



Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date **Monday 24 February 2025**
Time **9.30 am**
Venue **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham**

Business

Part A

Items which are open to the Public and Press
Members of the public can ask questions with the Chair's agreement,
and if registered to speak.

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Substitute Members
- 3 Minutes of the Meeting held 13 December 2024 (Pages 3 - 12)
- 4 Declarations of Interest, if any
- 5 Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties
- 6 County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan - Report of the Director Community Risk Management (Pages 13 - 40)
- 7 Probation Service - Report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services (Pages 41 - 52)
- 8 Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group Annual Report - Report of the Interim Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services (Pages 53 - 68)
- 9 Quarter Two, 2024/25 Performance Management Report - Report of the Chief Executive (Pages 69 - 96)

- 10 Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

Helen Bradley
Director of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
14 February 2025

To: **The Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor P Heaviside (Chair)
Councillor J Charlton (Vice-Chair)

Councillors V Andrews, P Atkinson, D Boyes, R Crute, M Currah, L Fenwick, C Hampson, C Lines, D McKenna, L Maddison, E Mavin, J Miller, D Nicholls, A Simpson and D Sutton-Lloyd

Co-opted Members: D Balls and J Mordue

Co-opted Employees/Officers: Chief Fire Officer S Helps, Superintendent N Bickford and Assistant Chief Constable R Allen

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of **Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham** on **Friday 13 December 2024** at **9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor P Heaviside (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Charlton, V Andrews, P Atkinson, R Crute, L Fenwick, C Hampson, C Lines, D McKenna, J Miller and D Nicholls

Co-opted Members:

D Balls

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Currah, E Mavin, A Simpson, J Mordue and Chief Fire Officer S Helps

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2024 were agreed as a correct record subject to Councillor J Charlton be amended to Councillor J Clark under 'Also Present'.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members of Interested Parties.

6 Serious Violence Duty

The Committee received a report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services which provided an update on the Serious Violence Duty. The presentation attached as Appendix 2 provided an overview of the partnership approach to tackling serious violence within the county (for copy see file of minutes).

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen gave a detailed presentation on the serious violence duty to demonstrate the confidence in the work which was being carried out across the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership. Under the requirements of the partnership there was a legal response in the objectives to improve multiagency partnership working, prevention, tackle serious violence and share data to generate evidence-based analysis of problems and their potential solutions. The partnership was accountable to the Community Safety Partnership and the Home Office. There were four key priorities

- Priority 1: Support for those aged between 18-35 engaged in serious violence;
- Priority 2: Reduce Domestic Abuse related violence with a knife or sharp instrument;
- Priority 3: Alcohol Related Violence Within the nighttime economy; and
- Priority 4: 18 and Under at Risk of/Engaged in Serious Violence

He noted that data was received through a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) to drive the priorities for 2023-2025 and advised that the SNA would be refreshed in January 2025 to ensure there were no missing emerging trends. He highlighted what had been achieved, where funding from the Home Office had been allocated against each priority, what the next steps were and the importance of the work with partners such as Northumbria University on youth interventions. He expressed concern that funding would run out in March 2025 so it was unsure what the service would look like going forward. Work was ongoing with the Home Office to ensure the views of the partnership were reflected with the work with partners on a national level.

Councillor J Miller asked if the 'Ask for Angela' safety scheme which allowed people to discreetly signal if they needed help was used in County Durham and how frequently. He queried why funding from the Serious Violence Prevention Fund had been allocated to TEWV (Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust) to provide a forensic psychology (trauma) pathway for young people under the supervision of both Youth Justice Services for Durham and Darlington when following an inspection it had been deemed as 'needed improving'. He questioned how they were being monitored to ensure that they were doing what they should be doing.

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen agreed to find out and feed back to the committee.

I Harrison, Business Compliance Manager responded that the 'Ask for Angela' safety scheme was a voluntary scheme within the licensing trade. It was not enforceable unless it was added as a condition to a premises licence where staff would be required to be trained on the scheme and it would be an offence if they were not. The scheme could be added to new licences but could not be added to licences which had already been granted unless there was cause to hold a licence review for a premises where it could be added as a condition by the Statutory Licensing Committee.

J Waller, Head of Community Protection added that pubs were part of the 'Pub Watch' scheme which had active forums and links to information to raise awareness to the scheme but Pub Watch was also voluntary.

D Summers, Youth Justice Service Manager replied that his team worked with the Forensic Psychology Service, which was one very small part of TEWV. The inspection had looked at the whole range of services being delivered. In respect of the partnership the Forensic Psychology Service were committed to a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) when applying for the funding. The KPIs were monitored monthly. These were being met and in some cases were being exceeded. He was pleased with the service received from the Forensic Psychology Service.

Councillor P Atkinson thanked the Assistant Chief Constable for the presentation and asked how the service was measured and monitored, whether figures were taken from the start of the year compared to figures at the end of the year and if there was evidence of any increase or decreases.

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen responded that data came from different sources in relation to funding. Performance data was in part to recognise what serious violent crime looked like. He advised that figures had to be used with caution as national crime recording standards crime data integrity had changed but in terms of the most serious violence offending this rarely changed. The recording standard changes were often for lower harm offences such as public order, or lower level harassment.

Councillor D Nicholls acknowledged that more work was needed around violence against woman and girls. He was concerned that funding was to come to an end as a quarter of women suffered from domestic violence and every three days a woman was killed by a man. He queried how Clare's law was being used and if there were any statistics available. He was concerned about the trend in violence in young people's relationships and questioned what was being done to support and show them what healthy relationships looked like.

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen responded that he was in attendance to discuss the serious violence duty and had not prepared any information on Clare's law or unhealthy relationships but agreed to provide an update for the committee. He advised that there had been an increase in staff in that area within the police for a quicker turn around for reporting domestic violence. He added that work was being carried out in schools about unhealthy relationships with the Alice Ruggles Trust which had been established in honour of Alice who was sadly murdered by her stalker.

Councillor J Charlton thanked the Assistance Chief Constable for his presentation and queried who fed data into the data base and whether it all came from the police.

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen explained that data in existence came from different facets and suggested that a presentation was given to a future meeting on where the information came from and what technology was used to support it.

Councillor J Charlton asked if funding was available after March 2025 if he was confident that the same work would be carried out.

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen was confident about the strong relationships which had been formed and the areas the money had been spent on. It showed how working together across agencies with optimism could ensure learning came from the funding.

Councillor J Charlton asked if a recommendation could be submitted to Licensing from the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that 'Ask Angela' could be demonstrated in all premises across County Durham.

The Business Compliance Manager responded that 'Ask Angela' could not go any further than a recommendation. It was already part of the new licensing policy which had been submitted to full council for adoption. The request could be applied to all new premises licences within their conditions but could not be adhered to licences which had already been granted as these lasted forever and could not be changed unless they were put forward for a review to committee. Work was ongoing to promote this scheme.

Councillor J Charlton stated that there were lots of rural pubs in County Durham where potentially people did not feel safe. She added that every tool should be used to make everyone feel safe everywhere.

Councillor D McKenna asked what education was given around knife crime.

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen replied that this was flagged in the data around local early intervention cohorts which focussed on education. On a broader sense new legislation was to be brought out to enhance knife crime prevention orders to divert those carrying knives or who were at greatest risk of being drawn into serious violence away from being involved in knife crime. There was also more focus from the police with knife amnesties and the banning of the zombie knife.

