issues etc.

**Protection of Young People and Communities:** with emphasis on the sale of age restricted products such as alcohol, fireworks, knives and vapes etc.

**Environmental Crime (Bracknell Priority):** Including fly tipping, fly posting etc. *Note in West Berkshire this work is not undertaken by PPP.*

5.11 It proved more challenging to identify areas for disinvestment in order to focus on these priority areas. However, to do so the Service will need to move some resource between

functions and in areas such as food and housing there will be a need for some staff to undertake additional training. The PPP has a number of vacancies and a comprehensive apprenticeship programme these routes will also be used to target resource.

- 5.12 It was also agreed that that the Service should be driven by a risk-based approach such as MoRiLE including for the management of individual cases where demand is very high such as consumer related unfair trading and fraud. There were even questions about whether further investment in developing the existing intelligence function (1.5FTE) should be considered.
- 5.13 Further work will be undertaken with the Councils and the Committee to review priorities should new duties and new areas of policy focus dictate. These include those matters identified in the Kings Speech briefing as set out as Appendix A to this report.

## **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 The Service Management Team and Joint Management Board will now consider the Strategic Assessment in the context of the consultations that have taken place and will focus resource accordingly and build these findings into the MoRiLE profile for these priority areas. The vast majority would have scored highly in any case.

## **7. Concluding Observations**

- 7.1 The Service faces unprecedented demands. Finding the appropriate cross-over on the supply and demand curves is critical. This has to be risk based. Prevalence, impact, personal, environmental and societal risks all come into play. The Service is about protecting people, communities, economic development, public health and the environment. Good legislation appropriately applied is beneficial for people, communities, businesses and the environment.
- 7.2 In order to strike the right balance between demand and resource the Service needs to be intelligence led and manage risk appropriately. Members represent the communities they serve and are well placed to assist the Service in this process. The PPP will continue to keep under review our engagement with Members in order to work together to manage risk and address local needs and impacts. Officers will also seek ways to engage the town and parish councils in these processes.
- 7.3 The 'horizon scanning' elements of the assessment give some indication of known new duties down the line as does the briefings on the Kings Speech. Demands will constantly change, and unprecedented demands caused by once in a generation events such as animal or human disease outbreaks can have lasting effects.
- 7.4 Resourcing remains an issue as does recruitment. There are vacancies that cannot be filled. These factors also have to be managed but with our comprehensive workplace strategy the coming months and years should see many gaps filled.
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## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix A – Updates to the Strategic Assessment arising from the King's Speech and Legislative Changes

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## 9. Background Papers:

9.1 [Key policies and documents - PPP \(publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk\)](http://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)

### Subject to Call-In:

Yes:  No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

**Wards affected:** All Wards

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