



Responsible Authorities Group (RAG)

Terms of Reference

(Version 8, Drafted 10 September 2012)

Purpose of Group

1. The Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) will formulate and implement a three-year strategy within Milton Keynes to reduce:
 - Crime and disorder
 - The misuse of drugs and alcohol
 - Re-offending by adults and young peopleAnd to promote
 - Accurate perception of crime
 - Social behaviour
2. The three-year strategy will be revised annually.
3. The RAG will base the three year strategy on:
 - An annual strategic assessment of crime and social behaviour in the area
 - Consultation with the public and with stakeholders.
4. The RAG will meet the statutory requirements within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and take due regard to the suggested practice, hallmarks of partnership performance and the need for links with other partnerships and bodies.
5. The RAG will liaise closely with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Thames Valley and take due regard to the PCC's policies in all its actions and decisions.
6. RAG members will provide strategic and executive accountability, direction and decision-making to the Community Safety Partnership.

Statutory Requirements – Unitary Area (Delivering Safer Communities Guidance 2007) amended in 2011 by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act

“Although the legislation makes reference to a ‘Strategy Group’.....these may be called a ‘Responsible Authority Group’”. (In Milton Keynes the RAG is the strategy group).

- This Group is ultimately responsible for preparing and implementing a strategic assessment and partnership plan.
- Each of the five responsible authorities must be represented on the Group.
- At least one of the representatives from each of the five responsible authorities must hold a senior position within their home organisation.
- Where there is an elected member responsible for community safety on the Council for the district/unitary area, they must also be a member of this Group.
- The Group can decide the frequency of its meetings and can invite others to their meetings.
- There must be arrangements for appointing a Chair, agreeing the period for which the Chair can serve and the grounds on which the Chair can be changed within this period
- At least once a year, the Group needs to consider whether the partnership has the requisite skills and knowledge to meet the statutory requirements.
- The Strategy Group will prepare an information-sharing protocol.
- This protocol will be signed by all responsible authorities and will govern the sharing of information between the responsible authorities.
- The Strategy Group shall take steps as it considers appropriate to bring to the attention of persons who live or work in the area, or who might otherwise be interested, information about what was discussed at such meetings and where the meetings are to be held.
- The Strategy Group is responsible for the implementation of the partnership plan.
- The Strategy Group must have in place arrangements for assessing the value for money of partnership activities.
- The Strategy Group will take due regard to the policies and strategy of the elected Police and Crime Commissioner for the area.
- The Strategy Group should commission domestic homicide reviews according to the statutory guidance issued by the Home Office.

Specific Tasks

- In meeting the above statutory requirements, the RAG will agree and approve the priorities, objectives, targets and actions in the 3 year Partnership plan and be responsible for progress and performance following implementation.

General Tasks

- The Group will work with the support and advice of the Community Safety Forum, thus ensuring the views of the co-operating bodies and key stakeholders are taken closely into account
- The Group will consider and have regard to, any report or recommendations provided by the Community Safety, Crime and Policing Select Committee, (known in law as the Crime and Disorder Sub-Committee) and have regard to these in exercising its functions. It will respond to that committee indicating any action it proposes to take.
- To receive reports from the Performance Group, identify and resolve barriers to improvement and direct as necessary to meet the aims and objectives of the three year plan.
- To approve the terms of reference for the whole SaferMK Partnership and all elements of it and ensure they are reviewed annually.
- To commit appropriate levels of resources, including funding, to the work of the Partnership.
- The group shall take account of equality and diversity issues and consider the needs of high risk and vulnerable groups in all decision making.

Membership

Voting members with one vote each (The Responsible Authorities)

- The nominated Fire Officer representing the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority.
- The Chief Executive representing Milton Keynes Council.
- The Director of Standards and Public Engagement representing Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust.
- The Local Police Area Commander representing Thames Valley Police.
- The Nominated member representing Thames Valley Probation.

Non voting members

- The cabinet member with responsibility for Community Safety (Statutory requirement in DSC).

Advisors to RAG

- Parish Councils - one representing urban parishes and one representing rural parishes.
- Assistant Director of Integrated Support and Social Care (Children's Services) Milton Keynes Council.

Scrutiny

- The Chair and one other observer from the Community Safety, Crime and Policing Select Committee that are from different political groups from that of the ex-officio Chair of RAG, will be invited to attend all meetings of RAG and may contribute to discussions at the discretion of the Chair.

Officers in attendance

- The Head of Community Safety / Youth Offending Team.
- Thames Valley Police Deputy Area Commander (Chair of Performance Group).
- Assistant Director, Housing and Communities Milton Keynes Council (Deputy Chair of Performance Group).
- The Thames Valley Police Partnership Inspector.
- Fire Service Partnership Manager.
- Thames Valley Probation MK Partnership manager.
- Any person attending in support of a specific agenda item or otherwise as required or requested by a Responsible Authority or the SaferMK Manager.

Arrangements for Substitutions

- If a voting member is unable to attend a meeting he or she should appoint a deputy to act as a substitute.
- Any nominated deputies or substitutes for voting members must be of an appropriate seniority and be adequately briefed.

Definition of Quorum

- A quorum will consist of a minimum of four representatives of the five Responsible Authorities, except in financial matters when an affirmative vote of all five members will be required.

Arrangements for Chairing

- The arrangement for Chairing (as required by Regulation) and agreed by the voting members (The Responsible Authorities), is that the Milton Keynes Council Cabinet member with responsibility for Community Safety will be appointed Chair, with the Vice Chair being the Police Area Commander for Milton Keynes. From July 2013 there will be annual election of Vice-Chair, who will be appointed from among the members of RAG.
- The appointments of Chair and Vice Chair will be aligned to the planning cycle, required by Regulation, formally revisited annually.
- Any change in the Chair or Vice Chair during the period, will be on grounds of either;

- a) the un-availability of an individual to act in that capacity, or
- b) other reason agreed by the voting members (The Responsible Authorities).

Frequency and nature of Meetings

- The group will meet no less than 4 times a year and more frequently as and when determined by the members.
- Meetings will be open to the public who may be invited to speak at the discretion of the chair. Confidential items may be discussed in private with the prior agreement of the chair of the meeting.

Budget Management

- The Head of SaferMK/Youth Offending Team is the appointed budget manager for the funds available to SaferMK, other than money controlled by the partnership agencies.

Servicing of Meetings

- Democratic Services within Milton Keynes Council will service the meetings of RAG.

Review of Terms of Reference

- As part of the statutory requirement upon the RAG to annually consider whether the Partnership has the requisite knowledge and skills contributing to the Partnership, these terms of reference will be reviewed annually in January.

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10 September 2012