Councillor D McKenna asked if education or training was delivered in schools and if bleed kits were to be made available like defibrillators had.

Assistant Chief Constable R Allen that bleed kits were being looked into to be rolled out imminently. Education in schools was a struggle as you had to be wary on how to deal with children and young people as not to invoke fear or ideas to carry knives as training in schools was not necessarily the best way of learning for them. However there was school engagement and interaction which had been very positive that had led to children being less likely to carry knives.

The Youth Justice Service Manager added that the Youth Endowment Fund had invested millions of pounds into research with young people in respect of serious violence. Part of the research had looked at reasons why they carried knives which was often because they felt scared and carried them for protection. The problem is that, if you carried a knife, you were more likely to use it.

Councillor R Crute commented that 'Ask for Angela' was an initiative which could not be recommended from scrutiny to licensing as conditions were added to licences on a case by case basis. It was a good initiative and would need to be referred to the Monitoring Officer for consideration at the Constitutional Working Group if the policy was to be changed.

S Gwilym, Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer mentioned that the annual Statutory Licensing Policy had been drafted and was to be presented to full council for approval.

The Business Compliance Manager added that the policy would be adopted once approved at full council.

The Business Compliance Manager advised that the licensing trade had different legal regulations but awareness could be increased to highlight this initiative as best practise. There would be a need for primary legislation from Government to change the Licensing Act to make adding this initiative as a mandatory condition to all licences. He confirmed that 'Ask for Angela' was referred to in the licensing policy for any new licences being applied for.

Resolved:

That the report and presentation be noted.

7 Community Protection Service - Enforcement and Intervention Activity

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change which provided background information in advance of a presentation on enforcement and intervention activity by the Council's Community Protection Service. The presentation attached in appendix 2 provided an overview on activities of the Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing functions within the Community Protection Service (for copy see file of minutes).

I Harrison, Business Compliance Manager gave a detailed presentation that gave an update on activities carried out by the Consumer Protection Service. The team covered investigations into underage sales, illicit tobacco, animal welfare, animal licensing, food safety, Natasha's Law around food being correctly allergen marked, health and safety at work, environmental protection, air quality, private water supplies, the Licensing Act 2003 and taxis. He advised that the newest issue was around illegal vapes which could be sold to anyone at any age. He showed a video of how contraband was hidden in secret walls within shops which was discovered by a highly trained police dog. He advised that a new bill was to be introduced which would ban the sale of tobacco and vapes to anyone born after 1 January 2009.

J Benson, Health Protection Manager informed the committee that Natasha's law was introduced in February 2024 to protect allergy sufferers and give them the confidence in the food they bought. The Food Standards Agency were introducing a new food Standards Delivery model where the Council were required to risk assess the standard compliance which looked at the labelling, quality and composition of food. Any premises thought to be high risk would be visited regularly.

T Johnson, Consumer Safety Manager stated that her team looked at animal health especially farm premises to provide quality assurance on where food came from to prevent farmers cutting corners in times of austerity. New legislation had been brought in that stated that all birds kept outside should be registered with Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs).

The Business Compliance Manager advised that the biggest challenge for 2025 was the annual licensing fee charges which had not changed in 20 years which was meant to cover the administration of the licence. This was a challenge as costs had increased and the service was required to find the additional funding.

Councillor D Nicholls appreciated that vaping was a massive issue in his ward especially with young people vaping at secondary schools. He welcomed the work to counteract this issue. He was concerned at the number of barber shops which were opening at an alarming rate which acted as fronts for organised crime selling counterfeit goods and queried what was being done around this. He was also concerned about mobile food vendors who did not know what ingredients were in the wrapped food they sold.

The Health Protection Manager responded that the new legislation covered pre-packed food for direct sale. The new UK food standard model had a compliance score within the business management system and if sellers were rated poorly and were a high risk they were visited more regularly.

The Business Compliance Manager advised that the team relied on intelligence or complaints about barber shops to warrant investigations where surveillance operations and test purchases were carried out.

The Head of Community Protection stressed that intelligence was important to instigate investigations to try to disrupt any organised crime.

Councillor J Miller asked if bird registrations applied to those who kept birds at allotments and who was responsible to make the registration with Defra.

The Consumer Safety Manager stated that it was the individual who owned the birds who had to register with Defra which applied to birds kept outside including allotments but not budgies or parrot who lived inside homes unless they were allowed to fly outside.

The Head of Community Protection stated birds were required to be registered so that agencies could act quickly to put zones in place in case an epidemic broke out.

The Consumer Safety Manager stressed that this was important for time efficiency to map where birds were instead of having to door knock in emergencies.

Councillor D McKenna queried if barbers were licenced for hygiene as there were a lot of skin diseases which could be spread if equipment was not cleaned appropriately. He mentioned that a premises selling illegal tobacco in his ward had been quickly closed following complaints and queried if these businesses were monitored in case they were quick to reopen or relocate elsewhere.

The Consumer Safety Manager confirmed that premises which were closed were monitored but if they reopened it was not always with the same individuals in charge.

The Head of Community Protection advised that a premises could reopen after three months of being closed. Premises were monitored and could potentially be closed again if intelligence provided evidence that illegal activities were still ongoing.

Resolved:

That the report and presentation be noted.

8 Anti-Social Behaviour: Six Monthly Update Report

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change which provided the most recent anti-social behaviour (ASB) data available at both a national and local level. The report provided information on progress made in relation to the key projects and actions undertaken by the council and its partners to address and reduce ASB, including actions set out within the ASB delivery plan ('the plan') 2024/2025 and linked to the ASB Strategy 2022-25 (for copy see file of minutes).

J Waller, Head of Community Protection gave a detailed presentation on the progress made on Anti-Social behaviour. The new strategy which had been developed for County Durham had been refreshed last year with new priority outcomes agreed by the Safe Durham Partnership Board. The focus of the delivery plan for 2024/2025 was around three key areas of Partnership, People and Places with three categories of ASB of Environment, Nuisance and Personal. National statistics showed that the number of incidents reported since 2021 had reduced but that this may indicate underreporting in Durham. There had been an increase in personal incidents which may account for incidents over the summer of 2024. A further report to evaluate the impact of ABS on victims would be brought to a future Board meeting and could be an agenda item for a future committee meeting.

Councillor P Atkinson thanked the Head of Community Protection for her presentation. He was concerned that victims of ASB were reluctant to report crime for fear of reprisal. He asked if this attitude had changed.

The Head of Community Protection responded that in Durham it appeared victims of ASB against a person were reporting crime more readily and that this would account for the increase in incident data. Over time it was hoped that there would be a growing confidence in reporting but there was still work to do to narrow the gap between the incidence of ASB and the number of reports which were received.

Councillor R Crute thanked the Head of Community Protection for her presentation. He believed there were issues with collecting data and queried if there was a system that could cut through the quantity to get quality data.

The Head of Community Protection replied that a system called Orcuma/First was used to log relevant data. There were issues with data cleansing however as it was extracted from different sources from different agencies. This could often lead to duplication in reporting. There were also challenges around how incidents were recorded by various agencies and more recently there had been changes to crime reporting within the police reporting system.

Councillor J Miller stated that he was having issues with the process of replacing CCTV cameras in Wheatly Hill attached to lamp posts due to documents having to be signed by the Parish Council over liability of damage.

