

# 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

**FRIDAY 11 OCTOBER 2024**

### **COUNCIL CHAMBER COUNCIL OFFICES MARKET STREET NEWBURY**

**Present:** Iskandar Jefferies and Justin Pemberton

**Also Present:** Sean Murphy (Service Lead - Public Protection), Moira Fraser (Public Protection Partnership), Damian James (Bracknell Forest Council), Councillor Jeremy Cottam, Councillor Cherise Welch, Councillor Howard Woollaston and Stephen Chard (Democratic Services Manager)

#### **PART I**

##### **1 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

##### **2 Public Protection Priorities 2024-2027 (JPPC4619)**

The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 3) which provided an update on the priority setting process and which sought approval of the methodology for setting priorities.

The Committee approved the Strategic Assessment for 2024/27 at its meeting in June 2024. Discussions had since been held with Members, and priority areas had been carefully considered, alongside available resource and continuation of business as usual. Government priorities added to these considerations, as did priorities in the individual local authorities.

A scoring mechanism had been used to assess areas of risk in order to inform priority setting. The MoRiLE methodology was used (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement). The scoring was used to identify the level of harm, its likelihood and from there the capacity/capability to respond. The following priority areas were proposed, many of which were common across the Public Protection Partnership:

- Private Sector Housing
- Food Safety and Standards
- Protecting consumers from unfair trading and fraud
- Community matters
- Protection of young people and communities
- Environmental crime (Bracknell Forest priority)

Services not listed as a priority area were still subject to the MoRiLE methodology and this helped to identify the level of resource given to these areas of work.

Councillor Justin Pemberton supported the approach which had been outlined to Members. He noted that dog fouling was a matter of concern to residents and it remained

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a prevalent issue, he therefore queried the action being taken and whether more could be done to tackle the issue.

Sean Murphy (Service Lead – Public Protection) agreed this was a prevalent issue and many enquiries were received on the matter, but it did carry a relatively low risk. Awareness raising was conducted as was enforcement which included targeting problem areas. Work was also ongoing to encourage the emptying of dog waste bins with the organisations responsible for that function.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- The outcome of the priority setting process with partner Councils be noted.
- The MoRiLE methodology formed the basis of operational risk.
- Those matters identified as priority areas for the Councils (set out in paragraph 5.10 of the report) be weighted accordingly in risk/priority calculations.

### **3 Revenue Budget 2025/26 including Proposed Fees and Charges Schedule (JPPC4620)**

The Committee considered the report (Agenda Item 4) which set out the Public Protection Partnership's draft revenue budget for 2025/26, including discretionary fees and charges for 2025/26.

The report sought approval of the draft budget, and draft fees and charges schedule prior to submission to Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire Councils as part of their budget setting process in accordance with the Inter-Authority Agreement.

Agreement was also sought of the figure that would form the basis of the recharge to Wokingham Borough Council with respect to the services shared with Wokingham Borough Council under the shared service agreement effective on 1 April 2022.

Approval was also sought of the amendments to the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS).

The Committee's role with this report was to propose a budget to the individual Councils based on a percentage split. The proposed budget for 2025/26, including the percentage split, was outlined in the below table.

<b>Authority</b>	<b>% Split</b>	<b>Proposed Net Revenue Budget 2025/26</b>
Bracknell Forest	39.25%	£1,361,360
West Berkshire	60.75%	£2,107,080
Wokingham	-	£526,310
<b>Total Budget 2024/25</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£3,994,750</b>

A 3% uplift was proposed on discretionary fees for 2025/26, but this could be adjusted prior to the fees being set. However, statutory fees had not been increased since 2011 and were therefore well behind inflation.

It was clarified that the grant funding received from ARIS did not form part of the revenue budget. The appendix to the report proposed areas of use for this funding, which included victim support.

Councillor Iskandar Jefferies thanked officers for all their hard work in producing this report. Budgets continued to be under pressure, but officers were commended for maintaining the PPP's services despite the pressures being felt.

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Returning to the statutory fees, Sean Murphy explained that a significant financial gap had been identified in the absence of any inflationary rises since 2011. A Bank of England calculation tool had been used to identify this.

Councillor Justin Pemberton agreed that statutory fees were far behind where they should be and explained that Councillor Jeremy Cottam (Chairman of West Berkshire Council's Licensing Committee) would be bringing a Motion to a meeting of West Berkshire Council to seek agreement to lobby the Government on this matter.

Sean Murphy added that should licensing fees be increased to a similar level as the recent increases agreed for planning fees, then this could result in an increased income of £80-£100k.

Councillor Jefferies agreed it was important to seek to increase fees in line with inflation in future years.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- The draft revenue budget, including the fees and charges, had been considered.
- The contributions set out in column three of the table at 5.27 of the report be recommended to partner Councils to form the basis of the 2025/26 net revenue budget contributions.
- The pressures set out in columns four and five in the table at paragraph 5.27 be noted.
- The fees and charges set out in Appendix A be approved.
- The contribution request from Wokingham Borough Council be approved as set out in paragraph 5.27.
- The revised Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme be approved and that funds be allocated in accordance with this policy. It was noted that this funding did not form part of the revenue budget

## **4 PPP Nuisance Policy 2024-2027 (JPPC4451)**

The Committee considered the Nuisance Policy for 2024-2027 (Agenda Item 5). The purpose of the Policy was to set a framework that would help the PPP ensure the continuation of a consistent and transparent approach to both reactive and proactive work on nuisance issues.

The Policy would form part of the suite of key policies used by the PPP to deliver its services.

Members were asked to consider the consultation comments received on the draft policy and changes proposed as a result.

The Committee agreed, at its meeting in June 2024, to consult on the draft Policy. The consultation had taken place and Moira Fraser (Principal Officer – Policy & Governance) reported that 69 responses had been received to the consultation. The responses were outlined in Appendix C to the report and changes had been made to the Policy as a result of these. These changes included greater clarification on the actions that could be taken by the Service in response to noise complaints, nuisance areas that were considered as a private matter, and reference was included to anonymous complaints.

Councillor Iskandar Jefferies had found the report and the responses made to the consultation to be very interesting. He was pleased to note that all respondents to the consultation had been contacted and thanked officers for this very thorough piece of work.

Councillor Justin Pemberton added his thanks to the officers for their work in processing the consultation responses and in producing the report. There had been an increase in

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the consultation response and this showed the level of concern felt by residents over nuisance issues.

**RESOLVED that:**

- The responses received during the consultation and officers' comments on those responses had been considered.
- The Nuisance Policy 2024-2027 be approved.
- Authority would be delegated to the Service Lead – Public Protection, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, to make any minor amendments to the Policy once adopted.

*(The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 1.25pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**Date of Signature** .....