

Date:

Thursday 18 December 2025 at 4.30pm

Venue:

Council Chamber, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ

Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Chair)

Cllr Katie Weston (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Ray Godwin,
Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman and Cllr Alan Watson

Agenda

1. **Evacuation Procedure** (Pages 7 - 10)
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Minutes** (Pages 11 - 16)

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on
27 November 2025.
5. **Scrutiny Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse** (Pages 17 - 28)

To consider information in relation to this scrutiny topic from:
 - Cleveland Police
 - Early Years Providers – Survey Feedback (verbal)
6. **Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) – Previous Minutes (October 2025)** (Pages 29 - 34)
7. **Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025-2026** (Pages 35 - 42)

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

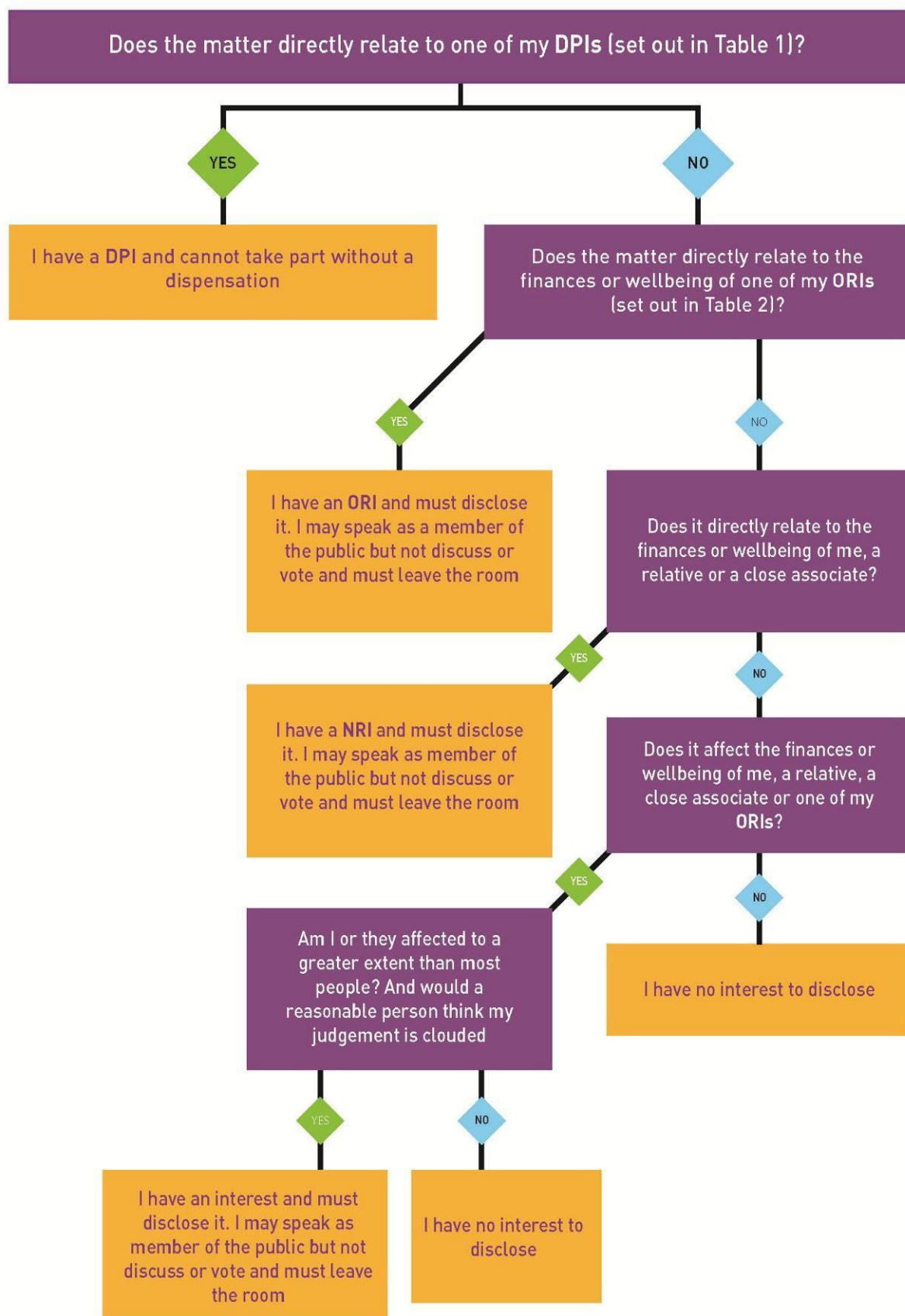


Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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 Registrable 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

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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.

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Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of the Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday 27 November 2025.

Present: Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Chair), Cllr Carol Clark (sub for Cllr Barbara Inman), Cllr Bob Cook, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Sufi Mubeen (sub for Cllr Shakeel Hussain), Cllr Tony Riordan (sub for Cllr John Coulson), Cllr Alan Watson

Officers: Stephen Donaghy (A,H&W); Gary Woods (CS)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr Katie Weston (Vice-Chair), Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman

CSS/31/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CSS/32/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

CSS/33/25 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Community Safety Select Committee meeting which was held on 30 October 2025 for approval and signature. Attention was drawn to the following item:

- Scrutiny Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse: Members were reminded that responses from the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) and local Primary Care Networks (PCNs) relating to queries raised at the October 2025 meeting were relayed via email yesterday (26 November 2025).

AGREED that the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 30 October 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CSS/34/25 SBC Air Quality Strategy 2025-2030

The Committee received a presentation on the recently adopted Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Air Quality Strategy 2025-2030.

Following the introduction of The Environment Act 2021, Local Authorities were required to produce an air quality strategy. In July 2025, a report was presented to SBC Cabinet recommending the adoption of the SBC Air Quality Strategy covering the 2025-2030 period. Following Cabinet's approval of this new strategy, the Council's Environmental Health Service (which developed the document) was asked to provide a briefing on its content to the Committee.

The SBC Environmental Health Service Manager was in attendance and presented the following information (which was supplemented by the full SBC Air Quality Strategy 2025-2030 document itself):

- Air Quality & Public Health: Local air quality was vital to public health as air pollution contributed to a wide range of serious health conditions. Pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter could aggravate respiratory diseases like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and were linked to heart disease, stroke, and even cancer. Vulnerable groups (children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions) were especially at risk, including unborn babies in the womb.

