
Public Protection Partnership Service Update and Q1 Report for 2025/26

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	6 October 2025
Chair of Committee:	Councillor Tom McCann
Date JMB agreed report:	22 September 2025
Report Author:	Sean Murphy
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) in line with the operating model and business plan and provide an update setting out performance during the first quarter of 2025/26.

2. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Be **INFORMED** about the 2025/26 Q1 data for the Public Protection Service set out in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 Be **INFORMED** about the update on service delivery.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>At the end of Quarter 1 the Service is forecasting that it will come in on budget.</p> <p>Further detail can be found at Section 5 below.</p>
Human Resource:	<p>The current vacancy information and recruitment activity is set out within the body of the report. See Section 6.</p> <p>There is some very limited engagement of agency staff, but this is linked primarily to grant funded areas where there is not the resource to conduct the work. The only agency resource outside of grant funded work has been in the areas of case management (vacancy / long term absence cover) and food safety inspections.</p>
Legal:	<p>There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) charges the Joint Public Protection Committee with the responsibility to oversee service delivery and performance including financial performance. This report discharges that responsibility.</p>

	The governance arrangements with Wokingham Borough Council are managed through the Joint Management Board in accordance with the current agreement.			
Risk Management:	<p>JMB and the management team meet regularly to consider the risks for the delivery of the service.</p> <p>The current key risks relate to operational and management capacity due to the nature of vacancies across the service and the inability to recruit to critical posts including a strategic manager leading the case management unit and senior Trading Standards and Environmental Health posts.</p> <p>To mitigate this, the service is continuing the 'grow your own' approach primarily through the apprenticeship route.</p> <p>Due to the finite resource, management are taking a risk-based approach in all its activities ranging from routine interventions to criminal investigations. The service is also maintaining its approach as being intelligence led in dealing with reactive requests and prioritising of risk. This does create additional risk around the perceptions of the level of response which require management of those expectations.</p>			
Property:	None			
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 to maintain oversight of performance. This report addresses that requirement.</p> <p>The revised service priorities were approved at the October 2024 JPPC meeting. The Strategic Assessment was adopted at the June 2024 meeting.</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:		✓		
Health Impact:		✓		
ICT or Digital Services Impact:		✓		
PPP Priorities:				<p>The report will impact on the following PPP Priorities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building Safer Communities 2. Improved Living Environment 3. Protecting Consumers from Fraud 4. Reducing Harm in Young People 5. Protecting and Informing Consumers 6. Protection of the Environment 7. Promoting Animal Welfare 8. Safety in the Workplace 9. Safe and Healthy Food Chain <p>Business as Usual Activity is supported too.</p>
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. A whole team away day took place on the 05th March 2025 and further team briefing(s) took place on the 29 May 2025.</p>			
Other Options Considered:	<p>None. It is a requirement of the IAA to report on the performance of the service.</p>			

4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Joint Public Protection Committee is mandated by the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) to keep under review the performance and activity of the Public Protection Service including the financial performance and outputs of the service.
- 4.2 Throughout the year the Committee receives updates on aspects of performance and any emerging issues, achievements, and priorities. This report also sets out progress and risks in key strategic areas of the business i.e. HR, ICT, Property and Legal. The report also provides the Committee with the current financial position and highlights any pressures arising in-year.
- 4.3 The key outturn measures of volume and data for Quarter 1 (April to June) is set out in Appendix A to the report. The narrative in this report sets out the steps and

interventions that the service performs across all partner authority areas to protect both residents and businesses.

- 4.4 Officers reviewed the previous Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Measures of Volume (MoV), and these were considered and agreed by the Committee at the June 2025 meeting. This report therefore reflects the amended reporting structure.

5. Finance

- 5.1 As at the end of quarter 1 the service is predicting that it will come in on budget. There is a pressure of around £90K arising from a shortfall in income, pressure arising from a housing matter in Bracknell and significantly from additional kennelling costs. These are being offset by holding posts vacant and in the case of the housing matter through a charge against the property. The holding of posts will be done on a risk-based approach with focus on retaining capacity in line with the agreed priorities.