The Head of Community Protection agreed to chase up the CCTV issue and get back to Councillor J Miller.

Resolved:

That the progress being made by the council and its partners in addressing and reducing ASB be noted.

9 County Durham Youth Justice Service - Overview, Performance, Service Developments and Improvement Plan 2024/25

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services which gave an overview of County Durham Youth Justice Service, including the latest Service/Partnership performance. It highlighted key achievements during the previous year, along with areas for improvement and development which the service would be focussed upon during the next year (for copy see file of minutes).

D Summers, Youth Justice Service Manager gave a brief outline of his presentation which highlighted the financial issues with funding coming to an end meaning that 19 out of 50 members of staff were at risk. The service had expanded its remit and now linked with the ASB processes to provide interventions for young people, families and victims.

Councillor V Andrews asked what next steps were taken with the parents of a child or young person who had been caught committing an ASB offence.

The Youth Justice Service Manager responded that there was a panel that met to look at support for parents and/or use of parenting orders. Most parents once contacted accepted support to manage the behaviour of their child when they had been caught committing offences.

Councillor D McKenna asked if orders were given to parents of young people who misbehaved on off road bikes which were illegal to ride or any other actions that were taken.

The Youth Justice Service Manager replied that this would be a question for the Head of Community Protection to answer, but advised that they had found that, generally, parents wanted the help and support with their children to resolve the issues they faced.

Councillor J Charlton thanked the Youth Justice Service Manager for presentation which was an interesting read. She hoped the service continued to get funding as they did a good job.

Resolved:

That the report and work of the service be noted.

County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Authority



Safest People, Safest Places

Safer, Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24 February 2025

Community Risk Management Plan Consultation

Report of Ben Cairns, Director Community Risk Management

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Safer, Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with background to the Fire Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2025-2028. The Committee will be provided with a presentation setting out details of the plan and consultation process.

Background

2. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework. The Framework sets out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities who must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their duties.
3. The Framework refers to the requirement for fire and rescue authorities to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan, this term has been replaced with the title Community Risk Management Plan to align with the National Fire Chiefs Council's Community Risk Management Planning Fire Standard.
4. The Framework directs fire and rescue authorities to:
 - be accountable to communities for the service they provide;
 - identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;

- make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and the response to fire and rescue related incidents;
 - develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse;
 - collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide.
5. Specifically, the National Framework states that we have a statutory responsibility to include a several areas within the CRMP. These duties are summarised below:
- Reflect up-to-date risk analyses of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
 - Demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities;
 - Outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
 - Set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRO) 2005;
 - Cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as is necessary;
 - Reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
 - Be easily accessible and publicly available.
6. The Service's CRMP is a three-year strategic plan. This is currently reviewed annually to assess the effectiveness of existing arrangements. Following this review an annual CRMP Action Plan is developed.

CRMP Content

7. The CRMP contains profile information regarding the Service area, performance data, governance arrangements and how the Service identifies, manages and responds to risk in County Durham and Darlington.
8. Linking directly to the Community Risk Profile (CRP) and Station Plans, the CRMP sets out the key risks found and what proactive and reactive measures will be in place relating to each identified risk.
9. Each of the main Strategies (Community Safety and Arson Reduction; Business Fire Safety; Emergency Response and Resilience; People, Estates, ICT, Assets and Assurance; Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change, Equality Diversity and Inclusion) and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is directly referenced with regard to how they are affected by risk.
10. An overview is provided of what we have introduced following last year's consultation together with the proposed options for Year 1, 2 and 3 of the 2025-2028 CRMP period.

11. In 2024-2027 we consulted on and delivered the following:

We said	We did
<p>Monitor the crewing of Wholetime fire engines</p>	<p>In July 2023, the Service implemented the crewing of the wholetime fire appliances at five fire stations the crewing of wholetime fire engines, with four firefighters.</p> <p>Throughout 2023 and 2024, we monitored the operational activity and operational performance of each of the five fire stations. We found no operational performance or health and safety issues reported that were directly attributable to the implementation of this action.</p> <p>We have also conducted a review of our response times 12 months prior to implementation, and 12 months following implementation, the results of which highlights that the Service’s response times were maintained. We will continue to monitor this activity in the coming year through our normal assurance processes.</p>
<p>Implement the findings following the review of the Risk Based Inspection Programme.</p>	<p>The review produced an updated Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) with an increased focus on premises types that have been identified through national research as a higher risk. These premise types include care homes, hotels, hospitals and residential buildings over four storeys tall.</p> <p>The new RBIP implemented by our Service on 31 March 2024, has increased the number of premises in our Service area classed as higher risk from 40 to 734. Many of these premises now classed as higher risk have not been inspected for several years. We have developed a three-year plan to ensure all these premises receive an inspection. Once inspected all higher risk premises will receive a reinspection at least, every three years thereafter.</p>
<p>Continue to monitor the staffing arrangements and application of Targeted Response Vehicle’s (TRV’s).</p>	<p>The TRV and its staff operate independently at low impact low risk incidents. In doing so they increase the availability of front line fire engines. This is especially effective between 4pm and 9pm. They also support the wider operational capability either through provision of equipment and/or personnel at high impact incidents.</p> <p>Other supporting roles include enhancing operational cover at on call stations, standby cover at wholetime stations as well as forming part of our Business Continuity arrangements. The TRV is comfortable in</p>

	<p>dealing with varying terrains and is used for assisting in flood conditions, at wildfires and during other such spate conditions or complex incidents.</p> <p>More recently the TRV and staff have been utilised alongside partners for anti-social behaviour collaboration initiatives aiming to reduce unwanted deliberate and nuisance fire setting in hot spot areas.</p>
<p>Continue to explore opportunities and evaluate changes introduced through collaboration projects</p>	<p>Over the past year our Service has been involved in several collaboration projects.</p> <p>We are working in collaboration with three other FRSs Cleveland, Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire to integrate a new Fire Command and Control system that will save us approx. £1.9m over the 7-year contract. The joint system increases resilience and fallback arrangements including the handling of each other's calls during spate conditions or day to day business disruption.</p> <p>Other benefits include the reduction of carbon footprint through sharing of telephone lines, freeing up of technology infrastructure by moving to a cloud-based approach as well as improved cyber security.</p> <p>We have reviewed the Community Safety Responders roles in Weardale, signing a new agreement with Durham Constabulary. They now focus on a dual role of Community Support Officer and On Call Firefighter, with performance indicators reported through the Collaboration Board.</p> <p>We have signed an agreement with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority (TWFRA) whereby experts in Data Protection from TWFRA assist County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority with meeting its responsibilities to the Information Commissioners Office and its legal duties arising from the Data Protection Act 2018.</p> <p>We continue to collaborate on our Service Estate with partners from Durham Constabulary and North East Ambulance Service and are pursuing further collaboration on other schemes.</p>

Medium Term Financial Plan

12. The Service has faced considerable financial pressures including a reduction in central government grants, increases in NI employer contribution costs, cost pressures arising from rapidly increasing inflation which is resulting in demands for higher pay awards. The financial pressures faced by the Service are compounded by uncertainty surrounding the level of government funding from 2026/27 onwards.
13. Our 2024/25 annual budget is £35.4M and to set a balanced budget for 2025/26 it will be necessary to continue to closely monitor our spend and income from central government. The Authority has one of the lowest level of reserves of all English fire and rescue authorities therefore using reserves to balance the budget is not sustainable on an on-going basis.
14. Historically, we have received an equal amount of our funding from direct government grants and Council Tax. However, over time this has changed, with 62% of our funding now being received from Council Tax, increases which are subject to strict limits without going through a very expensive referendum process. The Government have determined a band D Council Tax increase limit of £5 on fire and rescue authorities for 2025/26. Reliance on Council Tax also brings with it challenges in an area such as ours where a significant number of the properties are in Council Tax band A and B. A 1% increase in Council Tax raises an additional £218,000 for the Authority whereas in other areas 1% raises significantly more. To further illustrate the problem a 1%, pay award costs us over £298,000 per year and other inflationary pressures are adding significant costs to the Service.