Long-term exposure to poor air quality could reduce life expectancy and increase hospital admissions. Improving local air quality helped create healthier communities, reduce healthcare costs, and enhance overall quality of life for residents.

- Automatic Monitoring: There were two monitoring stations within the Borough (one in Eaglescliffe and one in Stockton (A1305)) which measured small particles in the atmosphere and provided continuous real-time information on air quality standards (with data logged every hour and available as public information). The stations were calibrated every two-four weeks to ensure the equipment and data was accurate, and these formed part of a national monitoring network (mapped on a subsequent presentation slide).
- Diffusion Tubes: A map illustrating the location of the 15 diffusion tubes situated across the Borough showed the spread of air quality monitoring throughout Stockton-on-Tees. These tubes checked the levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and had been agreed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- PM & NO₂ – Pollutants of Prime Concern: Tiny even in comparison to a human hair or fine beach sand, so-called 'PM' pollutants were caused by vehicles and heating systems, contributing to most of the air quality issues. Once in the lungs, they were virtually impossible to get out.
- KS2 Project: An educational package (comprising lesson and assembly plans) was introduced in all the Borough's primary schools in relation to air quality matters. Council officers had visited schools to lead assemblies on this topic, with further efforts made via the use of anti-idling signage (principally aimed at school drop-off / pick-up times), enforcement patrols, and a review of legislation following amendments to the Environment Act 2021 regarding anti-idling enforcement provisions. This year had seen a further three schools contact SBC to get this information into their setting.
- Legal Rationale for Air Quality Strategies: Local Councils in the UK were legally required to manage air quality under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, as amended by the Environment Act 2021. This framework, known as Local Air Quality Management (LAQM), mandated Councils to regularly review and assess air pollution in their areas. If national air quality objectives were not met, Councils must declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and develop Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs).

Recent updates had strengthened these duties, requiring Councils to produce an Air Quality Strategy (AQS) and set clear timelines for implementing measures. These strategies would help embed air quality considerations into planning, transport and public health policies, ensuring a proactive and transparent approach to improving local air quality.

- Air Quality Strategy Overview: The SBC Air Quality Strategy 2025-2030 outlined a proactive approach to maintaining and improving air quality across the Borough. Despite current compliance with national standards, the strategy aimed to further reduce pollution through five key priorities: expanding monitoring and public awareness; implementing internal sustainability measures; cutting vehicle emissions; addressing domestic, industrial, and agricultural sources; integrating air quality into planning and development.

Led by SBC Environmental Health and supported by a cross-departmental working group, the strategy included a detailed Action Plan and annual reporting to DEFRA. It aligned with the Council's net-zero goals and promoted collaboration, education and enforcement to protect public health and ensure cleaner air for residents, workers and visitors.

- Key Group Members & Responsibilities: Whilst other Local Authorities had simply rebranded existing documentation, SBC conducted extensive consultation with colleagues across the Council's various directorates (as reflected within the subsequent presentation slide, 'Supporting Departments & Partners'). The strategy was overseen and implemented by a multi-departmental Air Quality Working Group, with responsibilities distributed across various Council services. SBC Environmental Health had the primary responsibility for monitoring, reporting, enforcement and co-ordination.
- Monitoring, Reporting and Increasing Awareness of Air Quality: In addition to the continued monitoring of NO₂ / PM pollutants, an Annual Status Report would be produced assessing progress around air quality. In terms of increasing awareness of this topic, several actions had been identified, including the sharing of data / information via the SBC website and its social media platforms, discussions with food businesses, further work with schools, and the creation of a training course for residents and businesses.
- Strategic Measures: From a strategic viewpoint, a range of benefits such as the reduction in the local carbon footprint, the development of a corporate travel plan, enhanced staff knowledge around air quality, tackling fraud / mis-selling of green energy products, exploring / implementing new digital technology, and a reduction in emissions from Council events were envisaged to result from the new strategy.
- Reduce Emissions from Vehicles: Work would include a focus on tackling emissions from idling vehicles, promoting internal car lease schemes for low-emission vehicles, incentivising electric / hybrid vehicle uptake within the taxi trade, collaborating with the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) on the electric vehicle (EV) strategy, and reducing emissions from the Council's fleet. The promotion of active travel and investment in / monitoring of new cycle route infrastructure was also key.
- Reduce Emissions from Domestic, Industrial and Agricultural Sources: This would involve reviewing smoke control boundaries, investigating and enforcing non-

compliance in Smoke Control Areas, ensuring retailers displayed a 'Ready to Burn' logo on solid fuels, engaging with the farming industry to reduce agricultural emissions, and minimising emissions from Part B permitted industrial processes (e.g. petrol stations / cement mixing).

- New Developments, Construction and Planning: For these areas, key features were the implementation of a new Local Plan with air quality and sustainability links, using the planning system to minimise emissions from development phases, developing an Air Quality / Low Emission Technical Advice Note (in conjunction with SBC Planning colleagues), ensuring chimney stacks for wood burners discharged at appropriate heights, and adherence to new national planning guidance to improve air quality.
- Internal & Public Consultation: Public consultation for the new strategy was achieved through a combination of internal and external engagement. In addition to extensive rounds of internal consultation across SBC departments and services, the Council conducted consultation with key partners (DEFRA, Environment Agency) and members of the public, allowing stakeholders and residents to contribute to the development of the strategy (with the latter providing strong feedback on smoke control and EV provision / infrastructure). This collaborative approach helped shape the Action Plan and ensured that the measures included were relevant, feasible, and aligned with community needs.

The strategy also committed to ongoing monitoring and annual reporting, with progress updates made publicly available through the Annual Status Report submitted to DEFRA. This transparency ensured continued public engagement and accountability throughout the strategy's implementation period.

- Reporting to Central Government & Accountability: Reporting on the strategy would be achieved through a structured and transparent process. Annual Status Reports (ASRs) would be submitted yearly to DEFRA, detailing progress on the strategy's actions, current air quality levels, and trends. Once approved by DEFRA, the ASRs would be made publicly available via the Council's website, ensuring transparency, and enabling residents and stakeholders to track progress.