6. Human Resources

Recruitment

- 6.1 Since the June 2025 meeting the Service has successfully recruited to the following posts:
- Licensing Enforcement Officer
 - Casual Licensing Enforcement Officer
 - 2 Public Protection Community Officers
 - 2 Investigators
 - 2 Externally Funded Level 6 Trading Standards Apprentices
 - Case Officer
 - Trading Standards Enforcement Officer
- 6.2 In terms of recruitment, we are currently recruiting to these posts:
- Senior Trading Standards Officer
 - Senior Environmental Health Officer
 - Strategic Manager: Case Management Unit
 - 0.6 fte Licensing Applications Officer
- 6.3 The following posts are now vacant:
- 0.4 FTE Enforcement Officer – Trading Standards
 - 1.0 FTE Customer Delivery Lead Officer
 - 1.0 FTE Animal Warden

Training and Development

- 6.4 There are two team members undertaking their MSc's in Environmental Health. A further member of staff has applied to enter the MSc programme.
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- 6.5 The Environmental Health Graduate trainee is continuing to make good progress as is the Level 6 Environmental Health Apprentice. One of our Senior Trading Standards Officers is currently undertaking an ILM course through the apprenticeship programme. One of our Level 6 Trading Standards Apprentices are entering the final phase of their apprenticeship.
- 6.6 In-house training sessions on case file preparation for managers took place in May and in-house disclosure training took place on the 15th July and 16th September 2025. A whole team away day is due to take place on the 21st October 2025.
- 6.7 Regulation of Investigatory Powers training for relevant members of the team took place on the 09th September and training for affected Senior Managers will take place on the 15th October 2025.
- 6.8 One of our Enforcement Officers has completed the training to become a Mental Health First Aider.
- 6.9 Two Members of the Customer Delivery Team undertook the Dealing with Difficult People training delivered by West Berkshire Council.
- 6.10 One of our Trainee Regulatory Services Officers will be starting his Level 6 Food Control training after earning a distinction in his Level 5 Food Premise Inspection Qualification.
- 6.11 Further safeguarding training is being provided for new staff into the service. This is a mandatory requirement for PPP staff as set out in the Training and Development Plan. All new members of staff will be required to undertake induction training in both West Berkshire Council and Bracknell Forest Council.
- 6.12 Safeguarding training for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers as well as Private Hire Operators is now being delivered in-house. We are exploring if Disability Awareness training could be delivered as a new income stream.

7. ICT Update

- 7.1 An extension to the contract for the provision of the IT system for the Service (Idox Cloud) is currently being signed off.
 - 7.2 The Service is in the process of producing an AI and Digital Strategy which will focus on harnessing emerging technologies to drive innovation, improve service delivery, and enhance operational efficiency across the Service where it is appropriate to do so. This strategy will be shaped by current digital capabilities and current and future needs of the Team while being mindful of any operational, ethical and legal restrictions and resource usage. It will outline a roadmap for integrating AI tools into core processes and building digital skills across the workforce. Training requirements will be reflected in the Training and Development Plan which will be coming to the December JPPC meeting for consideration.
 - 7.3 The Strategy will set out how the Service can responsibly implement Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies to enhance productivity, improve service delivery and support sustainable development while aligning with the Services existing priorities and objectives.
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- 7.4 In advance of the Strategy being produced Officers are looking at ways that technology can be used to assist them with streamlining their work processes including making use of AI Minute to transcribe PACE interviews, making use of co-pilot to assist with communication activity and form compilation throughout the team and using Chatgpt to assist with analysis of documentation.
- 7.5 The Team are also investigating the use of tablets by field officers to expedite the processing of inspections and improve communication and access to Council information when undertaking engagement activity within the community.

8. Update on the Peer Review Recommendations

- 8.1 It was agreed at the June 2025 meeting that regular updates on progress being made with the Peer Review recommendations would be included in this report (See Appendix D)
- 8.2 A staff workshop took place on the 08th July 2025, a Duty Manager roster has been put in place to provide management visibility and oversight of office management at the Theale Gateway office. Joint Management Board are continuing to monitor progress with the recommendations.