Our Plans

15. In 2025/26 the following options will be considered
 - Review the newly implemented Service Risk-Based Inspection Programme;
 - Continue to explore opportunities and evaluate changes introduced through collaboration projects.
16. In 2026/27 the following options will be considered
 - Implement any changes to the Service Risk-Based Inspection Programme identified by the review in 2025/26;
 - Continue to explore opportunities and evaluate changes introduced through collaboration projects.
17. In 2027/28 the following options will be considered
 - Continue to explore opportunities and evaluate changes introduced through collaboration projects.

Consultation

18. The consultation for 2025/26 will begin on 19 February 2025 and will run for 12 weeks closing on 14 May 2025. To ensure that a wide range of views can be gathered the Communications and Engagement Team will lead on all consultation activity, with the assistance of crews and other departments. The consultation questions are set out at paragraph 24 of this report.
19. The consultation questions will be available to the public to answer in two formats, via an online survey created on Smart Survey and via a questionnaire style booklet.
20. A Communications and Engagement Plan has been created to assist with the consultation process. Various methods of communication will be utilised to ensure a meaningful consultation is carried out. Following an evaluation of the 2024/25 communications strategy, a wider emphasis on in-person engagement will take place. Three Station Open Days will take place during the consultation period and an Open Day at the Service Training Centre.
21. Social media will be a key component in promoting the online survey. The Service have a large following on Facebook and TikTok and a growing following on Instagram, LinkedIn and via our WhatsApp channel. Increasingly we will aim to promote and use WhatsApp, TikTok and stories, to connect to people quickly and efficiently in a landscape where people want their news faster and more concise than ever before.
22. Internal communications are an important aspect of our consultation, with our own staff being encouraged via The Bulletin, Chats with the Chiefs, everyone emails and at Leadership Forums to take part in the consultation and have their family members take part also. Posters with QR codes will be displayed around Service stations, Headquarters, Service Training Centre and Workshops.
23. A range of other communication methods will be utilised such as: working with the press to issue releases, visits to schools and universities, leaflet drops, work with social justice partners Teakisi and posters displayed in busy areas.

Consultation Questions

24. At the Strategic Planning Day on 21 November 2024 the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) considered the range of options which could be put to the public. Based on the feedback from this day and the Service analysis it is suggested the following questions be put to the public: The public are asked, do you agree for each of the following questions.

Investing in our communities:

“The effect of an accidental fire in the home is devastating for both individuals and communities. We know that there are several factors that mean some people are more at risk from a fire within their home. For instance, people’s lifestyle choices, such as smoking or drinking alcohol or those living with physical or medical illness

often present a greater risk with many of these people known to or engaging with other agencies. Our priority is to reduce the number of accidental fires in the home. To achieve this, we need to identify new and innovative ways to share information and train other agencies to reduce the risk.”

Q1 We will invest further with partner agencies to increase our access to people vulnerable from fire and other emergencies.

Investing in our communities:

“County Durham and Darlington suffers from some of the highest numbers of deliberate fires across England. We recognise the negative impact these fires have on our communities, not to mention the time we spend dealing with them. We work with a range of partner agencies to identify opportunities where we can have a positive impact. We know that deliberate fires are often linked with anti-social behaviour or crime and therefore we remain committed to working with our partners to both reduce them and investigate them with a view to supporting prosecutions.”

Q2 We aim to reduce the impact that deliberate fires have on our communities through targeted interventions and prevention activity.

Investing in our people:

“We know that our people are our greatest asset and therefore deserve the right support so they can be their best. Our focus is to have a fit, healthy and highly trained workforce that help us deliver our commitment to you “safer people, safer places”. This starts by recruiting the right people, providing them with support so that they can flourish and an environment which is welcoming, supportive and caring. We want to see our staff develop and reach their potential across all sections of the service”

Q3 To ensure we provide the best service to the public we will invest in our people by promoting our approach to recruitment, retention and staff well-being.

Investing in our On-Call Firefighter Response:

“County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service covers approximately 939 square miles including a large proportion of rural areas. We use on-call firefighters to provide cover in our rural areas and increase our response in more urban areas. Through this approach we remain one of the fastest responding fire and rescue services in England. We can only do this with the right people, in the right places at the right time. Therefore, it remains a priority to explore all opportunities to continually improve our response model. This will include investing time and resources in our people, our infrastructure and technology to provide the best service to our communities”

Q4 We are committed to continually improving our on-call response model.

Investing in our future:

“County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service considers the challenges we and society face today and those in the medium to longer term. Responding to these challenges is complex and requires commitment, planning and investment. We recognise the impact we have on the environment and have developed an Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy which sets out how we aim to reduce our impact. Legislative changes together with our own aims means we will continue to invest in our estates, fleet and equipment whilst exploring technological solutions to meet our vision.”

Q5 To meet the challenges of the future and reduce our impact on the environment we will invest in our buildings, equipment and technology.

Recommendations

25. Members are requested to:

- (i) **Consider and note** the content of the CRMP and consultation which will be presented at the meeting.

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority

Fire and Rescue Service

Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2028

   @CDDFRS
www.ddfire.gov.uk



About Us



- We serve approx. 630,000 people across an area of 939 square miles
- We protect 302,500 households and 20,150 businesses
- We have 15 fire stations
- We have 301 Wholetime firefighters, 168 On Call Firefighters, 18 Fire Control Operators and 98 Support Staff in HQ, Training and Technical Services

Our Achievements

- In our most recent HMICFRS inspection we achieved Good in all three categories of effectiveness, efficiency and people.
- We won Fire and Rescue Service of the year at the Public Sector Transformation Awards in 2022 and 2023
- We have an award-winning apprenticeship programme, being named 26th in the top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the national league table.
- We have invested in our fleet and equipment with a dedicated wildfire vehicle in response to the increased threat of wildfire emergencies.
- We continue to collaborate with our partner agencies on projects such as Operation Trailblazer.
- We are proud to have achieved The Better Health at Work Award at Maintaining Excellence Level for the 10th year in a row.



Our Performance

1. We have the fastest response times for a predominantly rural fire and rescue service
2. We attend the 4th lowest number of Accidental Dwelling Fires in England and the 16th lowest number of fires in non-domestic premises
3. Last year we delivered 18,290 Home Fire Safety Visits, a rate of 28.7 per 1,000 population (England rate is 10.37 per 1,000)
4. Last year we delivered 1,716 Fire Safety Audits, a rate of 9.66 per 100 known premises (England rate is 3.8 per 100)



Have Your Say

- We want to know what you think about our plans

- From 19th February 2025 to 14th May 2025 you can take part in our consultation
- We will be gathering views from our communities both online and face to face



Have Your Say



What is a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)?

