

Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please.

Contact: Senior Scrutiny Officer, Gary Woods on email gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk

Key – Declarable interests are :-

- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's)
- Other Registerable Interests (ORI's)
- Non Registerable Interests (NRI's)

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance

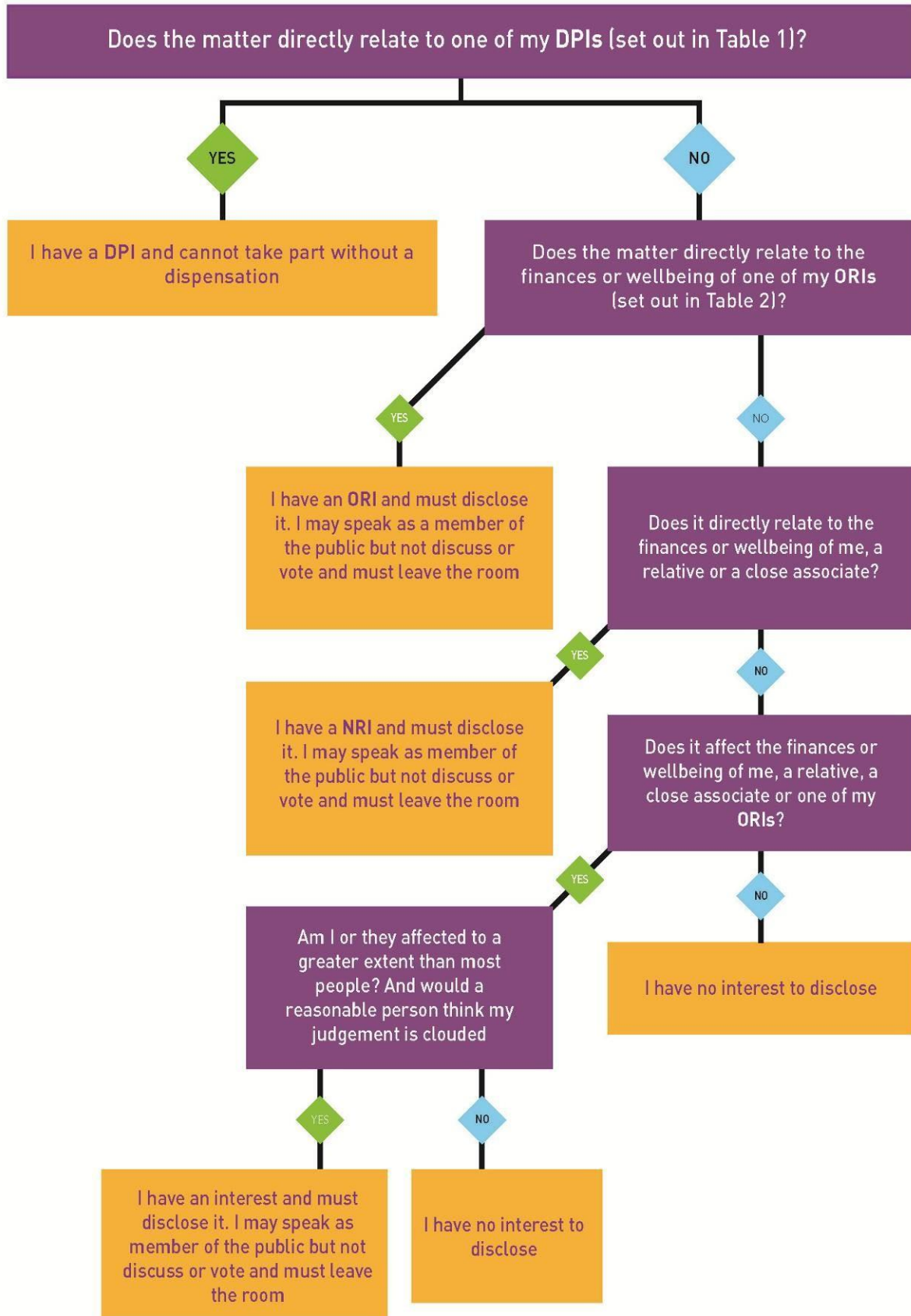


Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

This page is intentionally left blank

Council Chamber, Dunedin House Evacuation Procedure & Housekeeping

Entry

Entry to the Council Chamber is via the South Entrance, indicated on the map below.



In the event of an emergency alarm activation, everyone should immediately start to leave their workspace by the nearest available signed Exit route.

The emergency exits are located via the doors on either side of the raised seating area at the front of the Council Chamber.

Fires, explosions, and bomb threats are among the occurrences that may require the emergency evacuation of Dunedin House. Continuous sounding and flashing of the Fire Alarm is the signal to evacuate the building or upon instruction from a Fire Warden or a Manager.

The Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point is in the overflow car park located across the road from Dunedin House.

The allocated assembly point for the Council Chamber is: D2

Map of the Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point - the overflow car park:



All occupants must respond to the alarm signal by immediately initiating the evacuation procedure.

When the Alarm sounds:

1. **stop all activities immediately.** Even if you believe it is a false alarm or practice drill, you MUST follow procedures to evacuate the building fully.
2. **follow directional EXIT signs** to evacuate via the nearest safe exit in a calm and orderly manner.
 - do not stop to collect your belongings
 - close all doors as you leave
3. **steer clear of hazards.** If evacuation becomes difficult via a chosen route because of smoke, flames or a blockage, re-enter the Chamber (if safe to do so). Continue the evacuation via the nearest safe exit route.
4. **proceed to the Evacuation Assembly Point.** Move away from the building. Once you have exited the building, proceed to the main Evacuation Assembly Point immediately - located in the **East Overflow Car Park**.
 - do not assemble directly outside the building or on any main roadway, to ensure access for Emergency Services.

