
Update on the PPP Shared Service Contract

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	08 December 2025
Chair of Committee:	Councillor Tom McCann
Date JMB agreed report:	17 November 2025
Report Author:	Sean Murphy
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Public Protection Partnership Service was subjected to a peer review which concluded earlier in the year. In line with the negotiations on the recommendations of the review, reports seeking authorisation for Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Wokingham Councils to enter into a new three authority shared service agreement have been discussed, agreed and given effect at the Executive/Cabinet and Council meetings in all three authorities.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the decisions made and progress to date in amending the governance arrangements and Inter Authority Agreements that support and underpin the Service.

2. Recommendations

The Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTES** the decisions taken by the Executive/Cabinet and Councils in the three partner authorities to enter into a new shared service agreement until the 31st March 2029 and that the agreement will include an exit clause based on a minimum of twelve months' notice to give effect to leaving the agreement on the 31st March in any given year.
- 2.2 **NOTES** the decisions that West Berkshire Council continues to be the host authority to avoid significant short-term disruption.
- 2.3 **NOTES** the decisions by the Executives/ Cabinet and Councils in all three authorities to extend the delegation of relevant functions to the Joint Public Protection Committee until 31st March 2029.
- 2.4 **NOTES** the decision that Wokingham Borough Council becomes a full Member of the Joint Public Protection Committee and the associated changes to the Terms of Reference of the Committee as set out in Appendix A to the report.
- 2.5 **NOTES** the decisions that specified officers in each of the partner authorities be authorised to enter into the new Inter Authority Agreement.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary			
Financial:	The agreements will be amended within existing budgets and there are no budgetary implications associated with the production of this report.			
Human Resource:	<p>This report was drafted within existing resources. Support is being sought from colleagues in the West Berkshire legal team and legal officers in the partner authorities to draft the revised inter authority agreements.</p> <p>West Berkshire will remain the employing and administrative authority under the proposals.</p>			
Legal:	The basis of the existing and new shared service arrangements are delegations of both Executive/Cabinet and Council functions to a Joint Committee and the basis for employment of the staff is Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 which allows a local authority to enter into an agreement with another Council for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions. This is in line with the existing arrangements.			
Risk Management:	A full peer review of the service been conducted to provide assurance and confidence around the quality and level of shared service provided to ensure residents are receiving and will continue to receive a comprehensive public protection service.			
Property:	There are no property implications associated with the report.			
Policy:	There are no direct policy implications arising from this report.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equity Impact Assessment:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		✓		Full EQiA was conducted when shared arrangements/contract was entered into in 2017 and remains valid.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics,		✓		See above.

including employees and service users?				
Environmental Impact:		✓		This decision will not have any direct environmental impact.
Health Impact:		✓		This decision will not have any direct health impact
ICT or Digital Services Impact:		✓		There are no digital services impacts associated with this decision. The online iteration of the Constitution will need updating as will the governance pages on the PPP website.
PPP Priorities :				The report will impact on the following PPP Priorities <ul 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 Business as Usual Activity is supported too.
Data Impact:				The proposal will not have any impact on our data subjects.
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>All Members of all three authorities and all PPP staff were consulted during the peer review.</p> <p>Reports about the future of the shared service have been considered and agreed by the Cabinet/Executive in Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Wokingham Borough Councils.</p> <p>Reports about the future of the shared service have been considered and agreed by Full Council in Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Wokingham Borough Councils.</p>			
Other Options Considered:	Not to renew the partnership. This was discounted given the efficiencies and greater service resilience resulting from being in the partnership.			

4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) is a shared service delivering environmental health, licensing and trading standards functions on behalf of two authorities, Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Council. It also currently shares a range of services with Wokingham Borough Council including trading standards, financial investigations, intelligence functions, animal health and welfare and case management work and the technical delivery of air quality monitoring and reporting.
- 4.2 The Service has historically been underpinned by two Inter Authority Agreements (IAAs), one with Bracknell Forest Council and a separate agreement signed in 2022 with Wokingham Borough Council. These agreements are due to expire in January

2027, and it is a requirement that the arrangements be reviewed prior to the end date. A peer review was therefore conducted between October 2024 and January 2025.