How do we know what risks our communities face?

How will we manage these risks to keep you safe?

Have Your Say

- We want to know what you think about our plans

Why do we consult?

- We plan how to tackle the risks our communities face every year.
- Our plans include deciding where and how to use our resources.
- It is important to us to take into account what you think about the impact of any changes.



Have Your Say

Our Finances

The Medium-Term Financial Plan

- Current MTFP covers 2024/25 to 2027/28
- Financial pressures mean we have to closely monitor our spending and look at different ways of delivering our services
- The MTFP was presented to the CFA on 17th February 2025

In 2024-2027 we consulted on and delivered the following:

We said	We did
Monitor the crewing of Wholetime fire engines	<p>On 1 July 2023, the Service implemented the crewing of the wholetime fire appliances at five stations with four firefighters.</p> <p>All operational debriefs and health and safety events linked to operational activity for these five stations have been monitored throughout the year. There were no operational performance or health and safety issues reported that were directly attributable to the implementation of this action.</p> <p>Monitoring of response times 12 months prior to implementation and 12 months following highlights that response times have been maintained. Ongoing monitoring will be through the Operational Assurance Group, Joint Health and Safety Committee and Performance Board.</p>



In 2024-2027 we consulted on and delivered the following:

We said	We did
<p>Implement the findings following the review of the Risk Based Inspection Programme.</p>	<p>The review produced an updated Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) with an increased focus on premises types identified as a higher risk through national research. This included care homes, hotels, hospitals and residential buildings over 4 storeys.</p> <p>The new RBIP was implemented on 31 March 2024 increasing the number of premises classed as higher risk from 40 to 734. Many of these premises now classed as higher risk have not been inspected for several years.</p> <p>A plan has been developed to ensure all these premises receive an inspection over the next three years. Once inspected all these higher risk premises will receive a re-inspection at least every three years.</p>

In 2024-2027 we consulted on and delivered the following:

We said	We did
<p>Continue to monitor the staffing arrangements and application of TRVs</p>	<p>The TRV and its staff operate independently at low impact low risk incidents protecting front line appliances. This is especially effective between 4pm and 9pm. They also support the wider operational capability either through provision of equipment and/or personnel at high impact incidents.</p> <p>Other supporting roles include enhancing operational cover at on call stations, standby cover at WT stations as well as forming part of our Business Continuity arrangements. The asset is comfortable in dealing with varying terrains and is used for assisting in flood conditions, at wildfires and during other such spate conditions or complex incidents.</p> <p>More recently the TRV and staff have been utilised alongside partners for ASB Collaboration initiatives aiming to reduce unwanted deliberate and nuisance fire setting in hot spot areas.</p> <p>Moving forward monitored through BAU activity. Opportunity to staff additional TRVs when/ if required.</p>

In 2024-2027 we consulted on and delivered the following:

We said	We did
<p>Continue to explore opportunities and evaluate changes introduced through collaboration projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Fire Command and Control Collaboration (collaboration with three other FRS's Cleveland, Hereford and Worcester and Shropshire) . • We have reviewed the Community Safety Responders roles in Weardale, signing a new agreement with Durham Constabulary. They now focus on a dual role of Community Support Officer and On Call Firefighter, with performance indicators reported through the Collaboration Board. • We have signed an agreement with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority (TWFR) whereby experts in Data Protection from TWFR to assist County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority with meeting its responsibilities to the Information Commissioners Office and its legal duties arising from the Data Protection Act 2018. • We continue to collaborate on our Service estate with partners from Durham Constabulary and North East Ambulance Service and are pursuing further collaboration on other schemes. • An agreement has been reached between the four NE FRS for principal officer support.

Our 2025 Consultation:

You can read the full Plan and our
Community Risk Profile at:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Question 1

We will invest further with partner agencies to increase our access to people vulnerable from fire and other emergencies.

Do you agree?

Our 2025 Consultation:

You can read the full Plan and our
Community Risk Profile at:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Question 2

We aim to reduce the impact that deliberate fires have on our communities through targeted interventions and prevention activity.

Do you agree?

Our 2025 Consultation:

You can read the full Plan and our
Community Risk Profile at:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Question 3

To ensure we provide the best service to the public we will invest in our people by promoting our approach to recruitment, retention and staff well-being.

Do you agree?

Our 2025 Consultation:

You can read the full Plan and our
Community Risk Profile at:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Question 4

We are committed to continually improving our on-call response model.

Do you agree?

Our 2025 Consultation:

You can read the full Plan and our
Community Risk Profile at:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Question 5

To meet the challenges of the future and reduce our impact on the environment we will invest in our buildings, equipment and technology.

Do you agree?

Have Your Say on Our Consultation

How do I share my views?

Scan QR code to complete survey



To complete our survey online:

- Visit our website here:
<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/community-risk-consultation>
- Use the below link:
<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CRMP2025/>
- Alternatively you can find the link to our survey on our social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Tiktok



Thank You

Any questions?



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**Safer and Stronger Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

24 February 2025

Probation Service



Report of Helen Bradley, Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with background information in advance of a presentation on probation services in County Durham.

Executive summary

- 2 The presentation attached in Appendix 2 provides members with an update on delivery of Probation Services within County Durham.

Recommendation

- 3 Members of the Committee are asked to note information contained within the presentation and comment accordingly.

Background

- 3 The Committee considered its work programme in July 2024 and agreed to include an item on the Probation Service and reducing reoffending. It builds on previous reports to the SSC OSC which have detailed changes to delivery of probation services.
- 4 Karen Blackburn, Head of County Durham and Darlington Probation Service will be in attendance to deliver the presentation attached at Appendix 2 together with her deputy, Tanya Graham.

Main implications

Crime and Disorder

- 5 Information with this report aims to contribute to reducing re-offending.

Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- None

Contact: Clare Luery

Tel: 03000 265978

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

None

Consultation

None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Human Rights

None.

Climate Change

None.

Crime and Disorder

Information with this report aims to contribute to objectives in the Safe Durham Partnership Plan to reducing crime and disorder.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

None.

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Durham County Council Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Overview Committee Probation Service Update

Karen Blackburn
Head of County Durham and Darlington
17th February 2025

Page 15

Introduction

- Probation Challenges – prison capacity
- Good Practice – Hub Delivery Model / Local Initiatives / Case Study
- Partnership Developments

Probation Challenges

Probation Challenges in 2024

ECSL – End of Custody Supervised Licence early release scheme - quick turn around, one-off activity to release people 18 days early.

SDS40 – Standard Determinate Sentences – early release scheme from September – October 2024; those eligible were released at the 40% not the usual 50% point of sentence

Probation Reset – from April 2024 – Supervision suspended at the last 1/3 of sentence. Exemption of Counter Terrorist, Child Protection, Very High Risk cases...

Probation Hub Delivery

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- Shakespeare Hall, North Road – NORTH DURHAM
- West Auckland Community Centre – SOUTH DURHAM
& St Clare's Church, Newton Aycliffe (Women only)
- St Cuthbert's Community Hall – PETERLEE
- Enterprise House, DARLINGTON

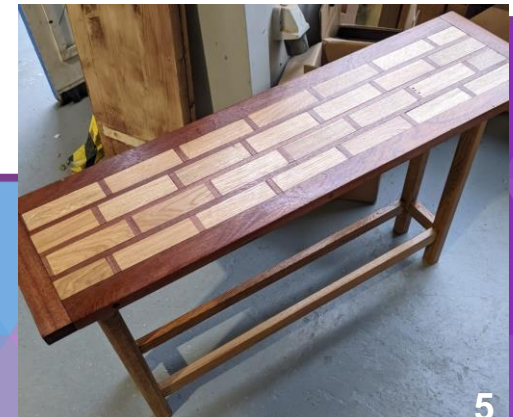
In a One Stop Shop approach to supervision / promoting desistance...