From an internal monitoring perspective, the Council's Air Quality Working Group would oversee the implementation of the strategy. This group would meet regularly to review progress, ensure accountability, and address any emerging issues. The strategy would be formally reviewed at three and five years to assess effectiveness, incorporate new legislation or opportunities, and adjust priorities as needed – this approach ensured ongoing evaluation, public engagement, and continuous improvement.

The presentation concluded with an endorsement from the SBC Environmental Health Service Manager of Stockton-on-Tees' approach to air quality which had culminated in a robust strategy containing 42 measures with associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) / milestones.

Praising the very detailed information provided, the Committee began its response by querying the impact of the annual bonfire night. Members were informed that whilst there was a definite spike in air pollution on both Halloween and bonfire nights, it took around 24-hours for the air to return to its normal state (evidenced via the two continuous monitoring stations in Eaglescliffe and Stockton). Regarding fireworks, it

was felt that organisations should be encouraged to use drone displays which, although more expensive, looked impressive and did not impact as much on air quality, nor produce the debris that traditional fireworks did.

Regarding Smoke Control Areas, the Committee highlighted the reported increase in the use of wood-burners and asked if these created air quality issues. It was stated that wood-burners could still be used in a smokeless zone, but needed to be an approved appliance, must only burn appropriate materials, and should be installed / maintained by Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme (HETAS) personnel. If this was the case, little smoke would be produced, and the wood-burner would be legally compliant.

Referencing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA), the Committee questioned if it was possible for a specific location (e.g. near an educational site) to be declared an AQMA even if the air quality levels were within national objective values. Members were advised that an AQMA could only be implemented if there was evidence of a breach, something that Stockton-on-Tees was not even close to seeing (indeed, the trend was a steady year-on-year improvement, with no area within the Borough above 55% of the current threshold). It was also very unlikely that a very local AQMA would ever be declared. It was explained that there were three key factors affecting air quality in urban areas – vehicles, home heating, and industrial emissions. Advances in technology meant the impact of these factors on the environment was becoming less harmful.

In response to a Committee query on whether the anti-idling signage around schools could be extended to cover a wider area (as people often parked away from the immediate vicinity of the school to drop / collect their children), Members were informed that this could be explored, though there were cost limitations and the signage was only advisory, not legally required / enforceable (SBC Civic Enforcement patrols did, however, approach anyone seen idling). Schools gave permission to use the signs, and the current policy was to attach these to either school or Council property (rather than lampposts, though this could be investigated).

Noting previous tensions with the Environment Agency following dust issues in the High Clarence area of Stockton-on-Tees, the Committee asked if relationships between it and the Council had improved. Assurance was given that this had indeed got better over time.

A question was raised on the data to be used for the Council's reporting obligations around air quality, and whether this would reflect average or daily / monthly readings. The Committee was advised that real-time information from the two monitoring stations would be published, and that this was publicly available anyway throughout the year (via an open access portal).

Returning to the work undertaken in partnership with local schools, Members requested confirmation on the numbers now involved with the Council's Key Stage 2 educational programme around air quality. It was reiterated that all the Borough's primary schools had been engaged with this project which saw SBC Environmental Health and SBC Public Health officers working together to deliver key messages. All primary schools had received the information package / signage and over 2,400 local children had been spoken to during assemblies (across approximately 20 schools). Efforts to visit all schools would continue.

Turning attention to the impact of vehicles, the Committee sought views on the benefits (or otherwise) of engines being temporarily turned off at traffic lights. Members heard that much depended on the size of the vehicle in question and how it functioned, though it was felt that manually turning off an engine whilst stopped at a traffic light could cause potential issues around road safety.

In related matters, the Committee noted the increasing use of electric vehicles (EVs) and the associated concerns around the provision of sufficient charging points (including those that could be accessed / used by people with disabilities). From an air quality perspective, Members were informed that EVs still produced particulate pollution (from tyres, body-wear, etc.), and that there was ongoing debate about how environmentally friendly EVs were given the process for producing (and disposing) of the batteries needed to operate them.

Concluding the debate, the Committee asked what would make the most significant impact on the Borough's air quality moving forward. In response, it was felt that education was the most fundamental aspect around this topic – this should include the promotion of active travel options, highlighting the risks of poor air quality, and what young people could do now, and in the future, to help the environment.

AGREED that the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Air Quality Strategy 2025-2030 be noted.

CSS/35/25 Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) - Previous Minutes (July 2025)

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) meeting which took place in July 2025.

AGREED that the minutes of the Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) meeting which took place in July 2025 be noted.

CSS/36/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025-2026

CHAIR'S UPDATE

In relation to the Committee's ongoing Scrutiny Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse, the Chair stated that relevant Cleveland Police representatives were unable to attend this meeting to give evidence. The force's submission would now be presented at the next Committee meeting in December 2025.

WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

Consideration was given to the Committee's current work programme. The next meeting was due to take place on 18 December 2025 where the deferred fifth evidence-gathering session for the ongoing Scrutiny Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse would be held.

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

Chair:

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CHILDREN AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE

Summary

The fifth evidence-gathering session for the Committee's review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse will consider information from Cleveland Police, as well as survey feedback from local early years providers.

Detail

1. As a key partner in relation to this scrutiny topic, **Cleveland Police** was approached for a contribution to this review. The force was asked to respond to the following lines of enquiry:
 - *What are Cleveland Police's main roles / responsibilities around domestic abuse (specifically cases involving children)?*
 - *How do force personnel identify at-risk individuals / families? How confident do they feel about spotting signs of domestic abuse?*
 - *Are force staff aware of how to report domestic abuse? How does the Trust promote reporting routes and local support services?*
 - *How does Cleveland Police support its staff around dealing with the issue of domestic abuse (e.g. training course options and any available date on the uptake of these)?*
 - *Any data on the number of domestic abuse-related referrals made to the Stockton-on-Tees Children's Hub (CHUB) by Cleveland Police in the last three years?*
 - *Who / what is the responsible person / role within your organisation regarding written safeguarding policies / training / submitting referrals?*
 - *Working with SBC and its partners with regards domestic abuse – how does this operate; is this effective; is there anything that could strengthen current arrangements?*
 - *Awareness of any national / regional / local developments which will / are likely to impact upon this scrutiny topic and how will this affect services?*
 - *Any views on key areas of future focus relating to this scrutiny topic (e.g. existing challenges that need to be addressed)?*

A report has been prepared and is included within these meeting papers. The force's Stockton District Commander is scheduled to be in attendance to give a summary of this submission and address Committee comments / questions.