9. Governance, Information Management and Communications

- 9.1 During Q1 Officers have dealt with six press enquiries, issued 20 press releases and published two articles on the website. The press release on a custodial sentence for a builder was featured on a segment on ITV News, BBC Radio Berkshire and BBC South today in June and our Service Lead appeared on a BBC Radio Berkshire to talk about courier fraud in July.
- 9.2 The Principal Officer - Policy and Governance continues to work closely with West Berkshire, Bracknell Forest and Wokingham Borough's Communication Teams and liaises with them on a regular basis regarding the PPP's campaigns. PPP press releases are shared for their distribution, as well as both continuing to share relevant posts on each other's social media platforms. The PPP also provides a weekly contribution to the West Berkshire Council Newsletter which is produced by the internal Communications Team and they have provided regular contributions to Wokingham Borough Connect (Community Safety and Enforcement) and Out and About in Bracknell Forest too.
- 9.3 In terms of social media activity Officers have supported a number of relevant national public campaigns including Meat and Dairy Products Banned from Entering GB from EU, Be Water Aware, Hoarding Awareness Week, Stop Loan Sharks week, Consumer Awareness Week, Clean Air Day, Microchip Your Pet Month and national Licensing Week. The Service has posted 201 posts on social media this quarter and has attracted another eight new followers.
- 9.4 During Q1 the team dealt with a total of 133 Freedom of Information requests which took around 111 hours to process (circa 3 weeks of officer time). The number of requests have increased when compared to the same period in 2024/25 where 102 Fols were processed and took significantly longer than the 71 hours to process.
- 9.5 The team also processed 64 enquiries from Councillors and the local MPs during quarter 1 which were split equally across West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest
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Councils. This represented a slight increase when compared to the 59 that were dealt with in the same period of the previous year.

- 9.6 In terms of complaints, the service received five complaints which equates to 0.18% of the 2,707 service requests that the team has dealt with in Q1. Of these all five were stage 1 complaints. Of the five complaints received (0 in BFC and 5 in WBC) two were upheld in full, one was not upheld and two were upheld in part. The number of complaints received has decreased when compared to the 11 that were received in the same period in 2024/25.
- 9.7 As a new website was implemented on the 31 March 2025 we did not switch on the analytics in April to allow time for the work on the website to be completed. Data about website visits will be reported in quarter 2. Initial anecdotal comments are that the new look website is clearer and has been well received.
- 9.8 During Q1 we completed the consultation on the West Berkshire Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and started the consultation on the Statement of Licensing Policy in Bracknell Forest Council.
- 9.9 The Team also supported seven events across Bracknell Forest, and West Berkshire including a District Parish Conference in West Berkshire, one pop up event in Newbury Town Centre, fun days and fetes in Pangbourne, Newbury and Thatcham and attended a careers day at Little Health School. Officers attended a series of summer of fun events in Bracknell Forest over the summer as well as some of the Lets Chat events in West Berkshire.
- 9.10 Film Classification Policies have now been agreed in both partner authorities and the West Berkshire Regulation of Investigatory Powers Policy was signed off as a Delegated Officer Decision on the 29 August 2025.

10. Building Safer Communities

- 10.1 The [national mosquito project](#), run by the UKHSA, which monitors for invasive mosquitoes that may increase the risks of disease transmission was conducted over the summer. Thankfully no invasive mosquitos have been detected to date. Monitoring along the M4 corridor will continue until the end of September.
 - 10.2 The provision of the PPP stray dog service has been challenging in the first quarter created in part by the lack of available kennelling provision. This has been made even more challenging following the resignation of the existing animal warden. Working with the stray dog collection contractor, the wider team have stepped up with Partnership Support Team colleagues to cover authentication of ownership, re-uniting, and re-homing alongside other animal warden related enforcement work such as dog fouling complaints, dangerous dog complaints, and other animal welfare queries.
 - 10.3 The Service has also managed to secure additional kennelling space, across two out of area sites bringing the number of kennel spaces available to 3 (and 4 depending on need) across the PPP, but this comes at a cost creating a budget pressure.
 - 10.4 The Licensing Team have undertaken 13 inspections of premises licensed under the Licensing and Gambling regime during Q1. Officers have attended one joint operation with Immigration who have indicated they do not intend to call for a review of the premises at this time. Other planned visits to premises were cancelled due to
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workload issues within the Immigration Service. Licensing Officers have accompanied colleagues from Trading Standards on several underage sales inspections and also attended any follow up interviews under caution. The Licensing Team have also licensed eight previously unlicensed ice cream vans in Q1. In addition three scrap metal sites and one scrap metal collector licences were issued.