- Community Rehabilitation Services – *St Giles Wise, Thirteen, Wise Group*
- HMPPS Co-Financing Organisation - *Ingeus*
- Local Authority Public Health Recovery Services
- Engaging People on Probation representatives
- Probation Structured Interventions delivery...
- Unpaid Work placements for women



Good News – Case Example

- The Police/Probation Integrated Offender Management Team use the services of *Handcrafted* at Willington as constructive activities...
- Charity with a Christian ethos where people learn woodwork/skills
- Empowers people excluded from the mainstream to gain skills/work
- John has an extensive criminal history and has not come to authorities' attention since prison release in November 2022.
- John has been welcomed at *Handcrafted* since his release and has recognised talents.



Local Initiatives - Engagement

- Staff Engagement & Wellbeing Committee
- CHAT Box initiative
- Reward & Recognition Panel
- Good Practice & Positivity Teams Call
- Engaging People on Probation Forum

Reducing Reoffending Delivery Group

Priority 1

To deliver an effective, multi-agency Integrated Offender Management scheme

Priority 2

To focus on the drivers of offending and clarify and develop Criminal Justice Pathways in relation to Substance Misuse, Health, Mental Health, Accommodation & Education, Training and Employment

Priority 3

To coordinate and align rehabilitative activity across County Durham and Darlington eg activity from the LCJB, CSPs and their subgroups, the combating drugs and alcohol partnership and the serious violence duty partnership

Potential Partnership Developments for Women...



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24 February 2025

**Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
Executive Group Annual Report**

Ordinary Decision



Report of Michael Laing, Interim Corporate Director of Adult & Health Services

Amanda Healy, Director of Public Health, Durham County Council

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) with an overview of the Domestic Abuse work carried out by County Durham and Darlington's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) April 2023 to March 2024.

Executive summary

- 2 It is estimated that 2.1million people are affected by Domestic Abuse (DA) each year (Crime Survey for England and Wales in the year ending March 2023). DA continues to have a significant impact on County Durham communities and support services.
- 3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed a statutory duty on Durham County Council (DCC) and partners to identify a Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board. Locally, this is known as the County Durham and Darlington Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG).
- 4 Sexual Violence is a standing agenda item on the DASVEG agenda with a bespoke SV plan and a separate SV annual report, presented independently to DASVEG and the Safe Durham Partnership.
- 5 DASVEG's DA plan covers the following priority areas (see appendix 2) for further details):
 - Prioritising prevention;
 - Supporting victims;

- Tackling those who cause harm.
- 6 SafeLives were commissioned in 2023 to provide an independent review of the work currently being undertaken by DASVEG. DASVEG will review this report and the findings and recommendations be shared with the SDP when available in autumn 2024.
 - 7 Despite most DA going unreported, referrals into Harbour Support Services (HSS), provider of the Countywide Domestic Abuse Outreach Service, continue to increase each year.
 - 8 Victim/survivor voice should be central to all DA systems, to support with this, additional NBF has been allocated to continue the DA Victim Voice Champion that sits within the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for a minimum of a further two fiscal years (for 2023-24 and 2024-25).
 - 9 New Burdens Funding (NBF) was allocated from April 2021 to ensure that local authorities could meet their statutory requirements supporting the delivery of a range of measures relating to safe accommodation. In County Durham the first allocation of funding was not spent until the fiscal year 2022.
 - 10 The most recent NBF payment in April 2023 is the last committed payment by the Government. However, as County Durham spent their first payment a year in leu, there is still one years' worth of NBF held in reserve to be allocated in April 2025.

Recommendation(s)

- 11 OSC is recommended to:
 - (a) note the content of this report and the Domestic Abuse Pan 2023-2025

Background

- 12 It is estimated that around 2.1 million people are affected by DA each year in England and Wales (Crime Survey England and Wales year ending March 2023) this equates to around 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men.
- 13 Nationally, there was no significant change in the prevalence of DA in the last year compared with previous years.
- 14 The impact of DA continues to affect all communities and support services across County Durham.
- 15 DA is consistently the most common primary reason for referrals into children's social care and fluctuates between the second and third largest reason for homelessness in County Durham.
- 16 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed statutory responsibilities on local authorities and their partnerships in relation to DA, specifically to provide support in safe accommodation. In addition, the Act brought with it the first DA definition in law, which made children and young people victims in their own right.

Whole System DASVEG Plan 2022 - 2025

- 17 DASVEG developed a County Durham and Darlington Domestic Abuse Plan 2022 – 2025 (Appendix 2) reflecting the priorities identified with in the DA Act.
- 18 In addition to the DASVEG plan, there is an independent Sexual Violence plan and standalone annual report.
- 19 The Sexual Violence plan and report are brought to DASVEG and the Safe Durham Partnership in addition to this report.
- 20 The DA DASVEG plan and its identified priorities are supported by three key workstreams as follows:
- Prioritising prevention;
 - Supporting victims;
 - Tackling those who cause harm.
- 21 The three subgroups are now operational, with a chair in place for each.
- 22 The subgroups contribute to the development of the overarching DASVEG plan. The outcome of any work is reported to DASVEG as a standard agenda item at each meeting.

- 23 SafeLives were commissioned in 2023 to provide an independent review of all work currently being undertaken by DASVEG. DASVEG will review this report and the findings and recommendations be shared with SDP when available, anticipated in October/November 2024.
- 24 In addition to the DASVEG plan and subgroups are a number of commissioned services including;
- Harbour; the countywide DA service;
 - The Domestic Abuse Navigator (DAN) service, providing specialist support for complex cases;
 - Four locality refuges, providing safe accommodation;
 - The Remain Safe Scheme, keeping victims in their own homes;
 - The victims Voice Champion, working with the OPCC to support victims.

Countywide Specialist Outreach Service Overview

25 Whilst it is acknowledged that most DA goes largely unreported, referrals to Harbour Support Service continues to increase each year.

Table 1: Referrals into Harbour Support Service 2020 - 2024

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/2024
Total number of referrals from all sources	6608	7116	7577	8412
Total families referred	5350	5851	6191	7224

- 26 There was an increase in both adult and child referrals into Harbour of the year 2023/2024.
- 27 There was no notable change in repeat referrals rising very marginally from 24.3% to 24.8% from last year to this year. However, any amount of re-referral in DA is viewed positively as victims and survivors feel empowered to re-engage with the service.
- 28 There was an increase in referrals (plus 66) of children and young people from 340 2022-2023 to 406 2023-2024.