5. await further instructions.

- **do not re-enter the building under any circumstances without an “all clear”** which should only be given by the Incident Control Officer/Chief Fire Warden, Fire Warden or Manager.
- do not leave the area without permission.
- ensure all colleagues and visitors are accounted for. Notify a Fire Warden or Manager immediately if you have any concerns

Toilets

Toilets are located immediately outside the Council Chamber, accessed via the door at the back of the Chamber.

Water Cooler

A water cooler is available at the rear of the Council Chamber.

Microphones

During the meeting, members of the Committee, and officers in attendance, will have access to a microphone. Please use the microphones, when invited to speak by the Chair, to ensure you can be heard by the Committee and those in attendance at the meeting.

This page is intentionally left blank

Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of the Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday 22 May 2025.

Present: Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Chair), Cllr Bob Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Katie Weston

Officers: Sharon Cooney, Mandy MacKinnon (A,H&W); Louise Hollick (ChS); Aishah Waithe, Gary Woods (CS)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr Ray Godwin

CSS/1/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CSS/2/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

CSS/3/25 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Community Safety Select Committee meeting which was held on 27 March 2025 for approval and signature.

AGREED that the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 27 March 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CSS/4/25 Action Plan for Agreed Recommendations - Review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres

Consideration was given to a draft Action Plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the recently concluded review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres would be implemented, including success measures and target dates for completion. Presented by the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Service Manager – Public Protection, specific attention was drawn to the following:

- Recommendation 2 (Utilising existing partnerships (including engagement with local business forums / groups), consideration be given over how to maximise the annual events and markets programme to provide further opportunities for increased footfall / exposure to town centre environments): This (as well as elements of other Committee recommendations) would be addressed via *Operation Shield* which was now in progress and was working well (recent feedback from local businesses indicated that they had experienced their busiest day since Christmas 2024).

The Committee thanked SBC officers for collating the draft Action Plan and approved the content as presented. The first update on progress of the actions would be

required in approximately 12 months, with the Committee looking forward to seeing the impact on all six town centres as each of them were unique spaces which made the Borough what it was.

AGREED that the Action Plan in relation to the recently completed Scrutiny Review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres be approved.

CSS/5/25 Scrutiny Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse

Consideration was given to the draft scope and project plan for the Scrutiny Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse, the proposed aims of which would be to:

- Understand the impact of domestic abuse on children, the extent of this issue across the Borough, and the ways in which those who experience this are identified. In particular, explore how domestic abuse impacts children in their early years, and the extent of the lasting impact as they grow older.
- Articulate the current local offer for children and young people affected by domestic abuse, providing clarity for frontline professionals, families and children / young people.
- Explore opportunities for early intervention (focusing on those services engaging with children / families with children in their early years) to protect children from the enduring impacts of domestic abuse.

A large number of contributors had been identified in relation to this scrutiny topic, including SBC directorates / departments (Children's Services; Public Health), Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership, Cleveland Police, and Harbour. Given the intention to focus specifically on early years, it was also proposed to engage with NHS Trusts from a midwifery and health visitor perspective, as well as early years providers (e.g. childminders). It was anticipated that the Committee's findings and recommendations would be reported to Cabinet in March 2026.

Members acknowledged that some difficult discussions and decisions lay ahead for the Committee in what was expected to be a lengthy piece of work. Capturing the voice of the child was a vital element for this review, and whilst there would be a concentration on early years children, the Committee would need to be mindful of situations where older siblings within families may also be affected by instances of domestic abuse. From a mental health support point of view, attention was drawn to the work directed towards young people at Eaglescliffe Medical Practice.

AGREED that the draft scope and project plan for the Children affected by Domestic Abuse review be approved.

CSS/6/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025-2026

CHAIR'S UPDATE

Reference was made to the previous Chair's desire for the Committee to be continually briefed about a range of community safety-related matters outside that of its in-depth review work. Members were therefore reminded of the 'Other Information Sources / Updates' section within the Committee's work programme document – this covered a number of topics which the Committee may wish to follow-up on in order to gain a local perspective on the issues raised.

WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

Consideration was given to the Committee's current work programme. The next meeting was due to take place on 26 June 2025 where the main items would include the first evidence-gathering session for the Children affected by Domestic Abuse review and the first progress update on the Action Plan which was agreed following the Committee's previous review of Outdoor Play Provision.

AGREED that the Chair's Update and Community Safety Select Committee Work Programme 2025-2026 be noted.

Chair:

This page is intentionally left blank

Community Safety Select Committee

26 June 2025

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CHILDREN AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE**Summary**

The first evidence-gathering session for the Committee's review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse will consider submissions from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) departments, Public Health (Adults, Health and Wellbeing), and Early Help, Safeguarding and Children in our Care (Children's Services).

Detail

1. This initial evidence session will outline some key elements in relation to domestic abuse and its impact on children. Information will include:

- Domestic abuse legislation and the legal framework relating to children
- Prevalence and known impacts
- Local Authority duties
- Strategic vision for Stockton-on-Tees
- Early help support
- Social work interventions
- Multi-agency work
- Commissioned services

Two presentations have been prepared and are included within these meeting papers. The SBC Strategic Health & Wellbeing Manager and the SBC Assistant Director – Early Help, Safeguarding and Children in our Care are scheduled to be in attendance to give a summary of these submissions and address any subsequent Committee comments / questions.