- 10.5 Officers continue to attend pubwatch in both areas.
- 10.6 Licensing Officers have also been out to several outdoor events to ascertain whether licence conditions are being complied with and ensuring adherence to noise restriction requirements.
- 10.7 The police led operation with DVSA which Officers were due to attend was unfortunately cancelled in Q1 but took place in August where a number of taxis were checked.
- 10.8 The following licensing panel/subcommittee meetings have taken place in Q1:

Type of Application	Applicant	Outcome
Bracknell Forest		
New Premises Licence	Ascot Take-Away, 2 Warren Row, Ascot, Bracknell Forest, SL5 8HN	Granted subject to conditions
New Premises Licence	Musica Group Ltd, Musica, 6f Eagle Lane, Bracknell, Bracknell Forest, RG12 1BG	Granted subject to conditions
West Berkshire		
None		

- 10.9 During Q2 of 2025/26 to date the following applications have been heard:

Type of Application	Applicant	Outcome
Bracknell Forest		
New Premises Licence	Popeye's, 45 High Street, Bracknell, Bracknell Forest, RG12 1EA	Granted subject to conditions
New Premise Licence	Feta & Fig Limited, 3 Rectory Row, Bracknell, Bracknell Forest, RG12 7BN	The application was refused.
West Berkshire		
New Premises Licence	Best Buy Foods, 51 London Road, Newbury, West Berkshire, RG14 1JN	Granted subject to conditions

Licensing Hearings Data for last three years.			
Authority	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 to date
Bracknell Forest	3	3 (and a further one was postponed)	4 (2 hearings were also postponed)

West Berkshire	8 (with a further five cancelled or adjourned after agenda publication)	1	2 (1 further hearing was cancelled)
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11. Improved Living Environment

- 11.1 The team successfully engaged with a hoarder in West Berkshire that we have been aware of for at least the last five years. They have now agreed to work with Social Services following professional meetings and the property is being cleared.
- 11.2 There has been a long-standing issue of waste deposits and sewage at Ringway Garages. The issues were brought to the attention of the team via the Bracknell Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Neighbourhood Policing Team. The residents had complained to their local MP amongst others. After being visited by Community and Trading Standards officers with the property managers the dumped oil, waste in fire exits and drug paraphernalia have been removed, and work is ongoing to make the doors secure and address other issues like lighting and the sump pumps.
- 11.3 A resident with two small children with medical needs had been struggling to get any response from her housing association after discovering rats in her kitchen. Ordinarily, it would be for the occupier to address pest issues, but in this exceptional case, intervention by the team resulted in the housing association rehoming the resident whilst a new kitchen was installed, alongside a rewire of the property and new loft insulation. The housing association have also compensated the resident for lost items due to the infestation.
- 11.4 Working collaboratively, a new project to raise living standards in the private rented sector covering issues such as Energy Performance Certificates (EPC), safety of furnished lets, Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) and ensuring businesses are complying with the Tenants Fees Act is underway. The project will see joint inspections and business advice being provided where appropriate.

11.5 In terms of service requests (SRs) relating to housing:

	Total request for service housing	Of these number of complaints regarding house condition	Of these number that were Registered Social Landlords
WB April to June 2024	90	71	32 (45%)
WB July to Sept 2024	68	59	21 (36%)
WB Oct to Dec 2024	92	62	31 (50%)
WB Jan to March 2025	84	56	29 (52%)
WB Apr to Jun 2025	61	37	19 (51%)
BF April to June 2024	78	49	20 (41%)
BF July to Sept 2024	87	55	25 (27%)
BF Oct to Dec 2024	95	69	35 (50%)
BF Jan to March 2025	86	51	29 (57%)
BF Apr to Jun 2025	54	21	7 (33%)

- 11.6 The majority of the housing condition SRs relate to leaks in the properties and other sources of damp and corresponding mould.

