

Oxfordshire Local Independent Forum of Chairs and Vice- Chairs of Standards Committees

1. At the exploratory meeting on 4 March 2010 the Chairs and Vice-Chairs present liked the idea of an Oxfordshire forum, particularly the local benefit. This would be distinct from the national Independent Members' Forum which had some positive aspects, but there were also concerns that it may be too unwieldy and that some individuals used it as a platform to promote more local or partisan issues.
2. The Forum decided on a frequency of every 6 months (roughly). It was noted that the MOs meet every 2 months, rotating locations, and that the Forum could meet immediately after one of those meetings. The MOs were very supportive and willing to look after the administration, for which the Chairs and Vice-Chairs were grateful.
3. After discussing relevant dates (bearing in mind local elections, etc.) it was agreed to meet on 9th July in Abingdon after the Oxfordshire Secretaries and Monitoring Officers Group meeting at the Vale of White Horse DC.
4. There was some discussion about what the purpose and content of the meetings should be. The main themes were sharing best practice and discussing what independent Chairs and Vice-Chairs should be doing. This should focus on proactive work, not on hearings and complaints. It was suggested we agree one or two subjects for discussion each time.
5. Although aimed at Chairs and Vice-Chairs, it was also agreed that other independent members be allowed to attend to represent their authority's Standards Committee in the event of unavailability.

Issues for Discussion

Administrative support

Role of Monitoring Officers

- in helping set the agenda?
- liaison beforehand?
- at the meeting?