2. In advance of this session, Members may wish to familiarise themselves with some relevant background material in relation to this scrutiny topic:

- Home Office: Domestic Abuse – Statutory Guidance (Jul 22)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62c6df068fa8f54e855dfe31/Domestic_Abuse_Act_2021_Statutory_Guidance.pdf (page 52: impact on child victims)
- GOV.UK: Victims in their own right? Babies, children and young people's experiences of domestic abuse (part 3: opportunities to identify and intervene early)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/babies-children-and-young-peoples-experiences-of-domestic-abuse/victims-in-their-own-right-babies-children-and-young-peoples-experiences-of-domestic-abuse-accessible#part-3-opportunities-to-identify-and-intervene-early>
- Stockton-on-Tees Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-2028
https://www.stockton.gov.uk/media/3841/Domestic-Abuse-Strategy-2022-28-Accessible/pdf/Stockton-on-Tees_Domestic_Abuse_Strategy_2022-28_Final_Accessible.pdf?m=1674053753577

3. Attention is also drawn to a previous Scrutiny Review of Domestic Abuse and its Impact on Children undertaken in 2019-2020 by the SBC Children and Young People Select Committee. The final report was presented to Cabinet in January 2020 and can be accessed at <https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/202001231630/Agenda/att37946.pdf>.

The ensuing Action Plan in relation to the agreed recommendations was presented and agreed by the Children and Young People Select Committee in August 2020 – see <https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/Data/Children%20and%20Young%20People%20Select%20Committee/202008261700/Agenda/att38920.pdf>.

4. A copy of the agreed scope and plan for this review is included for information.

Name of Contact Officer: Gary Woods

Post Title: Senior Scrutiny Officer

Telephone No: 01642 526187

Email Address: gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk

Domestic abuse

Mandy MacKinnon BSc(Hons) MSc

June 2025

An introduction to...

- Legal definition of domestic abuse
- Prevalence of domestic abuse
- Impacts of domestic abuse
- Local authority duties
- Domestic Abuse Commissioner
- Strategic vision for Stockton-on-Tees
- Commissioned services

Defining domestic abuse

DA Act 2021

... involves any **single incident or pattern** of conduct where someone's behaviour towards another is abusive, and where the people involved are **aged 16 or over**, and **are or have been personally connected*** to each other.

Abuse can involve:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial and/or economic
- Emotional
- Controlling and/or coercive

Children are recognised as victims in their own right if they see or hear domestic abuse

Abusive behaviour directed at over 16s is DA.

Abusive behaviour directed at under 16s is child abuse

Prevalence of domestic abuse

Crime Survey England & Wales, 2024

Approximately one in five (20.5%) people aged 16 years+ had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 years: 33,508 people in Stockton-on-Tees.

An estimated 4.8% (7,845) of people aged 16 years and over (6.6% of women and 3.0% of men) experienced domestic abuse in the last year.

16yrs+ population of Stockton-on-Tees estimated to be 163,456 (ONS population estimates, June 2023)

5,225

Recorded incidents of DA in Stockton-on-Tees 2023/24

3,907

Recorded DA crimes 2023/24

26

per 1,000 population DA-related incidents & crimes. England & Wales avg: 24 NE avg: 32

17%

of all crimes recorded by Cleveland police are DA-related 2023/24

239

homeless presentations involved domestic abuse 23/24

64%

of victims are unsupportive of prosecuting their abuser



Domestic Abuse in Stockton-on-Tees

Domestic Abuse victim survivors:



73% Female



27% Male

40%

of domestic abuse incidents in Stockton-on-Tees involved a repeat victim

25%

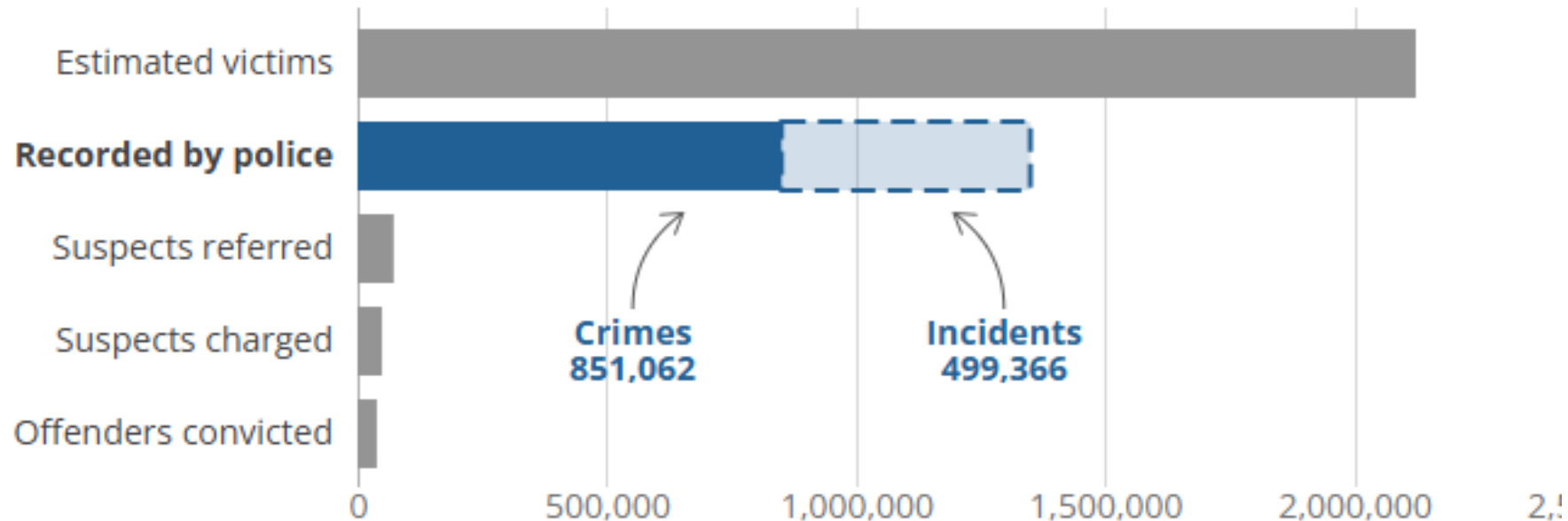
of referrals made to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's Children's Services were domestic abuse-related 2023/24



