

Safer Oxfordshire Partnership

Oversight Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Background

- 1.1. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership is a thematic group in Oxfordshire that brings together community safety partners to work together on joint priorities and emerging themes. The partnership is part of a strategic framework that community safety partners are expected to put in place to improve outcomes for local people. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership consists of a Co-Ordination Group and an Oversight Committee.
- 1.2. Regulation 8 of The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 sets out the community safety requirements which apply at a county-wide level. This requires that for each county area there shall be a county strategy group whose function shall be to prepare a community safety agreement and partnership plan for the county area on behalf of the responsible authorities in that county area.
- 1.3. In Oxfordshire, the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership fulfils this function through the Co-ordination Group which ensures the countywide statutory functions in relation to community safety in Oxfordshire are met. The Oversight Committee, which is elected member-led and attended by senior officers from partner organisations, provides support and challenge to the Co-ordination Group to ensure the effective coordination of action on community safety matters, directing resources to the highest priority areas and ensuring efficiency.

2. Oversight Committee Functions

- 2.1 The key functions of the Oversight Committee are-
 - a) To provide strategic support and challenge on county-wide community safety issues, especially in relation to how the Co-ordination Group is fulfilling the statutory duties that apply at a County level.
 - b) To provide a forum for elected members and senior managers from partner organisations to share information and review their contribution to joint priorities and emerging themes.
 - c) To provide a single point of contact for the Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss community safety concerns with elected members and senior officers.
 - d) To support a forum for sharing best practice and networking on countywide on community safety concerns.

- 2.2 The Oversight Committee will ensure that the Co-ordination Group fulfils the requirements set out in the working protocol that outlines the relationship between countywide Boards and the City/ District-level CSPs in Oxfordshire.
- 2.3 All member organisations of the Oversight Committee accept that they are committed to working together. There is recognition that the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership can only achieve its objectives by reaching consensus and building co-operation across the organisations and communities represented. It will not assume, or take precedence over, the statutory decision-making and public accountability roles of elected members of local authorities, probation services, health services and the police, and will respect the functions and priorities of participating member agencies.

3. Membership

- 3.1. The Oversight Committee will consist of the representatives of the following organisations-
- An Elected Member representative from Oxfordshire County Council (Chairman)
 - An Elected Member representative from each of the District Councils in Oxfordshire.
 - The Thames Valley Police Assistant Chief Constable with responsibility for the Oxfordshire area.
 - A representative from the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.
 - A representative from the Community Rehabilitation Company.
 - A representative from the National Probation Service
 - Appropriate people to provide a voluntary sector perspective.
 - The Chief Fire Officer for Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.
 - A representative of the public health function of the County Council.
 - A representative with oversight of Children Safeguarding.
 - A representative with oversight of Adult Safeguarding.
- 3.2 The Committee can invite representatives from other organisations to attend committee meetings for all or part of the meetings. Elected Members can be supported by officers from the relevant Council.
- 3.3 Individual committee members may represent their organisation at more than one strategic partnership. In that instance they are responsible for ensuring that the Committee is aware of any links between subjects under discussion at the Committee and subjects of interest and relevance to other strategic partnerships. Annually, the Committee will identify where there are links between membership of the Committee and other strategic partnerships.

- 3.4 Secretariat support is provided by the Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service.

4. Meetings

- 4.1 The Oversight Committee will meet twice a year. The Chairman can determine that a meeting is not required and in which case the Committee may meet less frequently. However, before cancelling a meeting the Chairman must consult with Committee Members and hold the meeting if requested to do so.
- 4.2 Members of the public can request to attend and speak at Committee meetings with not less than 24 hours notice to the Secretariat. They may also be invited to attend by the Chairman. Members of the public who wish to address the Committee will be given a maximum of five minutes to speak.
- 4.3 In determining whether to invite a person to address a meeting, the Chairman may consider the previous opportunities taken by that person (or his or her organisation) to address the Partnership on the same issue. Where there are a number of requests from people wishing to present similar views on the same issue, the Chairman may require that the views be put by a single spokesperson. It is expected that only in exceptional circumstances will a person (or an organisation) be allowed to address more than one meeting on a particular issue.