- 29 Durham Constabulary, remain the highest referrer into Harbour, accounting for 5270, or 62.6% of all referrals. This reflects the effective partnership work established between Durham Constabulary and the wider DA system.
- 30 Harbour continues to achieve positive outcomes for the people it supports. Outcomes relating to adult victims are as follows:
- 85% report improved safety (a deterioration from 88% last year);
 - 81% report improvement in their mental health and wellbeing) a deterioration from 85% last year).
- 31 Between April 2023 and March 2024, the number of new Children and Young Peoples (CYP) cases opened increased from 583 in 2022-2023 to 700 2023-2024. Children and young people accessing the service report the following outcomes:
- 92% of children and young people feel safer (up from 86%);
 - 85% feel their quality of life has improved (Up from 83% last year);
 - 83% feel more confident in themselves (up from 83%).
- 32 The Another Harbour commissioned workstream is the 'Preventions Service' this perpetrator focused service, offering targeted support and work to perpetrators of domestic abuse, received 448 referrals in 2023-2024. This is increase from 409 referrals the previous year.
- 33 These 409 increases in referrals to the Prevention Service did not translate into a similar increase in newly opened cases. Newly opened cases were 171 2022-2023 but only 167 cases in 2023-2024. The cause for this could be one of several reasons including inappropriate or premature referrals; Where the Police are referring perpetrators who are still in criminal proceedings and cannot engage in a service that implies guilt. Or, that there needs to be an improvement in transferring referrals into meaningful support and interventions. This data set will be looked at by the Tackling Those Who Cause Harm Subgroup.
- 34 What this data is telling the partnership is that there is an improvement in referring organisations identifying perpetrators of DA, but that there is no a notable improvement in perpetrators entering into a programme, if anything there has been a decline, something that the 'Tacking Those Who Cause Harm' subgroup will continue to address in the following year.
- 35 In the last year the following outcomes have been achieved by the preventions service:

- from 448 referrals 291 attended a Harbour intervention (65.0%);
 - from the 308 active cases 165 attended/are attending the Respect accredited programme (a rate of 36.8%).
- 36 Of the 308 active cases, 43 completed the Respect accredited programme (9.6%) (Note the course is 26 weeks long and some completed participants will be accounted for in next year's figures.
- 37 165 preventions cases were closed (planned and unplanned) in the year 2023-2024 and 123 of their victim-survivors reported feeling safer at exit. This is a rate of 74.5%.

Victim Survivor Voice

- 38 Victim/survivor voice should be central to all service design and improvement work.
- 39 To ensure that the County Durham system approaches victim/survivor voice in a meaningful and respectful way NBF has been allocated to continue the DA Victim Champion role that sits with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner with funding available until March 2026.
- 40 The post was vacant whilst an extended recruitment took place. The post has now been fulfilled and the DA Victims Champion will commence in September 2024.

Safe Accommodation

- 41 In line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, DASVEG provides the oversight and monitoring of the statutory duties associated with Safe Accommodation to ensure the stipulated outcomes are achieved.
- 42 Current safe accommodation provision within County Durham includes the following:
- 4 women's refuges (with a total capacity for 32 individuals/families);
 - a Countywide Domestic Abuse Specialist Outreach Service (that includes providing support to those in dispersed properties (9 properties were available for 2023-24);
 - six dispersed properties provided via the Domestic Abuse Navigator (DAN) service. This service is for those services users with complex needs (the service also includes an outreach service to support those with complex needs in other safe accommodation and in their own homes);
 - Remain Safe (target hardening) Scheme.

- 43 The overall number of referrals for Safe Accommodation during the 2023-24 reporting period dropped slightly when compared to the previous year (1026 referrals in 2022-23 to 948 referrals for 2023-24). The number of referrals will continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis.
- 44 Work to identify the cause for the drop in referrals to safe accommodation is being looked at by the Supporting Victims subgroup and any findings will be presented to DASVEG in due course.
- 45 One potential reason for this could be the increase in funding for the remain safe scheme. The remain safe scheme, whereby 'target hardening' measures are installed, including one way window film, fireboxes and new locks, has enabled more victim-survivors to be supported to stay in their homes with additional safety features and referrals to specialist support.
- 46 For 2023/24 the total spends for the target hardening safe scheme designed to keep victims safe in their own homes (including funding from DCC Housing) was £132,587. This allowed for 309 cases to be completed. This contrasts with the spend in 2022/23 of £71,264.45, which resulted in 196 cases being completed. This highlights efficiencies in the scheme with in 113 more households being supported this year than last year.
- 47 It should be noted, that whilst more units were fitted in 2023-2024 than the year before there has been an increase in the cost per unit. This has been because of increased call out, labour and raw materials costs passed on by Corporate Property and Land (CPaL). A matter for further discussion at the November DASVEG.

New Burdens Funding

- 48 Durham County Council (DCC) has received a further New Burden's Fund (NBF) settlement of £1.19m during financial year 2023-2024.
- 49 NBF is linked to the delivery of the safe accommodation duty and public health work in partnership with commissioning colleagues to spend NBF in accordance to the set parameters.
- 50 NBF is utilised to ensure that successful schemes and support service enhancements already in place have been able to continue.
- 51 NBF was initially allocated to local authorities in 2021 to allow them to implement the new duties of providing support in safe accommodation for victims, including children.

- 52 In County Durham, the first year's allocation was not spent until the next fiscal year, meaning every additional payment received, has been held back by one year before being spent.
- 53 This means that there is a year of NBF in reserve for the year 2024-2025.
- 54 There has been no announcement from the new Labour Government about NBF for the year 2024-2025.
- 55 The Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales strongly supports the continuation of the NBF for local authorities.
- 56 In her published priorities for the new Government in 'A Safer future without domestic abuse,' she strongly advocates for approaches tackling domestic abuse to remain a cross-departmental priority.
- 57 The Commissioner also recommends the Government continue to pay local authorities a dedicated and ringfenced funding stream to maintain domestic abuse services at a local level.
- 58 The Durham City refuge operated by Harbour was visited by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales February 2023. She was very complimentary and has publicly praised the support offered to children and families in Durham. She also invited members of DASVEG including DCC and Harbour staff to present at the Local Government Association conference.

VAWG and the SWAN hub

- 59 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) work undertaken in 2023-2024 has been focused on early interventions work. In partnership with the Relationship, Sex and Health Education coordinator for Durham County Council, working with the Sexual Health Oversight Group and the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Steering Group, who received feedback from DASVEG, Investing in Children and the Children in Care Council, a programme of work was created for the academic year 2024-2025.
- 60 The programme, delivered by three providers, enhances the current Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) offer for young people in County Durham.
- 61 Each provider will address a unique part of healthy relationships and consent that will aim to reduce VAWG long term by educating young

people early on in their lives and asking them to challenge historic social prejudices.

- 62 The work will be evaluated for effectiveness once concluded and findings reported to relevant management teams and DASVEG and the SDP.
- 63 The VAWG agenda is further supported by the attendance at the OPCC's Scrutiny Panel. The panel meets six times a year to scrutinise:
- Violence Against Women and Girls;
 - Domestic Abuse;
 - Sexual Violence.
- 64 The Safety of Women At night (SWAN) hub is currently reaching the end of the original block of Safer Streets funding.
- 65 There is an evaluation of the SWAN hub taking place. Details of the evaluation and recommendations will be brought to the SDP for consideration when the evaluation is complete.