There were 1010 referrals into Stockton-on-Tees Children's Services that had domestic abuse listed as the reason for contact 2023/24

Domestic abuse is a crime

Number of domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes recorded by the police, England and Wales, year ending (YE) March 2024



Source: Police recorded crime data from the Home Office

The impact of domestic abuse

- Fear, anxiety, depression, eating disorders
- Loneliness and isolation, withdrawn
- Physical injuries, untreated injuries
- Sleep, ability to function
- Sexual health, urinary tract infections
- Post traumatic stress disorder / enduring trauma
- Ability to work, disruption, absence
- Financial hardship
- Homelessness
- Substance misuse
- Severe and multiple disadvantage – interconnecting issues: complex lives
- Suicide

Pregnancy

- It is estimated that 30% of domestic abuse begins in pregnancy
- Incidence is likely to be higher due to under reporting
- Suicide leading cause of maternal death; 43% of whom had reported experiencing DA
- Stress & cortisol, state of alert
- Foetal trauma, death, low birth weight, premature birth
- Brain development, brain function, emotional regulation



Infants

- Under 12 months highest risk of serious incidents or homicide
- Risks to attachment with parent as protector
- Deliberate disruption to mother-child relationship
- Impact on child development (trust, self regulation)



Toddlers

- Brain development
- Cognitive and sensory growth
- Sleep, separation anxiety, fear when alone



Primary school age

- Readiness for school
- 'Behavioural problems'
- Toileting
- Eating
- Social interactions



Childhood exposure to domestic abuse

Impacts

- Present in 52% of child deaths
- 50% of children in CAMHS victim-survivors of DA
- Stress, fear, anxiety
- Bed wetting, eating disorders, self harm

- Trauma and adult complex lives
- Adverse childhood experience: interconnecting factors
- Safe together vs removal of child: safety planning and support
- Fleeing DA : leaving a life behind
- Future contact with perpetrator

Local authority duties

- Provision of support in safe accommodation (DA Act)
 - Refuge
 - Dispersed properties
 - Sanctuary support
- Produce a safe accommodation needs assessment and strategy to influence commissioning
- Lead a domestic abuse partnership with partner organisations & organisations that can represent the voice of victim-survivors.
- Recognise children as victim-survivors in their own right
- Allocate the role of a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator
- Respond to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner

Domestic Abuse Commissioner



Dame Nicole Jacobs

- Into post in 2019
- Powers in 2021
- Regional Office
- Voice of the child

Policy paper

Victims in their own right? Babies, children and young people's experiences of domestic abuse (accessible)

Published 28 April 2025

Stockton-on-Tees Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-28

Our Vision

Everyone experiencing DA is listened to, supported and protected to live their life free from abuse

All victims of DA have access to inclusive, quality, affordable and appropriate safe accommodation and support

Perpetrators of DA are held to account and supported to change their behaviour



Domestic Abuse Steering Group

Commissioned service: Harbour

- Includes a GP Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)
- Includes a Children's team and a Child IDVA
 - Play therapy, counselling, mother and child therapy
 - The voice of the child
- Harbour & Children's services
 - Joint planning
 - Workforce development
- Includes safe accommodation
 - Refuge, dispersed properties
 - *Safe at Home* sanctuary support



24 Hour Helpline:
03000 20 25 25

Domestic abuse

Louise Hollick, Assistant Director, Early Help, Safeguarding and Children in our Care

Children's social care

Legal Framework

1. Legal Recognition of Children as Victims

Under Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, children are now legally recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right—not just witnesses—if they see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse between adults in their household 1.

2. Duties Under the Children Act 1989

The Children Act 1989 places a duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need. This includes:

Section 17: Duty to provide services to children in need, which includes those affected by domestic abuse.

Section 47: Duty to investigate if a child is suspected to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm due to domestic abuse.

Section 20: Duty to provide accommodation for children in need in specific circumstances. It is a voluntary arrangement and does not require a court order.

A Care Order is a legal order made by a family court under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989. It places a child under the care of a local authority, giving them shared parental responsibility with the child's parents.

Working together framework

The **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated in 2020 and 2023)** guidance is statutory and sets out how organisations and agencies should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in England

Key Principles:

Child-Centred Approach: The child's needs are paramount. Practitioners must listen to and involve children in decisions that affect them.

Whole-Family Focus: Recognises that supporting the family as a whole is essential to safeguarding children.

Multi-Agency Collaboration: Health, education, police, social care, and voluntary sectors must work together effectively.

Domestic abuse: the guidance was updated in 2020 and expands the list of potential threats to children and young people's safety to include domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour. It states that practitioners should continue to expand their understanding of domestic abuse and the impact it has on children.

Information sharing to safeguard children

Multi-agency work

Information sharing: the guidance clarifies that the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

All partners have a responsibility to have written safeguarding policies and staff should be trained to identify the signs of abuse and harm for children. Where there are concerns for children's wellbeing, a referral should be made to children's social care, through the CHUB.

Partners should attend multi-agency meetings to share information, participate in safeguarding planning, and contribute to assessments and support plans.

