
Workforce Strategy 2026 - 2029

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:	George Lawrence
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the committee on the services workforce planning strategy following review of the existing 2022-2025 strategy.
- 1.2 To agree the training and development plan that underpins the workforce strategy.

2. Recommendations

The Committee:

- 2.1 **APPROVES** the 2026-2029 workforce planning strategy pending any further recommendations made by the committee, and
- 2.2 **APPROVES** the 2026-2029 training and development plan.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

4.

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>There are no new costs associated with the development of these two strategies.</p> <p>Budget impacts are related to establishment changes and are risk managed by the service.</p> <p>Any training costs will be met from within existing budgets and Apprenticeships are funded through the Apprenticeship levy.</p> <p>Two of the trainee roles in Trading Standards are funded until 2029/30 by the Department of Health and Social Care,</p>
Human Resource:	<p>The strategy requires HR (and management) resourcing as part of the retention, recruitment and retirement process.</p>
Legal:	<p>There are no direct legal implications associated with the strategies, but employment law applies.</p>
Risk Management:	<p>There is significant risk posed by not having a competent workforce, These risks are legal, operational and reputational.</p>

	<p>The purpose of this strategy is to ensure those risks are managed effectively.</p> <p>Skills gaps and so called 'single points of failure' also present risks. We will continue to identify such gaps and seek to resolve as we go forward.</p>			
Property:	None			
Policy:	<p>There are no direct policy implications arising from this paper. It is however noted that local Government Re-organisation planning may affect decisions in due course.</p>			
	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?				No implications – the service follows corporate HR requirements.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?				No implications – the service follows corporate HR requirements.
Environmental Impact:				None
Health Impact:				None
ICT or Digital Services Impact:				None in excess of business as usual
PPP Priorities:				<p>The report will impact on the following PPP Priorities (delete those that are not appropriate)</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 Business as Usual Activity is supported too.
Data Impact:				None
Consultation and Engagement:	The service has engaged with human resources and will continue to do so in advancing its policy on recruitment, retention and retirement (succession planning).			
Other Options Considered:	None.			

5. Executive Summary

- 5.1 The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) employs almost 100 permanent officers across a variety of professional and technical support roles. 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. The PPP also delivers services against a number of other arrangements and grant funded work streams.
- 5.2 The PPP delivers three local government regulatory roles: Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing. These roles are professionally based, broad in remit and ultimately open to legal challenge if not carried out correctly. It is therefore important that the staff remain professionally competent in accordance with the requirements of their professional bodies.
- 5.3 The service is supported by colleagues within areas such as Finance, Legal Services and Customer Services across the three Council's, as well as management oversight in the form of the Joint Management Board (JMB), and Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC). However, the service is reliant on its own workforce in these areas to ensure it delivers in a consistent and continuous manner.
- 5.4 With such a breadth of workforce knowledge, balanced with challenges in recruitment, retention and retirement planning, it is important that the PPP remains vigilant to the workforce market, service needs and service planning to ensure it remains relevant and resilient.
- 5.5 The last strategy was produced in 2023, and whilst mostly relevant, this still requires review. More so, following findings of the peer review into the service. It is for these reasons above that this review has been undertaken.

6. Skills Development

- 6.1 The service recognises its workforce is its most valuable asset and resource. It also recognises the need for officers to develop and grow.
- 6.2 Placed together, there is the opportunity to get the best out of its staff, whilst promoting individual talent and growth. This can then be recognised through promotional opportunity, whether that is focussed on specialist roles, or more generic managerial roles. To achieve such training and development in a fair and ordered

way, the PPP training and development plan outlines the approach it needs to take on the practical levels to achieve personal goals and ambitions as well as service requirements.

- 6.3 Furthermore, the organisation recognises the benefits of supporting learning and development for all concerned and has adopted the approach of documenting learning and development needs when staff meet with their line managers during 1:1's and appraisal target setting.
- 6.4 This two-way relationship is considered vitally important in ensuring the service and staff benefit.

7. Service Resilience

- 7.1 The PPP recognises the challenges in recruiting qualified and competent staff across all levels, and in particular management posts. It also recognises that retention challenges exist and that staff will retire. The service has a number of experienced officers who are able to retire, and some officers have notified management that they are planning to do so over the next few years.
- 7.2 As well as working with colleagues within Human Resourcing, the service has committed to growing your own to combat local (and national) recruitment challenges. This has been successful in recent years at level 4 regulatory compliance officer levels and has since moved towards higher level 6 TSO apprenticeships for 6 officers, as well as other externally funded courses such as the Environmental Health Master's degree and Food Safety Officer diploma.
- 7.3 The Peer review carried out in 2024/ 25 recognised that succession planning, at the management level could be improved. Consequently, the new strategy has included the need to put in place steps to address this and in particular at the level of line management. Firstly, it commits to provide the opportunities that will develop confidence in existing officers, such as mentoring. Secondly, to support more formal training in management roles.
- 7.4 Through its prioritisation of functions, the service has a recognised track record of resilience in its operational field functions. This is seen in how it coped with Covid recovery, assisting other departments in enforcement, adapting to changes in legislation, and leading on cross cutting related issues with key stakeholders. The strategy builds on that premise by ensuring we continue to support a healthy mix of professional and technical roles.

8. Service Capacity

- 8.1 As outlined above, the service needs to ensure it has enough capacity to deliver on the breadth of commitments set out in the Inter Authority Agreements, and wider agreements. To do so, the service needs a varied workforce in terms of skills, specialisms and numbers and a need to ensure the budget is there to do so.
- 8.2 Service needs will invariably vary from time to time, but the PPP must consider all competency levels across its workforce, whilst managing existing and future risks. This balance is considered to be at the heart of the strategy. It will ensure it maintains the correct officer capacity and competency in any given role, and at any given time.

- 8.3 The strategy informs its training and development plan, which are the practical steps needed to ensure the workforce remains relevant and resilient throughout the IAA period.

9. Concluding Observations

- 9.1 This strategy sets out the ambitions of the service to ensure existing risks are properly managed and that there remains the right resource with appropriate training in place. Moreover, that the workforce is planned in such a way that it is able to contend with future risks.
- 9.2 By having the correct mix of skills, qualifications and capacity, the service will ensure future security in its workforce deliver.
- 9.3 This strategic review is intended to set direction for at least the next three years, but it should not stand still. Any changes in structure, budget, legislation, political will or risk should prompt review to ensure that the direction remains relevant and resilient at any given time.
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10. Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix A – Workforce Planning Strategy
- 10.2 Appendix B – Training and Development Plan
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11. Background Papers:

- 11.1 None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

Wards affected: All Wards

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