

Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership Board

Terms of Reference

17/10/11

1. Background

- 1.1. The Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) is one of the thematic partnerships in Oxfordshire. The partnerships are part of a strategic framework that the county council is expected to put in place to improve outcomes for local people.
- 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 each county area where two-tier local Government arrangements applies must-
 - Have in place a county-wide community safety strategy group with a defined minimum membership.
 - Prepare a community safety agreement for the area which identifies-
 - (a) the ways in which the responsible authorities in the county area might more effectively implement the priorities set out in local community safety strategic assessments through coordinated or joint working; and
 - (b) how the responsible authorities in the county area might otherwise reduce re-offending, crime and disorder or combat substance misuse through coordinated or joint working.
- 1.3 In Oxfordshire, the Safer Communities Partnership Board fulfils these statutory functions. Within the Community Safety Partnership the Board works alongside the Business Group to provide a framework for partnership working which ensures coordinated action on community safety matters, directing resources to the highest priority areas and ensure efficiency.

2.0 Partnership Board Functions

- 2.1 The core responsibility of the Partnership Board is the identification and agreement of community safety risks, opportunities and priorities which partners will address on a county-wide basis. To discharge this responsibility the board will-
 - a) Provide strategic direction and challenge on county-wide community safety issues.
 - b) Agree a longer-term 5 year plan renewable annually providing strategic direction for community safety across Oxfordshire.

- c) Ensure the community safety 5 year plan supports the CSP local strategies and ties in with community safety and cross-cutting elements from Oxfordshire 2030.
- d) Agree an annual community safety Business Plan that provides for decision-making to manage and mitigate Oxfordshire-wide risks e.g. crime trends, new or emerging threats, demographic changes etc.
- e) Oversee and agree the production of the strategic intelligence assessment which should inform partners of the current risks by way of a combination of data and environmental scanning.
- f) Ensure that the Officer Business Group incorporates within the annual Business Plan outcomes, measurable targets/timescales, and monitoring and evaluation processes. These will link to managing the critical risks identified from the annual strategic intelligence assessment.
- g) Ensure the Officer Business Group has access to common information and facilitates data sharing to support analysis and the identification of risks and opportunities.
- h) Hold the Officer Business Group and Lead Officers accountable for delivery against the agreed action plan.

The Board will also fulfil community safety requirements imposed on it by the partnership structures in Oxfordshire.

In fulfilling these functions the Board will take account of-

- Views of those who live or work in Oxfordshire and those who visit the county.
- Data on crime, fear of crime and community safety related matters.
- The overall priorities for Oxfordshire, expressed through Oxfordshire 2030 and individual partner's plans.
- National guidance and best practice on community safety and crime-related matters.
- The opportunities to improve outcomes through working with a wider group of partners, including the contribution Community Safety can make to other thematic partnerships and their plans.

All member organisations of OSCP accept that they are committed to working together. There is recognition that OSCP 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 service, health services and the police, and will respect the working and agendas of participating member agencies.

3. Membership

3.1. The OSCP Board will consist of the representatives of the following organisations-

- An Elected Member representative from each of the District Councils in Oxfordshire.
- An Elected Member representative from Oxfordshire County Council.
- A Thames Valley Police representative.
- A representative of Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust.
- A representative of Thames Valley Probation.
- A voluntary sector representative.
- The Chief Fire Officer for Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Elected Members can be supported by officers from the relevant Council.

Secretariat support is provided by the Safer Communities Unit of Oxfordshire County Council and officers from that Unit will attend Board meetings for that purpose.

3.2 All organisations are entitled to one vote, apart from the Chairman, who has an additional or casting vote. Members can be outvoted by a majority decision, except where a commitment to funding is requested, when individual members may opt out. Where voting members are not able to attend meetings, they may nominate a deputy, who will retain the voting right for the agency they are representing. The member must inform the Secretariat if they will not be attending and who their representative will be.