Stockton Context

Domestic Abuse referrals

Contacts to the CHUB 2024/25



POLICE are the biggest referrer, submitting 485 (49%) of all referrals relating to domestic abuse

Stockton and Cleveland police have a daily PITSTOP meeting to triage DA referrals

Domestic Abuse	989	100.0%
Police	485	49.0%
Education-Primary School	64	6.5%
Relative	48	4.9%
PITSTOP	45	4.6%
Probation	41	4.1%
External LA Services	28	2.8%
Education-Secondary School	27	2.7%
Midwifery	27	2.7%
EDT	27	2.7%
Health Visitor	22	2.2%
A&E Department	20	2.0%
Voluntary Organisation/Charity	20	2.0%
Anonymous	19	1.9%
Social Worker (SBC)	17	1.7%
CHUB	15	1.5%
Service Provider	12	1.2%
Education-Nursery	12	1.2%
Adult Mental Health	10	1.0%
CAMHS	7	0.7%
Other Health Providers	7	0.7%
Adult Social Care	6	0.6%
Early Help	6	0.6%
Prison	5	0.5%
Neighbour/Friend	5	0.5%
Ambulance	4	0.4%
Education-College/Further Education	3	0.3%
Stockton BC Department	2	0.2%
Housing	2	0.2%
Other Section in Social Care	2	0.2%
School Nurse	1	0.1%
Grand Total	989	100.0%

Early help support



Family action – family outreach volunteers

4 Family Hubs – Billingham, Redhill, Stockton central, Thornaby. Hubs offer a range of parenting support services, group sessions, and programmes.

Family Solutions Teams – Senior Family workers



Project & Interventions Service – Family group conferencing and therapeutic support

Social Work interventions

- Children & Families assessments completed with 45 days
- Child in Need Plans
- Child Protection Plans
- Pre-proceedings plans under public law outline (PLO)
- Child in our care (CIOC) planning



Interventions under the above would include referrals to harbour, direct work with the child, home visits, observations of child with parent(s), parenting work, assessments, referrals for other interventions such as substance misuse or mental health.



ANY QUESTIONS?

This page is intentionally left blank

Community Safety Select Committee
Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse
Outline Scope

Scrutiny Chair (Project Director): Cllr Ann McCoy	Contact details: ann.mccoy@stockton.gov.uk
Scrutiny Officer (Project Manager): Gary Woods	Contact details: gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk 01642 526187
Departmental Link Officer: Louise Hollick (SBC Assistant Director – Early Help, Safeguarding and CIOC) Mandy MacKinnon (SBC Strategic Health & Wellbeing Manager)	Contact details: louise.hollick@stockton.gov.uk mandy.mackinnon@stockton.gov.uk
Programme Management Office Link Aishah Waithe (SBC Senior Project Manager – Early Intervention & Prevention)	Contact details: aishah.waithe@stockton.gov.uk
Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?	
<p>The review will contribute to the following Stockton-on-Tees Plan 2024-2028 priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Priority 1: The best start in life to achieve big ambitions:</i> We will support all children to have the best possible start in life, within a safe and inclusive community where everyone can thrive. • <i>Priority 2: Healthy & Resilient Communities:</i> We will continue to work with our partners through the Safer Stockton Partnership to make Stockton-on-Tees a safer place, where people are protected from serious harm and live in communities that are safe and welcoming (Building safe and connected communities). <p>The outputs from this review will also contribute to the SBC <i>Powering Our Future</i> transformation review of ‘Early Intervention and Prevention’.</p>	
What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?	
<p>In December 2023, Foundations (the national What Works Centre for Children & Families) reported figures which revealed that at least 827,000 children in England and Wales may have suffered domestic abuse by the end of 2023. Amid concerns that the numbers of children affected by domestic abuse had escalated, the organisation called for an urgent focus on testing the most promising approaches to strengthen support for children.</p>	

The impact of domestic abuse is felt by children regardless of their age, and this is now recognised in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Children exposed to domestic abuse or experiencing domestic abuse in their own relationships are regarded as victim-survivors in their own right.

Domestic abuse can seriously affect families and the physical, mental and emotional health, wellbeing and development of children and young people. Children and young people can develop emotional, behavioural and developmental issues such as anxiety, challenging and aggressive behaviour or withdrawal, delayed speech, language and communication and low self-esteem, affecting their ability to form healthy relationships and educational attainment. In 2020-2021, the local domestic abuse service found that children were exposed to three-quarters of domestic abuse incidents, whilst a third of referrals to Children's Services were related to domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse can be experienced by anyone and disproportionately affects children and young people. Domestic abuse can be one of the factors resulting in child exploitation and can contribute and exacerbate multiple disadvantage. In 2020-2021, services in Stockton-on-Tees reported that 17% of homeless presentations were related to domestic abuse and 20% of substance misuse service users had experienced domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-2028 for Stockton-on-Tees highlights the importance of intervening early to minimise the impact of domestic abuse on children. As such, the main aims for this review will be to:

- Understand the impact of domestic abuse on children, the extent of this issue across the Borough, and the ways in which those who experience this are identified. In particular, explore how domestic abuse impacts children in their early years, and the extent of the lasting impact as they grow older.
- Articulate the current local offer for children and young people affected by domestic abuse, providing clarity for frontline professionals, families and children / young people.
- Explore opportunities for early intervention (focusing on those services engaging with children / families with children in their early years) to protect children from the enduring impacts of domestic abuse.

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

When children experience domestic abuse in their early years, how does this then impact them throughout their lives (immediate and longer-term)? Are there variations in terms of a child's experience / impact of domestic abuse across different cultures?

What local data exists in relation to children experiencing domestic abuse and / or the subsequent impact of this?

How are children at risk of / experiencing domestic abuse identified locally? What are the reporting routes for professionals and how are these reinforced with staff?

What is the Local Authority's offer for children affected by domestic abuse in Stockton-on-Tees? Has this evolved over time and is it effective? How are support services promoted?

What is in place across local partners (particularly those engaging with children / families with children aged 0-5) to identify and mitigate the effects of domestic abuse on children in the Borough (including involvement in multi-agency arrangements)?

