

Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board
14 May 2026
Oxfordshire Combatting Drugs Partnership –
Annual Progress Report (2024-2026)

Report by Ansaf Azhar, Director of Public Health and Communities

RECOMMENDATION

The Health and Wellbeing Board is **RECOMMENDED** to note the activities and outcomes of the Oxfordshire Combatting Drugs Partnership, reflected in the Annual Progress Report in Annex 1.

Executive Summary

1. The Oxfordshire Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP) brings together Local Authority, NHS, criminal justice and voluntary sector partners to reduce the harms from alcohol and drugs.

Overall Oxfordshire continues to perform strongly against national benchmarks, particularly in relation to treatment access, continuity of care following release from prison and drug-related deaths. Key achievements over the reporting period include:

- Increase in the number of adults accessing drug and alcohol treatment
- Strong performance against national continuity of care targets
- Significant expansion of naloxone availability
- Strengthened system response to emerging drug threats through the local drug information system.

However, challenges remain in particular:

- Declining numbers of children and young people accessing specialist substance use support
- Persistent inequalities in drug and alcohol related harm.

This report provides the Health and Wellbeing Board with assurance on progress to date and outlines priority areas for system focus.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

2. The activity of the Oxfordshire Combatting Drugs Partnership supports the vision, values, objectives and strategic priorities in the County Council's corporate plan by tackling inequalities through ensuring that services are

accessible to all and demonstrates our commitment to prioritising the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Financial Implications

3. No direct funding implications from this report. The work described has been funded by the PH grant and associated OHID grants.

Comments checked by:

Silvia Sousa, Business Partnering Accountant for Public Health and Communities, silvia.sousa@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

4. The annual progress report of the Oxfordshire Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP) at Annex 1, sets out and updates on the local area's response to the Government's 2021 Strategy *From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives*.
5. The Government Strategy requires a strong local partnership response, that brings together all relevant organisations and key individuals, to take a proactive approach to implementing the Government's priorities and work together to jointly agree local provision and identify areas for improvement.
6. The Strategy further requires the partnership to provide a single point of contact for central government and a nominated chair to be the responsible owner. The report confirms that the Oxfordshire CDP is chaired by the Director of Public Health at Oxfordshire County Council, Ansaf Azhar, who is also the Senior Responsible Owner for the CDP.

Comments checked by:

Janice White,
Principal Solicitor – ASC, Send and Education

Staff Implications

7. There is no staffing implications linked to this report.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

8. Any Equality and Inclusion implications for activities are assessed when services are commissioned. There are no Equality and Inclusion implications specifically linked to this report.

Sustainability Implications

9. There are no sustainability implications specifically linked to this report.

Risk Management

10. This report covers the emerging threat of Synthetic Opioids. Details of mitigating actions taken under the “Reducing Drug Related Death” workstream are detailed in the report.

Consultations

11. There are no consultations as this is retrospective review of activity in the Combatting Drugs Partnership.

Ansaf Azhar
Director of Public Health and Communities

Annex: Annex 1 Oxfordshire Combatting Drugs Partnership
Annual Progress Report 2024-2026

Background papers: NIL

Other Documents: NIL

Contact Officer: Tom Addey, Public Health Registrar

May 2026