3.3 A quorum for OSCP meetings will be six members. Meetings cannot be held unless six members are present.

3.4 Where major decisions are being voted on, absent members have the opportunity to vote by proxy.

4. Meetings

4.1 The Partnership Board will meet three times per year. The Chairman can determine that a meeting is not required and in which case the Board may meet less frequently. However, before cancelling a meeting the Chairman must consult with Board Members and hold the meeting if requested to do so.

4.2 Members of the public can request to attend and speak at Board meetings meetings, with not less than 24 hours notice to the Secretariat. They may also be invited to attend by the Chairman. They may not vote, and must only speak on the items they have agreed with the Secretariat unless invited to do otherwise by the Chairman. Members of the public who wish to address the Board 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, (who will be an elected member from a local authority), will be appointed bi-annually, on an automatic alphabetical rotation basis between Responsible Authorities in accordance with the membership list below. The Chairman for the following period is considered to be the Deputy Chairman.

- Cherwell District Council.
- Oxford City Council.
- Oxfordshire County Council.
- Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service.
- Oxfordshire PCT
- South Oxfordshire District Council.
- Thames Valley Police.
- Thames Valley (Oxfordshire) Probation Service.
- Vale of White Horse District Council.
- West Oxfordshire District Council.

5.2 The Chairman should give OSCP six months notice should he or she choose to resign his or her position, (except in exceptional circumstances, where the chairmanship may be affected by elections).

5.3 The Chairman will have responsibility for ensuring that the tasks of OSCP are carried out through the constituent members. He or she will act as contact and signatory for agreements on behalf of the group.

5.4 The Chairman will preside at meetings of OSCP 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.

5.5 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, and will have the right to cast the Chairman's additional vote.

5.6 If neither the Chairman nor the Deputy Chairman is present, the Partnership will agree who will act as Chairman, for the duration of that meeting, but without the additional casting vote.

5.7 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.

5.8 A Forward Plan will outline key items for future agendas; this will be reviewed at each Board meeting. Additional items for the forward plan that are

not considered at a Board 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 Board meeting. Urgent items will be accepted with three working days' notice prior to the meeting at the Chairman's discretion

5.9 The Board meeting agenda, reports and supporting papers will be circulated by the Secretariat a minimum of five working days before each Board meeting.

5.10 Four or more OSCP voting members may request the Chairman to hold an urgent, extraordinary meeting at a minimum of 48 hours' notice.

6. Delegation

6.1. OSCP will agree a scheme of delegation and may delegate any of its responsibilities to individual officers or members, the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership Officer Business Group, CSPs, Tactical Business Groups (TBGs) or an appropriate agency, including established multi-agency steering groups. The delegation must be recorded in the minutes of the meetings.

6.2 Those who have delegated responsibilities must keep OSCP informed of their activities and proceedings, and submit formal written reports to the Partnership as requested.

6.3. TBGs covering specific areas may be convened as needed. Terms of reference for TBGs should be agreed by OSCP.

7.0. Conflicts of interest

7.1 Members will be subject to the codes of conduct and requirements for registration of interests of the bodies which they represent. Each Board meeting agenda will have as a first item 'declaration of interests'.

7.2 Members will be asked at the start of each meeting to declare any interest in any agenda item, whether personal or prejudicial.

7.3 Where the interest in the matter is such that it is prejudicial, the member concerned must not vote and would usually be expected to leave the meeting during consideration of that matter. The member in question may make a short statement before leaving the meeting.

7.4 Members of OSCP are requested to complete a short Register of Interests form. These are posted on the OSCP web pages.

8. Equalities and Inclusion

8.1 The partnership Board 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 OSCP. It will also work in accordance with any guidance on equalities produced for the Partnership.

8.2 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.

9. Complaints Procedure

9.1. 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 Board 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.

10. Conflict resolution

10.1 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. If this fails to result in agreement, the matter should be referred to the Public Service Board for final determination.