5. Appointment of the Chairman/Deputy Chairman

- 5.1 The Chairman will be the elected member from the County Council.
- 5.2 The Deputy Chairman will be appointed bi-annually, on an automatic alphabetical rotation basis between Responsible Authorities in accordance with the membership list below.
- Cherwell District Council
 - Oxford City Council
 - Oxfordshire County Council
 - South Oxfordshire District Council
 - Vale of White Horse District Council
 - West Oxfordshire District Council
- 5.3 The Chairman should give the Oversight Committee six months' notice should he or she choose to resign his or her position (except in exceptional circumstances such as where the chairmanship may be affected by elections).
- 5.4 The Chairman will have responsibility for ensuring that the tasks of the Oversight Committee are carried out through the constituent members. He or she will act as contact and signatory for agreements on behalf of the group.

- 5.5 The Chairman will preside over meetings of the Oversight Committee in an inclusive way so as to ensure that meetings are well-chaired, and move through the agenda in a systematic fashion and finish at a pre-agreed time, ensuring the core business is delivered.
- 5.6 If the Chairman is not present within 10 minutes of the time fixed for the beginning of the meeting, or is unwilling or unable to act in the case of a conflict of interest, the Deputy Chairman will act as the Chairman for that meeting or item only.
- 5.7 If neither the Chairman nor the Deputy Chairman is present, the Committee will agree who will act as Chairman for the duration of that meeting.
- 5.8 Members are responsible for ensuring that they not only represent the views of their constituent organisation but also demonstrate objectivity and impartiality in decision-making.
- 5.9 A Forward Plan will outline key items for future agendas; this will be reviewed at each Committee meeting. Additional items for the forward plan that are not considered at a Committee meeting must be submitted to the Secretariat one month before the meeting and be considered and agreed by the Chairman before they are added to the plan. The draft agenda and papers should be sent to the Secretariat ten working days before the date of the Committee meeting. Urgent items will be accepted with three working days' notice prior to the meeting at the Chairman's discretion.
- 5.10 The Committee meeting agenda, reports and supporting papers will be circulated by the Secretariat a minimum of five working days before each Board meeting.
- 5.11 Four or more members may request the Chairman to hold an urgent, extraordinary meeting at a minimum of 48 hours' notice.

6. Conflicts of interest

- 6.1 Members will be subject to the codes of conduct and requirements for registration of interests of the bodies which they represent. Each Oversight Committee meeting agenda will have as a first item 'declaration of interests'.
- 6.2 Members will be asked at the start of each meeting to declare any interest in any agenda item, whether personal or prejudicial.
- 6.3 Where the interest in the matter is such that it is prejudicial, the chairman for the meeting will determine whether that member may be able to speak on this matter. The views of the member concerned will be considered before a decision is made.

- 6.4 Members of the Oversight Committee are requested to complete a short Register of Interests form. These are posted on the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership web pages.

7. Equalities and Inclusion

- 7.1 The Oversight Committee will operate in accordance with Equalities legislation and guidance, and actively value the benefits of diversity. It will ensure fair treatment and equality of opportunity; this includes representation and participation on the Oversight Committee. It will also work in accordance with any guidance on equalities produced for the Partnership.
- 7.2 The Partnership will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on its plans, policies and services. The responsibility for this will be determined by the Chairman.

8. Complaints Procedure

- 8.1. In the event of a complaint regarding the Partnership that has not been resolved locally, the complaint should in the first instance be passed to the Chairman of the Oversight Committee who will acknowledge the complaint in writing. The Chairman should then follow the County Council's Complaints Procedure, (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) which may involve seeking resolution in discussion with the Partnership, depending on the nature of the complaint.

9. Conflict resolution

- 9.1 In the event of any dispute or difference between all or any members of the Partnership, those concerned shall meet to settle the issue amicably. Otherwise the matter will be referred to all Chief Executives to resolve.