12. Protecting Consumers from Fraud

Scams and Fraud Victim Support

- 12.1 Over the past three years, scams and fraud victim support work has been funded by each of the three Local Authorities' Community Safety Partnership's (CSPs) Community Safety Funds, provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Funding for this work ceased on 31st March 2025, nevertheless, owing to the service's continued commitment to protecting residents from fraud and scams and supporting those residents who are victims of this type of crime, funding proposals have been successfully submitted to the three LA's CSPs to gain a further three year's funding for this work.
- 12.2 On 1st May 2025, the PPP's Fraud Victim Support Officer retired from this full time role, leaving a gap in service provision. Consequently during Q1, fraud and scams victim support has been limited. The Service is still supporting scam victims through home visits and advice and recovery of their monies lost by challenging the consumer's banks under the banking protocol.
- 12.3 During Q1 the scams team have achieved the following across Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Wokingham:
- Dealt with 22 Service Requests in respect of fraud and scams ahead of the holiday season to inform consumers of their rights and to alert them to current scam types.
 - Undertaken one presentation and one seasonal campaign around holiday scams
 - Supported the set-up of one new No Cold Calling Zone and fitted two new call blockers.
 - 25 complaints have been assessed and actioned.

Unfair Trading and Fraud

- 12.4 In terms of losses across the PPP area arising from unfair trading and fraud in Q1 2025/26:
- The total detriment identified from victims in the PPP area is ££303,662 (Bracknell Forest £43,510, Wokingham £107,012 and West Berkshire £153,410). This represents an increase on the £250,999 at the same period in 2024/25.
 - The total money saved or recovered is £23k which is broadly comparable with the same period last year.
 - The total number of alleged incidents is 56 (5 Bracknell Forest, 27 Wokingham and 24 West Berkshire) which is an increase when compared to the 38 in 2024/25.
 - The average loss is £5,422 per victim. The average loss in Wokingham is £3,963, in Bracknell Forest £8,702 and in West Berkshire £6,375.
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13. Reducing Harm in Young People

Schools Work

- 13.1 There have been no requests from schools for presentations within West Berkshire during Q1. This may be owing to schools concentrating on exams and end of year academic events etc during the summer term. At present resource within PPP to deliver this piece of work remains limited, however following recent successful recruitment to the two Public Protection Community Engagement Officers, it is expected that now that they are in post they will be able to promote and undertake this work.
- 13.2 A discussion has taken place with Bracknell Forest's Director of Public Health regarding the funded provision delivered to West Berkshire Public Health by the PPP. Funding a similar provision for Bracknell Forest is being considered.

Attitudinal Survey

- 13.3 Owing to West Berkshire's Public Health Team completing their young people's survey at the beginning of this year, which includes similar questions to the PPP's attitudinal survey, this piece of work is yet to have taken place. A decision needs to be made whether the survey takes place during the school's Autumn or Spring Term. Moreover, consideration needs to be made regarding the widening of the survey to include nicotine pouches as well as alcohol, tobacco and vapes.

Tobacco Control Alliance

- 13.4 The Berkshire West Tobacco Control Alliance continues to meet on a six-weekly basis with representatives from West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham Public Health, Trading Standards, NHS, BOB ICB, pharmacies and local stop smoking service provider. The alliance's Tobacco Control Plan is a 'live' document that is routinely reviewed and amended.
- 13.5 The PPP's Senior Programme and Community Officer leads on the commissioning of West Berkshire Public Health's jointly commissioned Local Stop Smoking Service provision, in addition, it ensures the effective spending of the Local Stop Smoking Service and Support Grant Funding. During Q1, following the submission of an exceptions report to West Berkshire Council's April Procurement Board to direct award via the Provider Service Regime, a service specification was agreed and contract awarded to Solutions 4 Health to deliver a targeted outreach stop smoking service to persons employed within routine and manual professions. This commenced on 1st July 2025 for a period of 12 months. Moreover, the officer is leading for West Berkshire on the joint commissioning with Reading Borough Council of an Integrated Healthy Lifestyle Service to commence in October 2026 which would include smoking cessation and weight management.

Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP)

- 13.6 On 2nd April the CAP Coordinator attended Westminster to receive the CAP's Spotlight Award for the work delivered in conjunction with Newbury College.
 - 13.7 Following on from this work, Newbury College Health and Social Care students were asked to produce materials that could be used within secondary schools and by the young person's drug and alcohol behaviour change service to support health harm
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campaigns. A poem written by one of the students was chosen and has been made into a poster by West Berkshire Graphic's team. Furthermore, the student was supported to record herself reading the poem, which has also been sent to West Berkshire Graphic's team to be made into a digital video to be posted on social media and included on websites. It is anticipated that these assets will be ready for the new academic year.