2. In order to obtain views on this scrutiny topic from local **early years providers** (e.g. nurseries / childminders), a survey was issued in November 2025. The Committee will receive a verbal update on responses received thus far.
3. In advance of this session, Members may again wish to familiarise themselves with some associated 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 (see pages 91-97: Agency Response to Domestic Abuse – Health)

- **GOV.UK: Victims in their own right? Babies, children and young people's experiences of domestic abuse**
<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#chapter-five-the-role-of-health-services>
(see Chapter five: The role of health services)
- **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

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

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

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CHILDREN AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE

CLEVELAND POLICE

What are Cleveland Police's main roles / responsibilities around domestic abuse (specifically cases involving children)?

Cleveland Police Core Responsibilities

- **Protect Life and Wellbeing**
The overriding duty is to protect victims, children, and any other household members from further harm. Children present during domestic abuse incidents are treated as victims in their own right, even if not physically harmed.
- **Investigate All Reports**
Every domestic abuse report must be investigated thoroughly, with officers following the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) guidance.
- **Hold Offenders Accountable**
Officers must take effective action against perpetrators through the criminal justice system, including using civil measures like Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Orders (DAPN/DAPO) for longer-term safeguarding.
- **Adopt a Multi-Agency Approach**
Cleveland Police works closely with local safeguarding partnerships, schools, and social services. Initiatives like Operation Encompass ensure schools are informed within 24 hours when a child has been present at a domestic abuse incident, enabling immediate support.

Child-Centred Safeguarding

- **'Through the Eyes of a Child' Principle**
Officers are trained to consider the impact of domestic abuse on children, recognising Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). They are encouraged to record the child's environment and voice during risk assessments.
- **Child Strategy Commitments**
Cleveland Police's Child Strategy emphasises putting the child first in all decisions, recognising trauma and vulnerability, and ensuring dignity and respect.

Specialist Measures and Support

- **Early Identification and Referral**
Officers must identify at-risk children and refer cases to local safeguarding hubs (e.g., Stockton-on-Tees Children's Hub).
- **Protective Orders**
Use of DAPNs and DAPOs under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provides flexible, longer-term protection for victims and their children.
- **Training and Awareness**
Staff receive training on spotting signs of domestic abuse and understanding reporting routes.

National Legal Framework

- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**
Children who see, hear, or experience domestic abuse are legally recognised as victims. Police have a statutory duty under the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2023 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Emergency Powers**
Officers can enter premises and remove children to safety if they believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Key Takeaways

Cleveland Police's responsibilities combine protection, investigation, and prevention, underpinned by a child-first approach and strong multi-agency collaboration. Children are treated as victims, not bystanders, and safeguarding measures extend beyond immediate response to include school notifications, protective orders, and trauma-informed practices.

How do force personnel identify at-risk individuals / families? How confident do they feel about spotting signs of domestic abuse?

How At-Risk Individuals and Families Are Identified

Cleveland Police uses a multi-layered approach combining structured tools, professional judgement, and contextual indicators:

- **Risk Assessment Tools**
Officers apply the DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-Based Violence) framework during initial contact. These tools guide structured professional judgement, focusing on factors like coercive control, previous incidents, and threats. Risk is graded as standard, medium, or high, but officers are trained not to rely solely on tick-box scoring.
- **Professional Judgement and Observation**
Officers are encouraged to look beyond physical injuries and consider behavioural cues, emotional state, and environmental factors. For example, signs of coercive behaviour, financial control, or isolation are flagged even if no physical harm is evident.
- **Multi-Agency Information Sharing**
Programmes like Operation Encompass ensure schools are notified when children are present at domestic incidents. Referrals to safeguarding hubs (e.g., Stockton-on-Tees Children's Hub) are mandatory for cases involving children.

Confidence in Spotting Signs of Domestic Abuse

- **Training Coverage**
Cleveland Police has rolled out Domestic Abuse Matters (DA Matters) training to all officers and staff. Developed with SafeLives and the College of Policing, this programme focuses on recognising coercive and controlling behaviour and improving cultural attitudes. Over 1,500 personnel have completed the training, and it continues.
- **Impact on Confidence**
The training aims to give staff "the confidence to recognise domestic abuse" and respond compassionately. Feedback from national surveys suggests most officers feel better equipped post-training, though challenges remain in consistently identifying subtle signs like psychological abuse.

Are force staff aware of how to report domestic abuse? How does the Trust promote reporting routes and local support services?

- Significant force wide emphasis is placed on DA training so that staff know how to address domestic abuse incidents, bearing in mind the majority of incidents are reported to us as opposed to reported by us.
- All officers and support staff receive Domestic Abuse Matters training placing emphasis on how domestic abuse presents itself, its insidiousness and also how officers must look beyond the obvious, i.e., once the emergency incident has ended upon police arrival the victim often denies, minimises and will not disclose due to fear and long term CCB.
- The Force domestic abuse policy deals with the responsibilities of each and every individual involved in the domestic abuse process from start to finish, including the handling of high risk domestic abuse cases, HBA and consideration of MARAC. NB this policy is regularly reviewed and updated and is currently in the process of being updated to emphasise no crime/no disclosure does not negate submission of PPN and other recent developments including the use of DAPO.
- PVP Hub and CAVA have delivered training inputs to Sgt's Development training and probationer training in terms of the importance of the full completion of the PPN.
- There are online guidance tools and cards to support officers in the completion of the domestic abuse PPN.
- There is full PPN guidance on the Safeguarding Sharepoint.
- There are compliance measures within PVP using Power Bi to determine those PPN's that are not submitted timely and immediate measures taken to identify and process those high risk incidents. Feedback is given to officers regarding this to improve future submission.
- Messages to all are sent out when there are themes identified in relation to domestic abuse matters, for example, tasking.
- PVP Makes it quite clear in all feedback that the office is available to offer advice and support regarding domestic abuse incidents.
- The PVP Hub has developed a decent working relationship with the Vulnerability Desk and provides advice and support in terms of how they handle domestic abuse risk assessments, particularly in light of the introduction of RVR.
- All shifts have been visited by PVP staff at least once and given support in the submission of a PPN.

How does Cleveland Police support its staff around dealing with the issue of domestic abuse (e.g. training course options and any available date on the uptake of these)?

Refer to Q2

Any data on the number of domestic abuse-related referrals made to the Stockton-on-Tees Children's Hub (CHUB) by Cleveland Police in the last three years?

- Children Services (CHUB) can provide this data.

Who / what is the responsible person / role within your organisation regarding written safeguarding policies / training / submitting referrals?

- The responsibilities for Domestic Abuse, and Child Safeguarding are overseen by Superintendent Strategic Leads (Supt Murphy-King and Supt Motson respectively) who as portfolio leads have overall responsibility for policy, training and referrals.

Working with SBC and its partners with regards domestic abuse – how does this operate; is this effective; is there anything that could strengthen current arrangements?

- In respect of children in Stockton we currently have the CHUB which manages the operational teams from the partnership working together. Staff are co-located to improve working relationships and the timeliness of the responses. This in turn leads to the better safeguarding of children.
- Shortly the front door arrangements are to split (Hartlepool and Stockton) however Police will still be co-located with partners.
- At a tactical level, the partnership is managed via the engine room. This includes all partners joining together to manage governance, performance, learning and development along side the operational business.
- The partnership arrangements are currently split across north and south Tees, however often cover the same themes and issues which occur across Tees. A central team structure would cut down on duplicity and make things more streamlined. This would also mean learning and good practice was shared Teeswide.

Awareness of any national / regional / local developments which will / are likely to impact upon this scrutiny topic and how will this affect services?

National Developments

Families First Initiative (Children's Social Care Reform)

- Embedding Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPTs) across local authority areas.
- Police will have a proactive role in Section 47 enquiries, strategy meetings, and child protection conferences.
- Emphasis on trauma-informed practice, contextual safeguarding, and restorative approaches to reduce care entries.

Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 – Section 20 Implementation

- From November 2025, police must notify schools if a child is suspected to be a victim of domestic abuse (new section 49A of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021).

Domestic Abuse Act 2021 – Continued Expansion

- Children remain legally recognised as victims when exposed to domestic abuse.

New Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs)

- National pilot launched in 2025; Cleveland Police is a pilot force.
- DAPOs replace DVPOs, offering longer-term, flexible protection with criminal penalties for breaches. Positive requirements (e.g., behaviour change programmes) can be mandated.

Tees-Wide Domestic Abuse Perpetration Strategy (2025–2035)

- A 10-year plan to reduce repeat offending and improve multi-agency collaboration.
- Aligns with the government's commitment to halve violence against women and girls over the next decade.

December 2025

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

Scrutiny Chair (Project Director): Cllr Mrs 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? The review will contribute to the following Stockton-on-Tees Plan 2024-2028 priorities: <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). The outputs from this review will also contribute to the SBC <i>Powering Our Future</i> transformation review of ‘Early Intervention and Prevention’.	
What are the main issues and overall aim of this review? 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.	

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> <div style="margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="font-size: 3em; margin-right: 10px;">}</div> <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 </div> <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 </div>

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's Office (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
How will this information be gathered? (eg. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)	
Committee meetings, reports, research, case studies.	
How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?	
Committee meetings, information submissions.	
How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?	
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.	
How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?	
<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.	
<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.	

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	Select Committee
	DA Steering Group Harbour	31.07.25	
	NTHFT (Maternity) HDFT (Health Visitors) TEWV (CAMHS)	25.09.25	
	NENC ICB Primary Care Networks	30.10.25	
	Cleveland Police Early Years Providers	18.12.25	
	HSSCP Housing Services	22.01.26	

Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	26.02.26	Select Committee
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	March 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	26.03.26	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Director
Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee	Consideration of report	[19.05.26]	Executive Scrutiny Committee
Report to Cabinet / Approving Body	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	16.04.26	Cabinet / Approving Body

Safer Stockton Partnership

A meeting of Safer Stockton Partnership was held on Wednesday 1st October 2025.

Present: Alan O'Donoghue (Vice Chair), Sharon Cooney, Elliott Beevers, Leanne Maloney-Kelly, Marc Stephenson, Joy Switherbank, Chris Dunwell, Gordon Bentley, Cllr Pauline Beall, Kay Nicolson, Adam Bateman, Sarah Wilson and Kellie Wiggley.

Officers: John Devine

Also in attendance: NA

Apologies: Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Clare Besford, Mandy Mackinnon, Jen Moore, Majella McCarthy, Karen Hawkins, Kevin Tyerman, Jamie Bell, Anna Waddington.

SSP/26/25 Appointment of Vice Chair

AGREED That Superintendent Alan O'Donoghue be appointed at Vice Chair.

SSP/27/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted

SSP/28/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

SSP/29/25 Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting held Wednesday 23rd July 2025 were agreed as a true record.

SSP/30/25 Recorded Crime & Disorder Report

Members were presented with the Recorded Crime & Disorder report, the report focused on the recorded crime in the Stockton on Tees Borough over a 12 month period starting in August 2024 to August 2025.

The key points noted from the report were as follows:

- Police generated crime had increased.
- Both Publicly reported Anti-Social Behaviour & Officer reported had increased.
- Sexual Offences had increased by 30.7%
- Stalking and Harassment had reduced by 11.4%.
- Criminal Damage & Arson showed an overall reduction of 5.3%
- Drug offences continued to show an increase with an increase of 18.2%.

Officers expanded on some of the above highlights. Officers explained that the increase in Police generated crime was linked to the active policing being undertaken by the Polce, with a number of arrests related to drug offences being evidenced of

that. The increase in Anti-Social Behaviour was being monitored closely by Police and partners through daily partnership meetings.

Increased numbers of sexual offences were evidence of victims being more confident in reporting offences to Police. Partners were reassured that the Police's approach would continue to be victim led in such cases but questioned how many cases lead to prosecution. Partners agreed that more work had to be done together to tackle the offences.

Members AGREED to note the report.

SSP/31/25 Bonfire Strategy

As there was no Officers present from Cleveland Fire brigade members agreed to defer the report to another meeting.

SSP/32/25 Reducing the Strength

Licensing Officers presented a report to the Partnership on the Reducing the Strength Scheme (RTS). It was founded by the Local Government Association, and it's aimed to uphold the licensing objectives, reduce alcohol accessibility, promote public health and reduce alcohol related Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). The Scheme asks off-licences to voluntarily agree to stop selling beer, lager and Cider with an alcohol content above 6.5% ABV.

RTS had been implemented initially within the Stockton Town Centre area (Specifically the Operation Shield Area). This area was chosen over concerns raised by the Community Safety Team regarding premises that served 'high strength, low cost' alcohol.

Often those buying the high strength low-cost alcohol are people who are intoxicated / beggars / known street drinkers. These people then often go on to cause issues within the Town Centre such as ASB, aggressive begging, littering and other crime which deters the general public from entering the Town Centre. Licensing Officers had observed alcohol related ASB first hand and identified the perpetrators as mainly consuming cans of cider which could be found at a very low cost of £1.29 per can in most shops within the Town Centre.

The consultation on the scheme began in July 2024 and ranged from face to face visits to letter drops which advised premises of the implementation of the scheme. Officers received positive verbal feedback on the scheme from a number of premises. As the response for written feedback was low Officers again undertook additional face to face engagement in February 2025, requesting electronic feedback. Five out of six of the premises who responded advised they would be willing to partake in the scheme. Positive feedback received stated 'We are supporting and obey the rules of council for the wellbeing of society especially for the elders and children' and another stating 'No one needs a strong drink to enjoy a drink'.

On 21st May 2025 Officers visited all fifteen premises within the scheme area, nine verbally agreed to reduce the strength of their alcohol sold and to participate with the scheme. During the consultation the Community Safety Team and Cleveland Police gave feedback in support the Scheme.

The Scheme was launched on 25th September 2025, participating retailers were provided with posters and involved in the promotion and comms around the scheme. The nine participating premises gathered for a photo which was shared through the Councils social media channels.

Those participating premises were as follows:

- Addison Newsagents – 102-104 Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TW.
- Pickwicks (formerly D&S News) – 8 High Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1UB.
- Iceland – Wellington Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1NH.
- B&M Stores – 139-139A High Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1LW.
- Heron Foods – 8A Castle Way, Castlegate Centre, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1AL.
- Savers – 7 Wellington Square, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1RG.
- Yarm Lane Convenience Store – 53 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 3DL.
- Quick News - 101 High Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1BD.
- Fani Vapes - 49-51 Yarm Lane, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3DL.

Going forward the scheme would be monitored through statistics of alcohol related incidents which would be checked to identify hotspots. This would allow officers to identify any premises which may be causing an issue or if it is due to out of areas retailers. Promotion of the scheme would continue through the Councils social media and the Licensing website. A QR code was included on the posters for the scheme which provides a link to a webpage with further information on the Reduce the Strength Scheme.

Partners from Public Health, Cleveland Police and the Community Safety Team praised Officers for their hard work on the Scheme. All partners noted the success of the scheme would have a positive impact in their own spheres. Members also praised the joined up working of partners in the Safer Stockton Partnership which was making Stockton Town Centre a place residents want to come and spend time in.

Members AGREED to note the report.

SSP/33/25 ASB Charter

Members of the Partnership were presented with the Cleveland Antisocial Behaviour Charter by Officers of the Police & Crime Commissioner.

The Charter outlined the commitment by Partners across Cleveland to help make victims feel safe in their homes and communities. Victims would be involved in how partners respond to their case and make sure their voice was at the heart of what partners do.

It stated that all members were committed to working together to resolve any issues of ASB. The charter set out what partners would do and what a victim could expect when reporting ASB against a person. There were eight bullet points in the report and they were as follows;

1. You will be able to understand and be understood.
2. The details of the incident will be recorded without justifiable delay.
3. A referral to support services will be offered with any support tailored to meet your needs.

4. You will be given information about any investigation or prosecution.
5. You will be given the opportunity to make a Victim Impact Statement.
6. You will be given information about the outcome of the cases and appeals.
7. You can make a complaint about your needs not being met.
8. You can ask for Antisocial Behaviour Case Review.

A copy of the Charter had been shared with Partners and changes had already been incorporated from their feedback. Officers stated that they aimed for the Charter to be published by December 2025, with a launch to be held in a public venue.

Members AGREED to note the update.

SSP/34/25 Project Harmony/ Shield Update

Officers gave an update on Project Harmony & Shield to members. They began with Operation Shield which Members would know was a community safety initiative of the Councils alongside Cleveland Police and other partners.

Officers praised the hard work of frontline staff as Operation Shield marked six months of operation. A number of instances where Officers had been involved in prevention of a crime or being involved in a successful arrest. For example, Officers were instrumental in helping Police making five arrests on one day in Stockton Town Centre via the use of CCTV Operators proactively monitoring the area.

Being proactive and a visible presence in the Town Centre had been an important tenet of the agreement between Partners and Local businesses. There would always be the same response function but that proactivity on the High Streets would be key to building relationships going forward.

Officers went on to praise the deployments from Enforcement & Cleveland Police during the Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF) in August. The deployments saw Officers working extra hours over three days and showcased their dedication and commitment to ensuring SIRF was a success. For their commitment to ensuring the success of SIRF frontline Officers met with the High Sheriff of County Durham in a show of appreciation.

Officers moved onto give Members an update on Project Harmony, which members were familiar with as the project had been in operation for a number of years. Members were also made aware that Project Harmony had begun to draw to a close in its current format. Some elements of the project will continue in different avenue, such as Operation Nightfall and a drop-in service. Following discussions with strategic partners the drop-in service would undergo some changes, it was to be moved in line with Ropner Warm Welcome Social which took place monthly. The Ropner Warm Welcome was an expansion of the SBC Community Engagement's work in other wards and was developed out of Project Harmony and feedback from the community survey.

The expansion of the community engagement events was linked to the operation Nightfall Action Plan, which had been developed in June 2025 with collaboration from Cleveland Police and A Way Out, while also being supported by local ward Councillors. Members would recall the core objective of the latest phase of Nightfall is "to encourage on street sex work to occur away from residential dwellings, whilst

ensuring we have the right partner services in place to safeguard women experiencing multiple disadvantages and address contributing factors to on street sex work.”

Officers explained that to best communicate this and the action plan to local residents Officers have invited residents to a meeting later in the month, where Partners and residents could inspect the plan in more detail. Following that meeting Officers would return to the Partnership with an update report.

Members AGREED to note the report.

SSP/35/25 Home Office Visit

In August 2025 Stockton on Tees Brough Council received a visit from Anne-Marie Pickup, Head of Safer Town Centres at the Home Office. Officers presented information on operation Shield, while highlighting the lessons learned from it and that it would continue to be in operation. Officers from Community Safety were praised for their efforts.

The positive feedback was welcomed by Officers and they would continue with the operation and not become complacent.

Members AGREED to note the update.

SSP/36/25 Prevent (CT) Update

Members were updated on four individuals who were currently in Stockton on Tees Councils programme. Officers also informed members that as an authority Stockton had met all of its benchmarks in a recent review.

SSP/37/25 Any Other Business

There was no other business to bring to members attention.

SSP/38/25 Reducing the Strength Report

Members were presented with a restricted report that provided further information on crime statistics related to the introduction of the Reduce the Strength Scheme.

AGREED that the report be noted.

SSP/39/25 IQuanta Report

Members were presented with a restricted report that provided an overview on crime comparisons against other similar CSPs utilising iQuanta.

This report was a restricted document due to the statistical information only made available as an intelligence tool for partnerships until released by the Home Office.

AGREED that the report be noted.

SSP/40/25 CSP Plan

Due to the connection to an ongoing Police investigation this Agenda Item was restricted.

Agreed that the update be noted.

SSP/41/25 Town Centre Action Plan

Due to the connection to an ongoing Police investigation this Agenda Item was restricted.

Agreed that the update be noted.

Chair:

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Draft) Scope and Project Plan 	Sharon Cooney Louise Hollick / Mandy MacKinnon
26 June	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early Help, Safeguarding and Children in our Care (Children's Services) ○ Public Health (Adults, Health and Wellbeing) 	Louise Hollick Mandy MacKinnon
31 July	Monitoring: Progress Update – Outdoor Play Provision Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Abuse Steering Group • Harbour Minutes of the Safer Stockton Partnership (March & May 2025)	Neil Mitchell Sarah Bowman-Abouna Samantha Neil / Kelly Thomson
25 September	Stockton-on-Tees Community Safety Strategy Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust (Health Visitors) • North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (Maternity) • Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (CAMHS) 	Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE / Marc Stephenson / Richard Bradford Sarah Massiter Lindsay Britton-Robertson / Beth Swanson Gemma Sharpe
30 October	Monitoring: Progress Update – Outdoor Play Provision Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) • Primary Care Networks (PCNs) 	Reuben Kench Kimm Lawson Rebecca Warden / Dr Clare Hodges

COMMUNITY SAFETY SELECT COMMITTEE

Work Programme 2025-2026

Date (4.30pm unless stated)	Topic	Attendance
27 November	SBC Air Quality Strategy 2025-2030 Minutes of the Safer Stockton Partnership (July 2025)	Stephen Donaghy
18 December	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleveland Police • Early Years Providers: Survey Feedback Minutes of the Safer Stockton Partnership (October 2025)	Alan O'Donoghue
22 January 2026	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership • Housing Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SBC ○ Thirteen Housing Group 	Majella McCarthy / Leanne Stockton Jane Edmonds / Julie Lathan Suzanne Halliwell / Fiona Heighton
26 February (informal)	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Evidence / Draft Recommendations 	Louise Hollick / Mandy MacKinnon
26 March	Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Draft) Final Report Review of Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Draft) Scope and Project Plan 	Cllr Clare Besford / Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE / Sarah Bowman-Abouna / Majella McCarthy / Louise Hollick / Mandy MacKinnon

2025-2026 Scrutiny Reviews

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

Monitoring Items (scheduled / to be scheduled)

- Fly-Grazed Horses (Progress Update) – TBC
- Welcoming and Safe Town Centres (Progress Update) – TBC (mid-2026)

COMMUNITY SAFETY SELECT COMMITTEE

Work Programme 2025-2026

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](#).

Part two of the [Police and Crime Commissioner Review](#), recommended that the Home Office undertake a full review of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) across England and Wales. The CSP review ran from March 2023 to January 2024 and has now concluded – it sought to clarify the role of CSPs, and improve their transparency, accountability, and effectiveness, making it easier for them to serve the needs of their communities in tackling crime, disorder, and antisocial behaviour. As a result of the review, the Home Office will be developing new guidance for CSPs, which will reflect the context CSPs currently work within and set out recommended minimum standards, as well as suggestions for good practice.

- **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 Home Office has [released new guidance materials](#) to support public understanding of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025—commonly known as Martyn's Law—by publishing a myth buster and a one-page leaflet aimed at clarifying the Act's scope and dispelling common misconceptions.
- **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 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). Middlesex University and Anti-Slavery International have completed [research exploring the role of local authorities as first responders](#). The report looks at the challenges and opportunities facing Councils, and focuses on the need to improve training, awareness, and collaboration to strengthen the local response to modern slavery.

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The LGA has [updated its councillor guide on tackling modern slavery](#). The guide provides advice to Councillors on how they can increase awareness and understanding of modern slavery across their Council and community, as well as how Councillors can scrutinise the work of the Council and its partners on modern slavery, ensuring accountability.

In November 2025, the Human Trafficking published updated [Slavery and Trafficking Survivor Care Standards \(Care Standards\)](#) which aim to improve service provision by ensuring that adult survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery consistently receive high quality care wherever they are in the UK.

- **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).

The Victims and Courts Bill includes new powers for the Victims' Commissioner to scrutinise the treatment of victims of anti-social behaviour. The Commissioner has already taken a close interest in ASB but to date, her focus has been on the criminal justice system. This additional power will enable future Commissioners to look more widely at the victim experience. In preparation for this, the Office of the Victims' Commissioner is undertaking a mapping exercise, to look at the victim journey across all agencies, identifying sources of data, gaps in policy and obstacles to victims reporting and getting support. The Commissioner is keen to receive any case studies and feedback about current processes.

The Home Office has updated the ASB statutory guidance for frontline professionals to housing providers and LAs which has been updated on [gov.uk](#). These changes have been made following the recommendations of the Victims' Commissioner's 2024 report, "[Still living a nightmare: Understanding the experiences of victims of anti-social behaviour](#)". Key updates include:

- Enhanced recommendations for victim participation and support throughout the ASB Case Review process.
- Clearer guidance on the role of a single point of contact for victims
- Stronger emphasis on the use of independent chairs for case reviews.
- Alignment with the Victims Code to ensure victims of criminal ASB are referred to support services, regardless of whether criminal charges are pursued.
- Additional guidance on the interface between ASB and safeguarding, including domestic abuse and exploitation.

