

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -12 MAY 2016

PARTNERSHIP PROTOCOL SUPPORTING THE WORK OF THE SAFER OXFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP

Report by the Head of Community Protection Services

Background

1. In March 2016, the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership Board accepted the proposed changes to the partnership at the last ever meeting of the Board following a year-long review. As such, the elected member-led Board has been reconstituted as an Oversight Committee and the officer-led Business Group is now known as the Coordination Group. Overall, the partnership is now called the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership.
2. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership is one of the thematic partnerships in Oxfordshire. These partnerships are part of a strategic framework that local authorities are expected to put in place to improve outcomes for local people. The Safer Oxfordshire Partnership fulfils the statutory requirement to provide a county-wide strategy group that develops a community safety agreement and plan for the area.
3. The partnership was last reviewed in 2011 prior to the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners. The review at that time was focussed on revising the partnership (at both Board and Officer Group level) in preparation for the arrival of Police and Crime Commissioners. Since this time there have been important changes in the community safety landscape which impacted on how community safety partners co-ordinate activity to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB). Some of these changes include:
 - the loss of the County Council's Safer Communities Unit which supported the Partnership;
 - the emergence of issues not foreseen at the time of the review, such as child sexual exploitation and modern day slavery;
 - increased focus on preventing crime through safeguarding vulnerable people (adults and children); and
 - the new duties to support the prevention of terrorism.

Key changes to the Partnership

4. The name changes are only a cosmetic element of the transformation being made to how this partnership will work to improve community safety and reduce crime in Oxfordshire. During a range of discussions and a workshop on the way the partnership wishes to work going forward it was agreed that a key element of the change was to ensure that the partnership operates on a more 'bottom up' and collaborative basis. It was also important to ensure that the constitution of the Partnership reflected statutory accountabilities for community safety.
5. To support this approach, there is an expectation that partners will bring issues to the table for discussion in order to seek agreement on how we can best address these issues together. Moreover, it is recognised that the Coordination Group consists of the experts who understand what the community safety risks are across the county and who can drive forward action to tackle these issues. It will be up to this group to make the changes work in practice. The Coordination Group will also be responsible for developing strong links to the Safeguarding Boards, particularly in forward planning and the identification of priority risks.
6. The elected member-led Oversight Committee will provide support and challenge to the Coordination Group. It will also provide a countywide forum to discuss shared community safety concerns at the senior level, including the Police and Crime Commissioner, and provide a direct link to the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel.
7. The terms of reference for the Committee and Coordination Group can be found on the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership website:
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/safer-oxfordshire-partnership>

Partnership Protocol and Next steps

8. A working protocol has been developed setting out the relationship between the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership, the district level Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), the adult and children Safeguarding Boards, the Health & Wellbeing Board, and the Childrens Trust.
9. The protocol sets out the framework within which these Boards will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of people living in Oxfordshire, including the distinct roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements for each of them.
10. It also refers to the relationship between the Boards and other partnership forums in Oxfordshire and sets out how the Partnerships and Boards will adopt an integrated approach to tackling key issues and commissioning services.
11. This protocol has been accepted by all the main partnerships and Boards.
12. The Partnership has also drafted the Community Safety Agreement for 2016/17. This agreement will be updated in May once the local CSP priorities have all

been confirmed. The Partnership will then commence planning on how we will work together to deliver against the shared priorities.

Recommendation

- 13. The Performance Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the report and provide any comments.**

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