How does the Council and its partners capture the voice of children themselves when considering / reflecting upon their service offer?

<p>Does the existing service offer from individual organisations contribute effectively to a whole ‘system’ approach to the provision of domestic abuse support for children?</p> <p>What evidence-based practice exists to tackle and reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children who have been exposed to or experienced this in their early years?</p> <p>What national / regional / local developments will / are likely to impact upon this scrutiny topic and how will this affect services?</p>	
<p>Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?</p> <p>Council, Cabinet, health sector, police, schools, early years providers, families and young people.</p>	
<p>Expected duration of review and key milestones:</p> <p>8 months (report to Cabinet in March 2026)</p>	
<p>What information do we need?</p> <p>Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Office: Domestic Abuse – Statutory Guidance (Jul 22) • GOV.UK: Victims in their own right? Babies, children and young people’s experiences of domestic abuse (part 3: opportunities to identify and intervene early) • SBC Children and Young People Select Committee: Scrutiny Review of Domestic Abuse and its Impact on Children – Final Report (Jan 20) 	
<p><i>Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)</i></p> <p>Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Services (Early Help, Safeguarding and CIOC) • Public Health <p>Domestic Abuse Steering Group</p> <p>Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSSCP)</p> <p>Cleveland Police</p> <p>Early Years Providers</p>	<p><i>What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What domestic abuse is and how it involves / can involve children ➤ Known impact of domestic abuse on children ➤ Identification / reporting routes / local data ➤ Local Authority support offer / future plans ➤ Capturing the voice of the child ➤ Evidence-based practice to tackle this issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Previous / current / future work re. this topic ➤ Previous / current / future work re. this topic ➤ ‘System’ co-ordination / accountability ➤ Identification of at-risk individuals / families ➤ Working with partners ➤ Identification of at-risk individuals / families ➤ Awareness / promotion of reporting routes

North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 'System' considerations around this topic ➤ National / regional developments re. this topic
Primary Care Networks (PCNs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identification of at-risk individuals / families ➤ Awareness / promotion of reporting routes ➤ Working with the Council / NHS partners
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (Maternity)	
Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (Health Visitors)	
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mental health impact of domestic abuse
Domestic Abuse Commissioner (Regional Lead)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ National / regional developments re. this topic ➤ Views on local offer / strategies
Harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Local data / support offer ➤ Capturing the voice of the child ➤ Working with partners
Housing Services (SBC / Thirteen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identification of at-risk individuals / families ➤ Awareness / promotion of reporting routes
<p>How will this information be gathered? (eg. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)</p> <p>Committee meetings, reports, research, case studies.</p>	
<p>How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?</p> <p>Committee meetings, information submissions.</p>	
<p>How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?</p> <p>The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. This review will be mindful of these factors.</p>	
<p>How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?</p> <p><u>Stockton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)</u>: The current Stockton JSNA includes a (now dated) section on 'Domestic abuse victims' – references to children are incorporated throughout.</p> <p><u>Stockton-on-Tees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030</u>: <i>All children and families have the best start in life</i> – Commitments (Safe from harm): Children and young people are safe from harm and safe in their communities, protected from bullying, neglect and abuse in the home, online and in the community. <i>Everyone lives in healthy and sustainable places and communities</i> – Commitments (Domestic Abuse): We want everyone living or working in Stockton-on-Tees to feel safe, supported and protected from domestic abuse, regardless of their age, sex, gender, sexuality, disability, socio-economic status, faith or background.</p>	

Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and / or transformation:

This review will seek to make recommendations which contribute to the provision of an effective multi-agency approach towards supporting children and young people who experience domestic abuse in Stockton-on-Tees.

With a focus on early intervention, reducing the impact of domestic abuse on individuals may reduce the need (demand) for services. This review will contribute to greater understanding of interventions and approaches which are effective at protecting children and young people from harm. The review will also identify where services and practice can be improved.

Project Plan

Key Task	Details/Activities	Date	Responsibility
Scoping of Review	Information gathering	May 2025	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	07.05.25	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Agree Project Plan	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	22.05.25	Select Committee
Publicity of Review	Determine whether Communications Plan needed	TBC	Link Officer, Scrutiny Officer
Obtaining Evidence	SBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Services • Public Health 	26.06.25 31.07.25 25.09.25 30.10.25 27.11.25 18.12.25	Select Committee
Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	29.01.26	Select Committee
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	February 2026	Scrutiny Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations	TBC	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Final Agreement of Report	Approval of final report by Committee	26.02.26	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Director
Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee	Consideration of report	[17.03.26]	Executive Scrutiny Committee
Report to Cabinet / Approving Body	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	12.03.26	Cabinet / Approving Body

COMMUNITY SAFETY SELECT COMMITTEE Work Programme 2025-2026

Date (4.30pm unless stated)	Topic	Attendance
1 May 2025	CANCELLED	
22 May	Monitoring: Action Plan – Welcoming and Safe Town Centres Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse • (Draft) Scope and Project Plan	Sharon Cooney Louise Hollick / Mandy MacKinnon
26 June	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse • Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council ○ Children’s Services ○ Public Health	Louise Hollick Mandy MacKinnon
31 July	Monitoring: Progress Update – Outdoor Play Provision Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse • TBC Minutes of the Safer Stockton Partnership (March & May 2025)	Neil Mitchell / Graham Clingan
25 September	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse • TBC	
30 October	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse • TBC	
27 November	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse • TBC	
18 December	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse • TBC	
29 January 2026		
26 February		
26 March		

2025-2026 Scrutiny Reviews

- Children affected by Domestic Abuse
- Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budgets

COMMUNITY SAFETY SELECT COMMITTEE Work Programme 2025-2026

Monitoring Items (scheduled / to be scheduled)