- 13.8 The national CAP has selected West Berkshire as one of six pilot areas for their new Parental Supply of Alcohol initiative. The PPP's CAP Co-ordinator attended Westminster in June for the official launch of the initiative and to seek cross party support. Insights work is currently underway within the six pilot areas. The campaign launch is expected in the Autumn.
- 13.9 A Responsible Retailer Scheme for independent retailers is in the process of being initiated across the three LAs with an initial focus on the responsible retailing of age restricted products. Nevertheless, if successful, the scheme could be extended to include other safe working practices. Documentation is being drafted for retailers detailing the nature and purpose of the scheme, expectations and benchmarking documents and sample documents such as a refusals register.

Age Restricted Products

- 13.10 The Age Restricted Products Enforcement officer has been undertaking many inspections in retail and other licensed premises to test compliance with the relevant age restrictions. These have resulted in several investigations which we are now pursuing. In addition, a recent operation was conducted at the Henley Regatta where we were accompanied by Wokingham Licensing Team checking underaged sales. No sales were offered.
- 13.11 During Q1 the following underage sales activity took place:

Vapes		Lottery		Alcohol		Knives		Tobacco	
Attempts	Sales	Attempts	Sales	Attempts	Sales	Attempts	Sales	Attempts	Sales
32	1	0	0	12	3	10	2	0	0

14. Protection of the Environment

- 14.1 **Air Quality** - the three Annual Status Reports 2025 (2024 data) for each of the partner authorities were completed and once signed off by the Directors of Public Health were submitted to DEFRA prior to the 30 June 2025 deadline. Feedback from DEFRA will be brought to the December meeting provided it is received in advance of the meeting. Social media messaging was posted to mark Clean Air Day on 17 June 2025.
- 14.2 **Environmental Permitting** - the new inspection programme for 2025/26 was set up with nine inspections due in Bracknell Forest and 24 in West Berkshire. The invoice for the annual subsistence fees has been raised.
- 14.3 **Private Water Supplies** – the single dwelling project commenced. Three new supplies have been found, and Risk Assessments have been carried out.
- 14.4 **Planning Consultations** – Officers attended the Kennet Centre Newbury appeal in respect of the impact of noise on proposed residents from existing noise sources.

The Team have seen an increase in noise complaints from padel courts and air source heat pumps, some of which require retrospective planning permission.

- 14.5 **Public Nuisance** - officers have been working with Licensing colleagues in dealing with complaints regarding noise and conditions which require updating.
 - 14.6 **Contaminated Land** -. The project to transfer information from existing systems onto Idox Cloud continues.
 - 14.7 **Weight Restrictions** - During Q1 86 checks were made in relation to potential breaches of weight restrictions and overloaded vehicles resulting in 66 breaches. A joint overladen operation was also undertaken with Thames Valley Police in Bracknell. Three vehicles were found to be overweight and are currently in the system.
 - 14.8 **Waste Removal and Fly Tipping** - Great Hollands continues to experience misuse of the verges and kerbsides with skips. Following a request from the Ward Member to investigate a skip that had been in place for over a year, investigations took the officer to Horton where the company who originally deployed the skip had now moved to. The operator was spoken to and within two hours he had removed the skip, as well as the accumulated waste, others had left behind.
 - 14.9 Collaboration with Runnymede Council has seen a joint investigation into a Fly Tipper from Chertsey, Surrey, who has been committing offences in Bracknell Forest and within the Chertsey area. Runnymede Council are progressing the prosecution to include a BFC offence from June 2024.
 - 14.10 Following a complaint from a local business in Bracknell, landowners were eventually traced to an address in North London and served with a notice requiring them to clear the land of waste and they were instructed to secure the land. Working with the company and explaining the concerns and state of disrepair the perimeter boarding had fallen into over the years, the company replaced all the boarding surrounding the large plot which was greatly appreciated by the adjoining businesses.
 - 14.11 Q1 has also been exceptionally busy, with 53 reported fly tipping incidents to investigate. CCTV has been deployed in Crown Row for a second time this year and is having a significant effect on the reduction of waste being left by members of the public.
 - 14.12 **Single Use Vapes** - The banning of illegal single use vapes from 01 June 2025 was introduced under environmental protection legislation. Enforcement for these Regulations, sits with Trading Standards services. It is a legal requirement that the service undertakes a public consultation with interested parties to ensure it can enforce those regulations. This was carried out by contacting retailers, legal services, public health teams and waste management colleagues setting out the PPP's proposed enforcement guidance. Following the conclusion of the consultation the [document](#) has now been published on the PPP website.
 - 14.13 Alongside this work officers have continued to prepare the formal notices, Fixed Penalty Notices and officer training has been undertaken. Plans are in place to carry out a number of inspections across the PPP area to ensure single use vapes (as prescribed by law) are not made available for sale.
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15. Protecting and Informing Consumers

