

## Community Safety Select Committee

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

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

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

**Also in attendance:** None

**Apologies:** Cllr Ray Godwin

### **CSS/1/25 Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

### **CSS/2/25 Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared.

### **CSS/3/25 Minutes**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **CHAIR'S UPDATE**

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

WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

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

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

Chair: .....

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