- 4.3 The review team concluded that the Service is focussed and effective in providing statutory regulatory services to protect residents. It also concluded that as a shared service it is delivering efficiencies and greater service resilience than individual authorities would be able to achieve. The review made a series of recommendations for all three partner authorities (Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire, and Wokingham Borough Councils) to consider including renewing the current agreements. The most significant of these being a recommendation to renew the current arrangements for a further ten years and the second was to include Wokingham Borough Council in the governance arrangements of the partnership at a member level.
- 4.4 Due to the ongoing uncertainties arising from local government reorganisation, during the discussions and negotiations following the peer review it was proposed to extend the current arrangements until March 2029 rather than the ten years proposed by the review team.
- 4.5 A series of decisions were made at Cabinet/Executive in [Bracknell Forest](#), [West Berkshire](#) and [Wokingham Borough](#) Councils and Full Council in [Bracknell Forest](#), [West Berkshire](#) and [Wokingham Borough](#) Councils including:
- to enter into a new shared service agreement until the 31st March 2029 and that the agreement will include an exit clause based on a minimum of twelve months' notice to give effect to leaving the agreement on the 31st March in any given year.
 - West Berkshire Council continuing to be the host authority to avoid significant short-term disruption to the Service.
 - to extend the delegation of relevant Executive and Council functions to the Joint Public Protection Committee until 31st March 2029.
 - Wokingham Borough Council becoming a full Member of the Joint Public Protection Committee and Wokingham Borough Council nominated Councillors Lou Timlin, Stephen Newton and Pauline Jorgensen to be members of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year. Councillor Prue Bray is the nominated substitute.
 - It was also noted at the Bracknell Forest Council meeting on the 26 November 2025 that Councillor Stephen O' Regan would be replacing Councillor Cherise Welch on the JPPC.
 - Amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Committee as set out in Appendix A to this report.
 - Specified officers (Executive Director for Communities in consultation with the Borough Solicitor in Bracknell Forest, Service Lead for Public Protection in conjunction with the Service Lead for Legal and Democratic Services in West Berkshire) in each of the partner authorities be authorised to enter into the new Inter Authority Agreement.

- Annual performance reports be considered by appropriate Scrutiny Committees in the partner authorities pending agreement of the relevant Chairman of those Committees.

4.6 Officers are in the process of engaging all three legal teams with a view to finalising the terms of the agreements in line with the resolutions made by each of the partner Councils. This work is expected to be completed very early into 2026.

5. Concluding Observations

- 5.1 The Peer Review concluded that the PPP has and continues to be “effective in providing statutory regulatory services to protect residents whilst also delivering efficiencies and greater service resilience”. The service has also been “successful in securing significant income from both external and internal partners to protect both residents and local businesses”. The service is “performing well and delivering high quality outcomes for residents and business across the three partner councils”.
- 5.2 Members across all three councils that participated in the peer review survey recognised “the importance of the service and appreciate how it affects the lives of residents whilst also supporting local council priorities.”
- 5.3 The review also established that “There was no desire from any partner to withdraw any services from the partnership and indeed there was a recognition that withdrawal and working independently would increase costs, reduce available expertise and undermine service resilience.”
- 5.4 There are significant efficiencies to be gained from sharing management costs which allow for more resource to be focussed on operational delivery. There are also the non-financial tangible benefits that the Peer Review identified had been delivered including critical mass, flexibility, expertise, focus and non-staffing related cost effectiveness e.g. IT contracts and subscriptions etc.
- 5.5 The proposals to extend the existing arrangements have received universal and unanimous support across all three partner authorities.
- 5.6 The Joint Management Board and the Service Management Team would like to thank the Committee and the Councils for the attention, guidance and oversight that it has afforded this matter.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix A – Revised Terms of Reference

7. Background Papers:

7.1 Peer Review Report

7.2 Executive/ Cabinet and Council Reports and Minutes in all three partner authorities.

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 in all three authorities

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