

# Notice of a Meeting

## Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5 July 2010 at 10.00 am

County Hall, Oxford, OX1 1ND

### Membership

Chairman - Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Deputy Chairman - Councillor Carol Viney

### Councillors:

John Goddard

Patrick Greene

Stewart Lilly

Lorraine Lindsay-

Gale

Sajjad Hussain Malik

Susanna Pressel

Bill Service

Alan Thompson

### Notes:

*A pre-meeting will be held at 9.30 am for all members of this Committee.*

*A sandwich lunch will be provided for all members of this Committee at 2.00 pm*

*Date of next meeting: 6 September 2010*

### What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

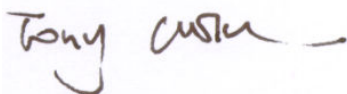
- Community safety; anti-social behaviour; crime and the fear of crime; fire and rescue; consumer protection; emergency planning; police issues; coroner's service; gypsies and travellers; drugs and alcohol awareness; road safety (police, trading standards, fire and rescue); adult learning (oversight of the adult learning service in provider mode); libraries; museums and heritage; the arts; archives; leisure and recreation; registration service; community cohesion; equalities and social inclusion; voluntary and community sector.
- The functions of the responsible authorities (local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, the police, primary care trusts, the probation service) which comprise a Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership/Community Safety Partnership.
- Those regulatory functions of the Planning & Regulation Committee not falling within the remit of the Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee.

### How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

### For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	- Councillor Lawrie Stratford
	E.Mail: <a href="mailto:lawrie.stratford@oxfordshire.gov.uk">lawrie.stratford@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Committee Officer	- Kath Coldwell, Tel: (01865) 815902
	<a href="mailto:kath.coldwell@oxfordshire.gov.uk">kath.coldwell@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>



Tony Cloke

Assistant Head of Legal & Democratic Services

June 2010

### About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 74 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

### **About Scrutiny**

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

### **What does this Committee do?**

The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting**

**A hearing loop is available at County Hall.**

## AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
2. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note on the back page**
3. **Minutes (Pages 1 - 22)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2010 (**SSC3**) and any matters arising on them.

4. **Speaking to or petitioning the Committee**
5. **Director's Update**

**10:15**

The Chief Fire Officer will give an oral update on key issues.

## REVIEW WORK

**To take evidence, receive progress updates and consider tracking reports**

6. **Community Pride and Self Help Select Committee**

**10:45**

*Contact Officer: Paul James, Head of Partnership Working, 01865 323959*

***“How can Oxfordshire County Council facilitate members of the community to act to benefit the wider community and what are the current barriers that prevent them from doing this?”***

The Council wishes to develop a strategy and framework by September 2010 which promotes and encourages community pride and self-help. The aim is to significantly reduce barriers so that individuals and communities are more able to help themselves.

This Scrutiny Committee is invited to contribute to the development of the strategy/framework by examining some of the barriers that people may be experiencing which act as a disincentive and by proposing some areas for improvement.

In doing so it is important that Scrutiny identifies areas:

- that we can do something about: for example: the bureaucracy around

checks on those working with young people may be a barrier to volunteering to run a local youth club but requires government legislation to change.

- that are relevant to our services and statutory responsibilities: for example: Community Safety provide an “Are you prepared?” booklet to every household to help people in emergencies.
- where we can add value and do things better for less: for example: improve access to useful information on our website.

The following documents are attached:

- a briefing paper which sets out the scope for this session (**SSC6(a)**);
- a programme (**SSC6(b)**);
- a summary of assistance already available to individuals and communities (**SSC6(c)**).

The Committee is invited to question the panellists and to propose some areas for improvement.

