

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.

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