- Fly-Grazed Horses (Progress Update) – TBC
 - Outdoor Play Provision (Progress Update) – Jul 25
-

Other Information Sources / Updates

- **Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP):** The SSP is the local community safety partnership and works together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) – meeting dates, agendas and minutes can be accessed via <https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=1144&Year=0>. Every three years, the SSP undertake a Crime and Disorder Audit and, following public consultation, produce a Community Safety Plan which sets out how agencies within the Partnership intend to achieve targets in crime reduction – the latest version is the [Stockton-on-Tees Community Safety Strategy 2022-2025](#). Government is consulting on part two of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Review, with Councils giving input into the Local Government Association's (LGA) response – there is appetite amongst Councils for a more fundamental look at the partnership duty landscape and how CSPs work with Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).
- **Serious Violence Duty:** The Duty (Aug 22) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-factsheets/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-serious-violence-duty-factsheet> and associated guidance (Dec 22): https://www.gov.uk/government/news/efforts-to-tackle-serious-violence-and-homicide-stepped-up?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=66d44b4c-9d22-4f1d-aed7-517818847183&utm_content=immediately. The Home Office plan to update the guidance to the Serious Violence Duty (SVD) – the LGA will be giving views (Councils have contributed to this).
- **Martyn's Law:** ([The Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Draft Bill](#) has recently (May 23) been published, which will introduce new requirements for those responsible for certain public premises or events to take protective security measures to mitigate against terrorist attacks. Also known as Martyn's Law, this will likely have a number of implications for Councils. Further details can also be found on [the Home Office's Martyn's Law factsheet](#). The LGA has recently (Apr 23) published [a case study highlighting how Manchester Council](#) has embedded the principles of Martyn's Law into their licensing process. The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's law, received Royal Assent on Thursday 3 April. Now that the legislation has received Royal Assent, the LGA expect the implementation phase will be at least 24 months. The LGA continue to signpost people to both [Protect UK](#) and [Gov.UK](#) for further information and updates on the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. Materials and guidance to support duty holders will be published on either Gov.uk or Protect UK.
- **Modern Slavery:** [New modern slavery risk assessment and due diligence guidance for local authority commissioners of adult social care](#), produced by the University of Nottingham Rights Lab in tandem with the LGA, was published in October 2023 - it provides advice on to how to set up effective local systems to identify and manage the risks of modern slavery in adult social care. The LGA has established a modern slavery network for council officers leading on work to tackle modern slavery – the network meets quarterly via Teams and aims to share good practice and discuss current issues. In March 2025, the Home Office [published its end of year summary for the National Referral Mechanism \(NRM\)](#) and Duty to Notify Statistics in 2024. The statistics provide a breakdown of the number of potential victims of modern slavery

COMMUNITY SAFETY SELECT COMMITTEE Work Programme 2025-2026

referred into the NRM. 19,125 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the Home Office last year, representing a 13 per cent increase compared to the preceding year. The [Home Office has published their Action Plan on modern slavery](#), which sets out the Home Office and partners' actions to tackle modern slavery over the next 12 months, and long-term ambition over the coming years. It sets the strategic approach for the next financial year, reflecting current parameters and constraints (including resourcing and budget). The Plan is focussed on the following four pillars; developing an approach to prevention, reforming the identification system, tailoring victim support, and improving criminal justice outcomes.

- **Youth Offending:** *Turnaround* is a voluntary youth early intervention programme led by the Ministry of Justice. The programme provides multi-year grant funding to Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) across England and Wales until March 2025, enabling them to intervene earlier and improve outcomes for children on the cusp of entering the youth justice system. The eligibility criteria for *Turnaround* includes; children involved in anti-social behaviour (ASB) – ranging from coming to notice for repeated involvement in ASB up to and including receiving a Civil Order for ASB. The Ministry of Justice is encouraging all community safety teams to engage with their local YOT Manager or Management Board to discuss a referral pathway for eligible children so they can be offered support via *Turnaround*.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):** The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman issued a press release in August 2023 expressing concern that [Councils were not doing enough to help victims of ASB](#). The Ombudsman has also produced a [learning lessons from complaints about antisocial behaviour](#) document which includes scrutiny questions for Councillors. The [ASB Action Plan](#) has since been updated (March 2024).
- **CONTEST:** In July 2023, the Government published its [updated counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST](#), which judges that risks from terrorism are rising. In related matters, SBC rolled-out mandatory staff training around the Prevent and Protect duty at the end of April 2023. In March 2024, the Government [published a new definition of extremism](#), updating the one in the 2011 Prevent Strategy and to reflect the evolution of extremist ideologies and the social harms they create. The Government also recently published a [progress report one year on from the publication of the Independent Review of Prevent](#). This sets out that 30 of the 34 recommendations are now complete, including updated statutory guidance, training and the assessment framework, the launch of a new [Standards and Compliance Unit \(STaCU\)](#) to handle complaints and provide oversight.
- **Fire & Rescue:** [State of Fire & Rescue 2022](#) - His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England. Arson and deliberate fire setting remain a significant issue for Cleveland Fire Brigade with Cleveland being the arson capital of the UK – in October 2022, Cleveland Fire Brigade [appealed for everyone to become a FireStopper in a new bid to reduce arson and violent attacks on Firefighters](#).
- **Shoplifting:** Police to treat shoplifting like organised crime (BBC online article published in October 2023): <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-67191793>. In November 2024, it was reported that incidents of shoplifting had reached a 20-year high, according to figures recorded by the police. A survey of shopkeepers by the Association of Convenience Stores found that 94 per cent felt that the problem had worsened in the last 12 months: [Sky: 'We need help': Workers say shoplifting is 'out of control' after surge in brazen thefts](#).