### **13.55 – 14.25 Sandwich lunch**

- (a) Briefing paper which sets out the scope for this session**\_(Pages 23 - 24)
- (b) Programme**\_(Pages 25 - 26)
- (c) Summary of recent activity**\_(Pages 27 - 28)

### **SCRUTINY MATTERS**

**To consider matters where the Committee can provide a challenge to the work of the Authority and its Partners**

#### **7. Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Discussion (Pages 29 - 38)**

**14:25**

*Contact Officer: Richard Webb, Acting Head of Community Safety and Trading Standards, 01865 815791*

The Home Office has produced guidance relating to the provisions in the Police and Justice Act 2006 on the scrutiny arrangements for crime and disorder.

Every local authority must create or designate a crime and disorder committee. This committee may be new or an existing committee may take on this role. The committee may be at county level or be set up as a joint committee with the districts. The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee is currently constituted to take on this role for the County Council.

The purpose of a crime and disorder committee is to:

a) review or scrutinise decisions made/actions taken by the “responsible authorities” in the exercise of their crime and disorder functions; and

b) make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions.

The responsible authorities in Oxfordshire are: Oxfordshire County Council, District Councils, Thames Valley Police, Thames Valley Police Authority, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust and the Probation Service.

In relation to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) it will be natural for this Committee to scrutinise the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) rather than the individual CDRPs, which lend themselves more readily to scrutiny by the district council scrutiny committees.

Members are reminded that this committee in its role as a crime and disorder committee will need to look at how the different partners come together (how the OSCP is co-ordinating its work to deliver positive outcomes) and what outcomes they are achieving, rather than focusing on one partner.

All of the county's district councils have already designated committees to scrutinise crime and disorder and there is a widely held view that work should not be duplicated.

A report on the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership is attached (**SSC7**) which includes the following information:

- an outline of the role of the OSCP
- achieving positive outcomes through a partnership approach
- examples of the work of OSCP in the last year
- the latest performance information
- details of district council scrutiny arrangements.

Councillor Kieron Mallon, the Chairman of the OSCP, has been invited for this agenda item to join in the discussion as to how to take this activity forward.

It is intended that the OSCP will report to this Committee at its September meeting on outcomes from the work programme that the scrutiny committee has formulated.

***The Committee is invited to:***

- ***hold an in depth discussion in relation to this new duty and how to take it forward, to include confirmation of who to invite to future meetings (e.g. who from the partnership will come, does the Committee want to invite district councillors?);***
- ***formulate a future work programme to detail the areas which the Committee wishes to scrutinise in respect to how the different partners are working together to deliver positive outcomes.***

**8. Fire Service Command and Control Room - the FiReControl and FireLink Projects**  
(Pages 39 - 42)

**14:55**

*Contact Officer: Colin Thomas, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Head of Service Support, 01865 855206*

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Head of Service Support will provide an update and answer the Committee’s questions.

Subject Matter	Document
Written update on progress of the Fire Service Command and Control Room (FiReControl and FireLink Projects)	SSC8

**9. Draft Action Plan arising from the Health and Safety Executive Inspection of Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service**

**15:15**

*Contact Officer: Colin Thomas, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Head of Service Support, 01865 855206*

To receive a report back on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Inspection, together with the Service’s draft action/implementation plan (**SSC9 (a)**). A GANNT chart showing the likely timescales for implementing the actions is also attached (**SSC9(b)**). A colour copy of the GANNT chart will be given limited circulation (to the Committee and to relevant Cabinet Members and Officers).

This further short report gives details of the action plan on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspection of Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the subsequent report received in March 2010. The action plan has not yet been formally approved by the HSE but will be subject to further discussion over the next 2 - 3 months.

***The Committee is invited to conduct a question and answer session in relation to the Health and Safety Executive Inspection.***

- (a) Draft Action Plan arising from the Health and Safety Executive Inspection of Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service\_(Pages 43 - 46)**
- (b) Annex 1\_(Pages 47 - 54)**

**REVIEW WORK**

**To take evidence, receive progress updates and consider tracking reports.**

**10. Debt Advice Scrutiny Review Progress Update**

**15:35**

*Contact Officers: Alexandra Bailey, Corporate Performance and Review Officer, 01865 816384; Richard Webb, Acting Head of Trading Standards and Community Safety, 01865 815791*

[Lead Member Review Group comprises Councillors Lawrie Stratford, Bill Service, John Goddard and John Sanders]

***The Committee is invited to receive an update from the Lead Member Review Group.***

## **BUSINESS PLANNING**

**To consider future work items for the Committee**

### **11. Scrutiny Work Programme**

**15:45**

*Contact Officer: Alexandra Bailey, Corporate Performance and Review Officer, 01865 816384*

Members are invited to put forward any suggestions for future scrutiny consideration.

