

SUBJECT: PUBLIC PROTECTION 2022/23 PERFORMANCE REPORT

MEETING: Performance & Oversight Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 21st June 2023

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To undertake scrutiny of service delivery across Public Protection services for the financial year 2022/23, with comparison to previous years. The Public Protection division comprises of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Animal Health and Licensing.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To consider and comment on the contents of the attached report – Appendix One - entitled 'Public Protection Performance Report 2022/23'.
- 2.2 Noting the breadth of services provided, Members to consider whether they would like to scrutinise a specific area of Public Protection work.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 This is the eighth annual report summarising performance across the Public Protection division. Members in 2015 requested an annual report to enable them to be sighted on performance, particularly how this varies when compared to previous years. The concern mainly related to ensuring the respective teams had capacity to deliver the array of services provided across all disciplines. The last annual performance report was presented to this Performance and Oversight Committee in January 2023. One of the recommendations last January was to bring the annual report closer to 'end of year', preferably in June or July each year.
- 3.2 The attached report, Appendix One, summarises performance for the twelve month period of 2022/23, and highlights the following -
- The four service teams are reverting to more normal service delivery after being significantly diverted as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. There was a significant shift in working with the removal of Welsh Government Alert Levels, and all the requests for service that generated. Some limited capacity to respond to Covid-19 clusters, primarily in care homes, was retained within our Environmental Health service.
 - As detailed in Appendix One, proactive work has returned, with notable increases particularly in Environmental Health (Commercial) and Licensing. 'Service requests' –

which refer to complaints from the public and businesses, and business/public requests for advice and information – saw an overall increase in demand.

- The Environmental Health (Commercial) team returned to proactive food safety inspections, and inspected 681 premises. Communicable diseases increased significantly to a total of 287 (non-Covid) in the year. The EH (Public Health) team responded to an increase in noise complaints, environmental protection and housing issues, and dealt with a total of 2,485 service requests. Trading Standards also witnessed an increase in service demand, (725 for year) and Licensing applications (1,603) remained high. 322 animal health visits were undertaken, again showing some return to pre-pandemic service levels.
- As national restrictions were lifted for organised events, the number of interventions to organisers also subsequently increased, 118 organisers were assisted last year. The Monmouthshire Event Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) provides partnership support, and helps mitigate risks, to music, sporting, agricultural and cultural events.
- Annual reports will continue to be made to this Committee to assess performance over time, and help inform future priorities noting the competing demands. Future annual reports will be scheduled for June or July each year.
- Services may struggle to take on any new statutory duties that protect the public and the environment, and therefore funding must be sought to support any new work.
- Future strategies for sustaining Public Protection services will be developed, (to include further income generation and collaboration), locally, regionally and nationally.
- Further Public Protection funding was secured from April 2022. This provided much needed extra capacity to the four PP teams.
- Services will improve linkages to the Authority's Community and Corporate Plan 2022 - 2028 and other key drivers when prioritising future service delivery.
- Regard was had for 'lessons learnt' in 22/23 as requested at the last P&O committee in January 2023, (section 6 in annual report attached).

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 The Cabinet decision log from 7th January 2015 stated:- 'Noting the continually changing legislative landscape in the future, it was decided Strong Communities Select Committee would receive six monthly performance reports on Public Protection services'. In 2019 it was decided to report annually to allow Members to scrutinise performance across the Division. Under the new administration, since May 2022, it provides good governance to continue providing performance reports to scrutinise service delivery and be open to any suggestions for improvement.
- 4.2 Officers would welcome any thoughts on specific topic areas for scrutiny in the future to provide a more detailed understanding, a deeper consideration of pertinent matters and suggestions on potential improvements.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None as a consequence of this report.

6. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT, (includes equality, future generations, social justice, safeguarding and corporate parenting).

Assessments were previously completed for the Cabinet report in 2015. This report serves to update the position in relation to performance, and therefore does not require a further assessment. As referenced in Appendix One, however, clearly Public Protection services contribute to protecting our environment, helping vulnerable people, providing safe food and consumer protection, etc. which are all positive contributions to people living, working and visiting our county. The Division also supports local businesses by providing consistent advice and tackling those that do not comply with legal requirements, (thus providing a 'level playing field' for fair trade).

7. CONSULTEES:

Public Protection service managers (& contributors)
Chief Officer, Social Care & Health

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Report to Cabinet, 7th January 2015, entitled 'Review of Service Delivery in Public Protection Department'.

9. AUTHOR:

David H Jones, Head of Public Protection

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644100 **E-mail:** davidjones3@monmouthshire.gov.uk