



1:00 p.m.

Page 1 of 5

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

- DEI Charter follow-up – Norwich
 - Given that the new Plan is being developed, it was agreed to remove this as a standing item on the agenda and address any concerns through the new Plan.
 - P. Heywood suggested that DEI be part of the fabric of the overall Plan rather than a separate Coalition or action item.
 - The DEI Action Coalition will connect with Norwich staff to provide support in achieving outcomes as desired.
- 2025 Summit – Mt. Elgin: November 7, 2025
 - Formal invitations will be sent to allow for RSVPs.
 - Detailed plans and an agenda for the meeting will be developed the week of October 13.
 - The Summit will be used to present a draft of the Plan to stakeholders and receive additional feedback. The Committee noted that it would be beneficial to highlight the milestones and successes of the previous plan at the Summit, building upon the work that has been accomplished.
- Use of Space Policy Update
 - Processes are being finalized.
- Canadian Index of Well-Being Survey
 - Results have been shared with StrategyCorp as a key piece of data for the new Plan.
 - A summary of the findings will be shared with the Steering Committee and various stakeholders. Committee members noted that numerous groups and organizations could benefit from this information. P. Heywood advised that SWPH might be able to play a role in analyzing some of the results.
- Oxford County Grant Program
 - Staff are reviewing applications and will make recommendations for funding.
- Updated Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
 - Engagement is underway, including focus groups with people with lived experience.
 - A survey was sent to all school Principals in Oxford County.
 - A draft of the Plan will be circulated to all area municipal Councillors ahead of the Summit to provide feedback in advance of finalizing the Plan.

5. Action Coalition Updates (Round Table)

- Oxford Housing Action Collaborative (on hold)
 - Rebecca Smith was in attendance to provide an update.
 - An action item included in the Oxford County Homelessness Response

Strategy is to establish an Action Collaborative as part of SWO. The Collaborative has not been initiated yet as the plan is to eventually transition the group working on the HART Hub into this Collaborative, as many of the partners would sit on both.

- A new Homeless Support Centre is currently a top priority.
 - There is currently a call for applications for \$500,000 for community partners to help move people out of homelessness.
 - Finkle Street units are being transitioned into supportive housing units.
 - Progress is being made on the Rent Supplement Program.
- Oxford Mental Health and Addictions Action Coalition (Peter Heywood)

Oxford Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Refresh Workshop

- On September 10, the OMHAAC hosted a pivotal workshop to advance the refresh of the Oxford County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy. This session marked a significant step in ensuring our local approach to substance use and mental health remains relevant, evidence-based, and responsive to emerging community needs.

Workshop Overview

- The workshop brought together a diverse group of community partners, service providers, and individuals with lived and living experience. Facilitated by Brooke and Ashley, participants were encouraged to engage in open dialogue and explore key issues in depth.

Purpose and Goals

- The refresh aims to:
 - Integrate a mental health promotion lens for a more holistic, person-centred approach.
 - Revalidate the eight core themes of the strategy.
 - Review over 80 existing recommendations, identifying completed actions, outdated items, and new priorities.
 - Incorporate innovative practices and address emerging trends in substance use and mental health.
 - Update local data and trends using resources like the Community Health Profile reports.

Key Focus Areas Discussed

- Participants engaged with questions designed to shape the refreshed strategy, including:
 - Overall Direction: What's changed in Oxford County? Where are the gaps in services, interventions, and policy? How can the strategy better align with other local initiatives (e.g., housing, poverty, youth wellness)?
 - Action and Implementation: Which actions have been successful, and what new steps are needed?
 - Prevention and Early Intervention: What strategies are most needed,

and which populations require more support?

- Low-Barrier Supports and Access: How can we reduce barriers such as transportation, intake requirements, and waitlists? What would a truly “low barrier” system look like?
- Treatment and Wraparound Services: How can treatment better integrate substance use and mental health supports, including peer support and trauma-informed care?
- Community Safety and Partnerships: How can partnerships be strengthened to promote safety and reduce harms? What role should first responders and community agencies play?
- Integration of Mental Health Promotion: How can resilience-building and trauma-informed education be embedded into prevention initiatives, especially for youth and families?

Next Steps

- All feedback from the workshop will be compiled into a stakeholder engagement summary report, which will directly inform the updated strategy. The refreshed Oxford County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy will provide clear direction for the years ahead, supporting both current residents and future generations. It is expected that the refreshed strategy will be published in the second half of 2026.

Planet Youth

- Planet Youth will be moving forward with Year 1 data collection. Year 2 and 3 funding is not in place.
 - First data points are planned to be collected before the end of the year.
 - Findings of the report will be shared with SWO and other stakeholders.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Coalition (Ayesha Sajid)
 - The Coalition members have approved the DEI postcard. These postcards will be used at the Summit to promote DEI and the DEI Action Coalitions' work.
 - In previous DEI Action Coalition meetings, concerns were raised by the community regarding recent interactions with local police services. After consulting with WPS and OPP and considering the interests of Coalition members, the Coalition plans to invite police services to the meeting in October.
 - The Coalition will be changing from a monthly posting of Article of the Month to bi-monthly.
 - Domestic Abuse Resource Team (Ashley Brown)
 - The Coordinator roles at DART are being transitioned and will be in place by January 2026.
 - The DART table has been restructuring to bring more focus, direction, and stronger coordination to the meetings. B-SAFER training was offered to

community partners in June, including police, women's shelters, CAS, and Welkin. We also hosted the Blanket Exercise for DART members to build knowledge and understanding Indigenous history in Canada to better understand Indigenous experiences of gender-based violence.

- We are developing our MARAM Table and community protocol. We are excited to be at the stage of running mock cases, which helps us build capacity, improve efficiency, and refine the process.
- In September, DART organized the Take Back the Night March in Tillsonburg. The event was well attended and supported by the community.
- We continue to offer training and public workshops for the general public in Oxford County, including sessions at the Tillsonburg Library and WERC.
- Looking ahead, DART is training our members on the rise of strangulation in our community, with a particular focus on youth. We plan to launch a Spring 2026 public education campaign on strangulation prevention.

6. Next Steps & New Business

- iHEAL Program
 - The Committee reviewed the information and noted its connection the Gender Based Violence priority risk area.

7. Upcoming Meeting Dates – Oxford County Administration Building – Room 129

- Remaining 2025 meetings:
 - October 27th
 - Summit – November 7th
 - December 1st

8. Adjournment

Resolution No. 3 Moved by: P. Heywood
 Seconded by: B. Martin

RESOLVED that the Safe and Well Oxford Steering Committee meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried