

Community Safety Select Committee Chair's Update – March 2025

Scrutiny Review – Welcoming and Safe Town Centres	
Achieved since last meeting	<p>Two evidence-gathering sessions for this review have been held since the last update to the Executive Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The fifth session in early-January 2025 considered views from local business forums / groups as well as SBC dementia-friendly initiatives within town centre spaces.</p> <p>The sixth and final session in late-January 2025 focused on contributions from the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector (via Catalyst), feedback on a Stockton town centre-related research project undertaken by a Council officer, and developments on this scrutiny topic in other Local Authority areas. Feedback on responses to the SBC Ward Councillor survey (issued in December 2024) was also shared.</p> <p>In related matters, the Committee Chair and supporting officers attended the Bright Minds Big Futures (BMBF) 'Big Committee' meeting in early-February 2025 to ascertain the views of young people on the Borough's town centre spaces.</p>
Problems or concerns	None
Planned this / next month	The Committee will consider a summary of all the evidence received as part of this review at an informal session in February 2025. Draft recommendations will then be formulated.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	<p>No updates have been received by the Committee since the last Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting.</p> <p>Future progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly-Grazed Horses (TBC) • Tree Asset Management (March 2025) • Outdoor Play Provision (TBC – mid-2025)
Requests for more information	None

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP): Minutes of previous SSP meetings are now periodically included on Committee agendas so Members are sighted on developments within that forum.

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	<p>Domestic Abuse: Duties to Victims: The Chair of the Domestic Abuse Steering Group (SBC Director of Public Health) attended the Committee meeting in late-January 2025 to provide the Group's thoughts on the recent Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman report (https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/news/2024/oct/councils-risk-compounding-problems-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse-if-they-do-not-follow-proper-process-ombudsman-says) regarding victims of domestic abuse sometimes being let down by Councils using an outdated and too narrow definition of what abuse means. Following a presentation, discussion covered a range of issues including links to mental health services, gender-specific accommodation, partnership-working with the police, and the awareness of professionals around signs of abuse when visiting properties.</p>
<p>Requests for more information</p>	<p>None</p>

Next Scrutiny Review

- To be confirmed

Remaining 2024-2025 Meetings (all 4.30pm unless stated)

Thursday 27 February 2025 (informal)

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