COMMUNITY SAFETY SELECT COMMITTEE Work Programme 2025-2026

- **Dangerous Dogs Act 1991:** The Government has added the XL Bully breed type to the list of dogs banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in England and Wales. From 31 December 2023, breeding, selling, exchanging, advertising, rehoming, gifting, abandoning, and allowing an XL Bully dog to stray will be illegal, and these dogs must be muzzled and on a lead in public. From 1 February 2024 it will be a criminal offence to own an XL Bully in England and Wales unless the owner has a Certificate of Exemption. [Defra has published further information about how to prepare for the ban which will be updated regularly](#), and they will continue engagement with stakeholders. In March 2024, the LGA wrote to Council chief finance officers on behalf of DEFRA about new burdens funding relating to the XL Bully Ban for 2023-24.
- **Licensing:** [Legislation has been introduced into Parliament to amend the Licensing Act 2003](#) so that it is easier to get changes to licensing hours for special events or occasions, such as significant sporting events, through Parliament. The Bill is more concerned with parliamentary process than the contents of the Licensing Act itself. The Local Government Association (LGA) understands this legislation has Government support, so is likely to complete its parliamentary stages and become law. The British Beer & Pub Association has [produced advice for licensees showing European Championship football matches](#) – this is an update of the previous World Cup guidance.
- **Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs):** The LGA and DAC conducted a survey regarding DHRs - [the results can be found on the LGA website](#). The LGA, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and Domestic Abuse Commissioner (DAC) have established a forum to share best practice and act as a platform for government changes in relation to domestic and related death homicide. So far there has been one meeting and 132 people have volunteered to take part.
- **Float to Live campaign:** The [RNLI's Float to Live campaign](#) took place on 21 May 2024. The ['float to live' message has saved lives](#), and the RNLI is keen for Councils to support the campaign to raise more awareness amongst local communities. It has produced [a free social media toolkit](#) which may be of interest to Council communications team.
- **Fires involving e-bikes and e-scooters:** The Office for Product Safety & Standards (OPSS) has written to heads of trading standards, asking that, where resources and prioritisation allow, Trading Standards services identify and inspect bike repair businesses and where possible inform OPSS of their findings.
- **Khan Review:** Dame Sara Khan has published her [independent review into social cohesion and resilience](#). Recommendations include the establishment of a new Office for Social Cohesion and Democratic Resilience (OSCDR), a 5-year Social Cohesion and Democratic Resilience Strategy (SCDR) and Action Plan, and that Government should better engage with Local Authorities over actions that could undermine social cohesion – for example in relation to asylum dispersal.
- **Taxi Licensing:** An [HMRC consultation](#) ended on 8 August 2024 on the VAT implications of court judgements that proposes abolishing the current licensing system, which differentiates between Taxis and PHVs, and moving to a single-tier system. The LGA will respond.
- **Safe Access Zones Around Abortion Clinics:** Councils have been contacting the LGA regarding Safe Access Zones around abortion clinics. The LGA have been engaging with government to ensure safe access zones can be established. Legislation will come into force from 31 October 2024 and will make it illegal for anyone to do anything that intentionally or recklessly influences someone's decision to use abortion services, obstructs them, or causes harassment or distress to someone using or working at these premises. The law will apply within a 150-metre radius of the abortion service provider. The College of Policing and

COMMUNITY SAFETY SELECT COMMITTEE Work Programme 2025-2026

the Crown Prosecution Service will be publishing operational guidance to ensure there is clarity and consistency with the enforcement of the new offence. Further information is available at: [Protection zones around abortion clinics in place by October - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/protection-zones-around-abortion-clinics-in-place-by-october).

- **Trading Standards:** Illegal imported sweets which contain banned additives linked to cancer and behavioural problems are “flooding UK high streets”, councils have said (see February 2025 article: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/feb/13/imported-sweets-american-candy-flooding-uk-high-streets-councils-banned-additives?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). The warning first came from the Chartered Trading Standards Institute, which said that demand for American confectionery was being driven by influencers on social media platforms, leading to high street shops and smaller convenience stores stocking the products.
- **Crime and Policing Bill:** Early-2025 saw the UK Government introduce the Crime and Policing Bill to Parliament. Key provisions include:
 - **Powers for Theft Recovery:** Police can now enter properties without a warrant to recover stolen items located via electronic tracking, such as ‘find my phone’ apps. This change enables swifter action during critical investigation periods.
 - **Protection for Retail Workers:** The bill introduces a specific offence for assaulting retail workers, ensuring better safeguards for employees in shops and supermarkets.
 - **Addressing Antisocial Behaviour:** New "Respect Orders" will ban habitual offenders from town centres, and police are empowered to seize vehicles like off-road bikes and e-scooters used irresponsibly in public spaces.
 - **Combatting Knife Crime:** Measures include increased penalties for selling dangerous weapons to minors and the creation of a new offence for possessing a blade with intent to cause harm.
 - **Violence Against Women and Girls:** The bill strengthens Stalking Protection Orders, criminalises spiking incidents, and restricts registered sex offenders from changing their names to evade detection.
 - **Child Protection:** A new duty mandates adults in specific roles to report instances of child sexual abuse, implementing recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.
 - **Public Order Enhancements:** The legislation bans face coverings used to conceal identity during protests and criminalises climbing on designated war memorials, promoting respect for public monuments.
- **Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cleveland:** Further information on the office of the PCC can be found on via <https://www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk/commissioner/office/> - this includes engagement with the **Cleveland Police and Crime Panel (PCP)**. Access to PCP agendas and papers can be found via <https://www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk/commissioner/office/the-work-of-cleveland-police-and-crime-panel/>.

This page is intentionally left blank