- 15.1 In this quarter the Trading Standards team has triaged/assessed and dealt with 1134 service requests across the three Local Authorities. The team have also dealt with several national product safety recalls either referred from local businesses or from the Office of Product and Safety Standards (OPSS) e.g. a baby's highchair, and a robotic lawnmower.
- 15.2 Complaints can originate from anywhere, leading to investigations needing to be carried out across the Country. Such a complaint was received by PPP from a European manufacturer with offices in Bracknell alerting us to an issue relating to the suspected supply of counterfeit gas boiler parts bearing their Trademark. This was reported to them by a registered Gas Safe Engineer who went to fit the part and realised it did not look right. This resulted in PPP officers seizing products out of area (Doncaster) and needing to visit the area to conduct interviews, which involved logistical planning and liaising with local police and Trading Standards services in that area.
- 15.3 A consumer complaint was received relating to baby's clothes and associated items which triggered several inspections which resulted in certain products being removed from sale due to safety concerns. The Service continues to provide information on its social media pages about recalled products.

16. Promoting Animal Welfare

- 16.1 Officers continue to undertake routine inspections for animal welfare on farms. No significant issues have arisen as a result, and advice is provided at the time of inspection.
- 16.2 Inspections continue to be undertaken over the whole range of animal activity licences, including ones which are as a result of complaints and a new zoo licence was issued.

17. Safety in the Workplace

- 17.1 The Team has dealt with 66 (30 in BFC and 36 WBC) health and safety at work service requests during Q1 and 20 (9 BFC and 11 WBC) workplace accidents were reported.
- 17.2 The Safety Advisory Group have been notified about and considered the documentation provided in respect of 54 events in Bracknell Forest and 76 in West Berkshire.

18. Safe and Healthy Food Chain

- 18.1 The Team have dealt with 143 (56 BFC and 87 WBC) food hygiene service requests during quarter 1. They have completed 206 (88 BFC and 118 WBC) food hygiene inspections. This includes both scheduled and reactive visits.
 - 18.2 It should be noted that the inspection programme is not a flat profile and more inspections tend to take place in the latter part of the year.
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- 18.3 Food hygiene cases of interest included an appeal lodged by a food importer against a Regulation 19 TARP Notice (The Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011) served by PPP in relation to a consignment of illegally imported caviar. It was dismissed at a hearing at Oxford Magistrates' Court on 25 April 2025. The Council was awarded costs of £2,721.80 and the Team are continuing to investigate possible offences related to this matter.
- 18.4 The team have also dealt with reactive and advisory work as standard business as usual and have had some interesting requests during Quarter 1. Certain food establishments require approval by the Council. These are food businesses that handle products of animal origin, such as meat, fish, egg, dairy products, and processed products of animal origin, which supply other establishments. Approval must be obtained by the food business operator before such activities commence, and the assessment process confirms that a business has adequate food hygiene arrangements in place to meet legal requirements. Establishments may be subject to approval, either by the Food standards Agency (FSA) or by the local authority depending on the nature of the business.
- 18.5 There are currently ten food business establishments approved by Public Protection Partnership operating across West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest local authority areas. Two of these premises (one in Bracknell Forest and one in West Berkshire) are cold stores handling products of animal origin and newly approved by Public Protection Partnership in Q1 of 2025.
- 18.6 The Service received 109 (46 BFC and 63 WBC) infectious disease notifications during Q1. This is a slight reduction when compared to the 126 during the same period last year. However, since the beginning of June the UKHSA has stopped reporting Campylobacter cases directly to local authorities and therefore the number of infectious disease notifications has reduced. The majority of cases reported now are in respect of Salmonella Enteritidis.
- 18.7 This is the first quarter the new food standards model has come into being. Inspections that are being carried out are being entered, and the system is providing quality data in terms of the residual risks and frequency for next inspection. However, it remains that data transfer has presented some historic data anomalies that requires further work to address and ensure that statutory returns can be completed with reliable data.
- 18.8 The food standards inspections have found a number of premises selling drinks with the ingredient EDTA (Calcium Disodium), this ingredient is permitted in foods in the UK but not in drinks. Action taken by officers has seen these items removed from sale and have advised local businesses to return them to their suppliers. On occasion, when supplier details have been sought, local food businesses have been reluctant, and in some instances, unable to provide details of their supplier. This has resulted in officers having to provide advice on traceability requirements under food legislation and having to have documents in place to show where their products have come from. This has then been reflected in the risk score for that inspection.
- 18.9 Where details have been given, these issues have been referred to the appropriate primary authority to take up with the supplier.
- 18.10 One food business was found to have most of its shop non-compliant with UK labelling legislation. This was due to lack of prepacked for direct sale labelling on
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'pic n mix' sweets, lack of English labelling and lack of a UK name and address. The business was initially advised on action to be taken but on a revisit had failed to do so. Therefore, improvement notices were issued covering the three areas of improvement required. On a further revisit to check the store, a huge improvement had been made, all prepacked stock has been over-stickered to make it UK compliant including foods not originally labelled in English and prepacked for direct sale items had a name and ingredients list including allergens present. This was a huge improvement and means consumers are now more informed as to what they are purchasing.