It would be appropriate for any suggestions to be related to the Council's priorities and the remit of this Committee, although suggestions which cut across more than one scrutiny committee can also be put forward for consideration.

Committee members are asked to submit any suggestions prior to the meeting and as soon as possible to Alexandra Bailey.

Proposal forms working up these ideas, together with Directorate suggestions, will then be brought to this Committee's September meeting for consideration.

A list of key areas already investigated by this Committee and scrutinised in relation to this Committee's current remit is attached (**SSC11(a)**).

A list of items logged for future meetings is also attached (**SSC11(b)**).

Members are also reminded that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Chairman on 25 May requested that the Committee conduct an initial examination of the current policies and practice for admittance of young people to youth centres and it was agreed to:

- (a) include a review of youth centres in the 2010/11 work programme;
- (b) invite Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny and Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committees to join as part of a joint working group;
- (c) liaise with Tan Lea, Strategic Lead - Youth, Young People and Access to Education, to provide officer support with the review.

Members are also reminded that road safety was previously considered as a suitable cross cutting topic for select committee consideration and has not yet been investigated.

***Members of this Committee are invited to put forward any items for future scrutiny consideration.***

***(a) Key Areas already investigated by this Committee\_***(Pages 55 - 56)

***(b) Items logged for future meetings\_***(Pages 57 - 58)

## **12. Information Share (Pages 59 - 66)**

**16:05**

*Contact Officer: Richard Webb, Acting Head of Trading Standards and Community Safety, 01865 815791*

- **Report on the arrangements for meeting the requirements of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000**

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('the Act') regulates the use of covert activities by Local Authorities. It creates the statutory framework by which covert surveillance activities may be lawfully undertaken. Special authorisation arrangements need to be put in place whenever a Local Authority considers commencing covert surveillance or considers obtaining information by the use of informants or officers acting in an undercover capacity.

Codes of Practice issued under the Act provide guidance to authorities on the use of the Act. A revised Code of Practice came into force in April 2010. This new Code of Practice specifies that elected members should review the authority's use of the Act and set the policy at least once a year. They should also consider internal reports on the use of the Act on at least a quarterly basis.

An overview of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and associated Codes of Practice and the arrangements in place in Oxfordshire County Council is attached (**SSC12**).

***The Committee is invited to receive an overview of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and associated Codes of Practice and the arrangements in place in Oxfordshire County Council, in advance of future reports providing information on the use of this Act by Oxfordshire County Council.***

## **13. Tracking Scrutiny Items**

**16:20**

Report back on advice given by this Committee to the Cabinet, full Council, other scrutiny committees, relevant strategic partnership bodies and other organisations where appropriate.



The Chief Fire Officer will give a verbal update on activities in relation to:

- **The Recruitment and Retention of Retained Firefighters Scrutiny Review**
- **The Road Safety Partnership**

**14. Forward Plan**

**16:30**

The Committee is asked to note any items of interest on the current version of the Forward Plan which covers the time period July to October 2010.

**15. 16:30 Approx Close of Meeting**

## Declarations of Interest

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 9.1 of the Constitution for a fuller description.

### **The duty to declare ...**

You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, ie where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):

- (i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
- (ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

### **Whose interests are included ...**

"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

### **When and what to declare ...**

The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".

In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

### **Taking part if you have an interest ...**

Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

### **"Prejudicial" interests ...**

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

### **What to do if your interest is prejudicial ...**

If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

### **Exceptions ...**

There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

### **Seeking Advice ...**

It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.