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- **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.

On 30 September, Counter Terrorism Policing launched ACT for Local Authorities. Led by National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), ACT for Local Authorities uses CTP's regional network of Counter Terrorism Security Advisers and Prepare Officers to enhance the capabilities of local authorities in delivering the Protect and Prepare elements of the [national counter terrorism strategy](#). ACT for Local Authorities strengthens local authority capabilities in protective security across five key areas: planning and development, licensing, community safety, transport and highways, and emergency planning. ACT complements the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, offering tailored information, guidance, and access to specialists. Local authorities will be able to access resources – including toolkits and videos for each of the five priority areas – primarily through [the ProtectUK website](#) to support their consideration and understanding of terrorist risks, protective security and preparedness.

- **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](#).
- **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.

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In July 2025, the Transport Select Committee launched [a new parliamentary inquiry looking at taxi and private hire vehicle licensing](#). This inquiry will examine whether the current licensing framework provides authorities with the tools they need to successfully regulate the sector. The Committee will consider the implications of uneven rules between areas, the growing role of digital ride-hailing platforms, and the challenges that can arise from cross-border working. It will also explore what reforms may be needed to improve standards for passengers and drivers. Councils are encouraged to respond to this inquiry, and the deadline for responses is Monday 8 September.

Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Trading Standards are working together to push for a national change to the Licensing Act by gathering national support and evidence via a short survey: [Licensing Act loophole survey](#). The goal is to close the loopholes which undermine the work from Local Authorities and regulatory services to protect communities and public health. One major issue is the transfer of alcohol licences during a review or appeal. Organised crime groups are exploiting this by passing licences to individuals with no known links to the criminal activity.

October 2025 saw calls for better monitoring of gambling venues, following investigation by the BBC which found that more than a third of Councils have not been able to carry out an inspection in the past year. The LGA said Councils struggled to fund proactive inspections, and welcomed plans to give it new powers to block new gambling premises opening on high streets. The Government also launched a [call for evidence](#) on what will be significant alcohol licensing reform, building on the recommendations of the [Licensing Taskforce recommendations and the government's response](#) (the LGA will be responding, but Councils are encouraged to submit their own response by 6 November), and [launched a call for evidence to inform their plans to introduce a licensing scheme for the retail sale of tobacco](#) (Councils are encouraged to respond by 3 December and the LGA will also be submitting a response).

The Government has since [published its national licensing policy framework](#), which only applies to on-sales premises. Whilst this is not statutory guidance, Government is clear that licensing authorities should demonstrate how they have had regard to the guidance when next reviewing their licensing policy. It has also produced an [analysis of the responses received](#) to the call for evidence on alcohol licensing reform.

- **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) formed a Domestic and Related Deaths Review (DARDR) forum for those who are involved in commissioning DARDRs or DHRs. There are currently 195 members of the forum from Councils, police, Offices of Police and Crime Commissioners and health. The forum set up a task group to give recommendations to government to consider in the forthcoming output from a review of DARDRs. The second phase will begin shortly where access to qualified chairs and costs will be considered.
- **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.

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- **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 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-2024).
- **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 (note: publication of a new VAWG government strategy is expected later in 2025).
 - **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.
- **Young Futures Programme:** The Young Futures Programme is a national, cross-government plan to prevent youth violence by proactively identifying and supporting young people most at risk. Central to the strategy are Young Futures Hubs, local centres that bring together mental health services, education, career advice, youth workers and police. Prevention Partnerships, which are multi-agency panels, will be introduced where there are Violence Reduction Units. This will work with communities, charities, schools, health services and police to map risk, co-ordinate early interventions and tailor support packages. These panels harness VRU expertise and local knowledge to spot vulnerabilities early, reduce youth involvement in crime (including knife crime and violence against women and girls), and offer continuous, evidence-based support. Each area with a VRU area will introduce a Prevention Panel from October 2025. Roll out to further areas is expected from April 2026.

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- **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG):** The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy publication is scheduled for September 2025.
- **Domestic Abuse:** A Sanctuary Scheme is a victim survivor centred initiative which aims to enable households at risk of domestic abuse to remain in their own homes (if it is safe and their choice) and reduce repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures (sanctuary) and support. The Local Government Association (LGA), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (STADA) are working in partnership to clarify current practice. In September 2025, surveys were sent to all Council Directors of Housing to delegate to relevant colleagues to complete.

A national reciprocal housing scheme is being developed, led by Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse and Clarion Housing, to provide secure housing options for domestic abuse survivors who need to relocate while retaining their tenancy rights. Building on the Whole Housing Approach toolkit, several local schemes already exist, and the national initiative aims to expand this support across England. With 2.4 million people experiencing domestic abuse in 2022, housing remains a key barrier to safety, making reciprocal moves a vital lifeline that prevent re-victimisation, reduce homelessness pressures, uphold tenancy security under the Domestic Abuse Act, widen rehousing options, and offer consistent support for both survivors and landlords. Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse would appreciate if councils completed this [survey](#).

- **Civil Resilience:** In November 2025, the [LGA updated guidance](#) designed to support Councillors in strengthening their approach to civil resilience. It provides an overview of the Council's responsibilities in this area, along with targeted sections outlining the role of Ward Councillors and portfolio holders. A new section also outlines how officers can support Elected Members in fulfilling their civil resilience roles.
- **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/>.

On 13 November 2025, Government announced the abolition of PCC elections when current terms end in 2028. It is intended that where there are directly-elected Mayors, the Deputy Mayor for policing model will continue. This will also be the case for where new Strategic Mayoral Authorities (SMAs) will be established. Where there are not Mayors, it is expected a new local Policing and Crime Board is established to local government leaders together to oversee the police force. These Boards are said by government to not be a return to the bureaucratic and invisible committee-based oversight of policing that existed before the establishment of PCCs. Government proposes these Boards include the leaders of each upper tier authority from the force area and up to two co-optees. The LGA is working with the Home Office with regards to how these police boards might operate.