- 18.11 Food Standards Officers have also been taking part in regional and national sampling projects over the past few months. This has involved purchasing takeaway meals and cakes, having them tested for undeclared allergens, buying spirits in pubs to check for alcohol content and authenticity, as well as checking for the amount of sugars present in low fat yoghurts, and more recently checking the water content of cooked meats. Results are pending.
- 18.11 Finally, A local convenience store with a history of underage sales is being investigated for the supply of dangerous counterfeit Glens Vodka, investigation ongoing and was picked up by the BBC. [Fake vodka warning issued by council trading standard teams - BBC News.](#) In the meantime, the businesses' alcohol licence has been revoked after a Licence review.

19. Investigations and Case Management

- 19.1 The Joint Case Management Unit continues to be busy working with new investigations commencing all the time across the PPP. Of these 68 are already in the case management / court system and most of the bigger more complex investigations are or are expected to be crown court disposals. A number are set for trial in late 2025 as well as in 2026. In addition, as anticipated and mentioned in the last report, there has been a big increase in the number of cases submitted for for e-cigarette, alcohol, offensive weapons and investigation prosecutions with the new officer dedicated to underage sales. The figure includes a number of road traffic prosecutions.
- 19.2 There was a significant case where a West Berkshire based trader pleaded guilty to multiple counts of unfair trading and supplying a forged electrical and building control certificate. He was sentenced to an immediate twelve month custodial sentence and a timetable for confiscation under the Proceeds of Crime Act was set.
- 19.3 The Investigations Team have seven cases going through the court process, two further cases are with Legal Services for a determination. There are also eight ongoing investigations in progress. It is anticipated that two of these will be completed by the end of August 2025. Further cases are awaiting allocation when the capacity is available.
- 19.4 The Accredited Financial Investigators have 21 active cases: six pertaining to confiscation of assets, fourteen money laundering/fraud cases and one money laundering/ counterfeit goods case. Of those cases seventeen are PPP, two are Reading BC, one is Wokingham BC Planning and one is Oxfordshire Trading Standards.
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20. Concluding Observations

- 20.1 The report sets out a significant focus with respect to the priority areas. This is in addition to the large volume of other work undertaken on a day-to-day basis. There will inevitably need to be some re-prioritisation of other workstreams if we are going to continue to focus on the areas of highest risk and demand.
- 20.2 This continues to be an extremely busy period for the service. The work has covered a vast range of priority areas, and the balancing of priorities and risk has been a key focus whilst delivering savings to mitigate pressures. The Service would, as always, like to place on record our gratitude for the support of the partner authorities and for constructive oversight of this Committee.

21. Appendices

- 21.1 Appendix A – Q1 Performance Data
- 21.2 Appendix B – Compliments
- 21.3 Appendix C - Activity by Authority
- 21.4 Appendix D – Update on Peer Review Recommendations

22. Background Papers:

- 22.1 None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☐ No: ☒

Report is to note only



Wards affected: All Wards

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