Operation Encompass

- 66 Operation Encompass is the name for a notification system that ensures staff in schools receive timely information about police attended incidents of domestic abuse and can understand how to support children in school the next day.
- 67 Durham County Council have been working in partnership with Durham Constabulary and Harbour to offer Operation Encompass notifications to school for many years.
- 68 Operation Encompass only recently became part of law under the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024.
- 69 As part of system improvements an updated notification system was trialled earlier this year. The trial was a success, and the new notifications system is now fully operational for all schools in County Durham as of 2 September 2024 for children in Reception to Year 11.
- 70 Expansions to the scheme from September 2024 to July 2025 will include notification to early years settings and post 16 provisions.
- 71 There is a multiagency Operation Encompass working group that meets regularly and will work to deliver on the planned 2024-2025 improvements.

White Ribbon Accreditation

- 72 White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls.
- 73 Durham County Council is a White Ribbon Accredited employer. This commitment means that as employer, the council has been working hard to commit to transformational changes in the staffing culture, systems and communities.
- 74 White Ribbon re-accreditation will be due in October 2025, and the White Ribbon steering group continues to work on the current action plan with annual updates to the relevant management groups.
- 75 This year's White Ribbon Day on the 25th November and the following 16 days of action theme is 'It starts with men' this theme highlights that violence against women and girls is rooted in harmful masculine traits and by starting with men this is where these attitudes can be challenged and changed.

Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions

- 76 Durham County Council recognises the importance of supporting colleagues affected by domestic abuse, one of the ways that this is done is through the network of Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions.
- 77 The Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions:
- provide colleagues with initial support and signposting to specialist services;
 - raise awareness of domestic abuse throughout the council;
 - act as point of contact within teams / service area;
 - promote local and national campaigns.
- 78 Full support and information is provided to all Domestic Abuse Champions, including a half day training, plus regular updates and emails to keep the group informed.
- 79 In 2023-2024 the Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions group continued to grow, and they will be part of the 16 days of action work planned for November 2024.

Conclusion

- 80 DASVEG continues to provide a system-wide approach across County Durham and Darlington to implementing the DA Act (2021) at a local level.
- 81 The future of New Burdens Funding remains uncertain. Whilst no announcements have been made there are indications that funding maybe maintained. The Domestic Abuse Commissioner’s Office continues to lobby on behalf of Local Authorities.
- 82 DA delivery at a local level continues to result in positive outcomes for victims/survivors, their children, and perpetrators. This includes work within Durham Constabulary, commissioned services, SWAN Hub, Operation Encompass, DCC’s White Ribbon Accreditation including the 16-days of Action and DCC’s Workplace Champions.
- 83 The delivery and capacity for Safe Accommodation within the county continues to align with the priorities highlighted in the national DA act 2021.
- 84 County Durham has undertaken three DHRs during 2023/24 and 2004/25. Two out of the three independent reviews have been submitted to the Home Office. All recommendations and actions from the reviews have been progressed regardless of delays in the Home Office processes for sign-off and publication.
- 85 As the development work continues to progress with the subgroups, the SafeLives report and the expansion of the Operation Encompass scheme regular updates will be shared with members of the SDP for their consideration and approval and required.

Other useful documents

- Previous reports / None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 imposes statutory duties on local authorities and partners, requiring adherence to safe accommodation standards and the proper handling of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). Compliance with new legal definitions, such as recognising children and young people as victims is essential. The evolving legal framework (e.g., potential renaming of DHR to DARDR) necessitates regular review and adaptation of local procedures, ensuring that policies remain aligned with national guidance and legislative changes.

Finance

Funding arrangements, including New Burdens Funding (NBF), are critical to the delivery of safe accommodation and other statutory services. The delay in initial NBF expenditure and the existence of a reserve for 2024–2025 requires careful financial planning to mitigate the risks of potential funding shortfalls. Contingency measures are being developed to address uncertainties in future, ensuring that service provision is not compromised.

Consultation and Engagement

Meaningful engagement with survivors, service providers, and key stakeholders is essential to ensure that service design reflects the lived experiences of domestic abuse victims. There is no current work requiring public consultation. Any new consultation would include a range of people and communities to gather a broad range of perspectives to inform any new work.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Policy and service delivery must be underpinned by a commitment to equality and diversity, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation, receive appropriate support. Intersectional considerations should inform practice, addressing the unique barriers faced by victim survivors with multiple protected characteristics or complex needs. Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty necessitates ongoing training for staff and the integration of diverse perspectives in all stages of policy development.

Climate Change

Where practicable within the contracting process, service providers should consider sustainable practices in the design and operation of safe accommodation facilities, such as energy-efficient building improvements and

resource management. Any future resilience planning should incorporate environmental factors that may affect service delivery, ensuring that facilities remain functional during extreme weather events or other climate-related disruptions.

Human Rights

Ensuring the human rights of all victims and survivors is paramount, with a focus on dignity, safety, and equality in service provision. Policies and interventions are designed to protect the rights of individuals experiencing domestic abuse. Continuous training and awareness-raising is necessary to support staff in upholding these standards across all services.

Crime and Disorder

Domestic abuse is intrinsically linked to broader issues of crime and disorder, necessitating close collaboration with law enforcement agencies. Effective response mechanisms, including multi-agency risk assessments and MARAC referrals, are essential for reducing the incidence and impact of domestic abuse-related crimes. Data collection and analysis shared with DASVEG is a proactive measure aimed to identify emerging trends and address gaps in the criminal justice response.

Staffing

Sufficient and well-trained staff are critical to the successful delivery of domestic abuse services. Investment in ongoing professional development, including specialist training on trauma-informed approaches and risk assessment, ensures staff are equipped to support victims and perpetrators alike. The recruitment and retention of skilled staff, along with support mechanisms such as the Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions network ensure the workforce is well trained and capable.

Accommodation

Meeting statutory obligations for safe accommodation is a core responsibility under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Continuous monitoring of referral trends and service capacity is needed to ensure that safe accommodation options remain available and meet the evolving needs of victims and survivors. Collaborative work between the local authority, service providers, and housing agencies is necessary to address any shortfalls and to incorporate innovations (e.g., target hardening measures) that enhance the safety and sustainability of accommodation.

Risk

Risk assessments are conducted as part of the multi-agency review process, ensuring that high-risk cases receive tailored interventions. The development work of the Domestic Abuse Related Death Review process, will overtime, create learning from the most high-risk cases to be used in future practice to continually mitigate risk for Victims and survivors. The integration of data from diverse sources (such as MARAC and police reports) supports informed decision-making and effective risk reduction strategies.

Procurement

Procurement processes must be transparent and compliant with public sector guidelines to secure services and products required for domestic abuse interventions. Strategic procurement focuses on cost-effectiveness and quality, ensuring that investments in safe accommodation, training, and support services yield measurable benefits. The procurement framework helps facilitate, at times, agile responses to emerging needs, allowing for the rapid scaling of services due to changes in demand or funding.

County Durham and Darlington Domestic Abuse Plan 2023/25

Our Shared Vision: A Stronger System which drives down domestic abuse and domestic homicide cases, while ensuring that victims and survivors get the support they need

DASVEG Priorities

These priorities will be developed on the principles of using best evidence, practice and victim voice at its core

Prioritising Prevention

- Define what we mean by prevention and early intervention for young people and vulnerable adults.
- Review and where possible influence the delivery of Relationship, Sex and Health (RSHE) education in educational settings
- Ensure that children and young people are recognised as victims in their own right and are supported by suitable interventions across the system
- Focus on early identification and developing trusted professional ethos
- Delivering a range of relevant social marketing campaigns

Supporting victims

- Ensuring the priorities set out in County Durham and Darlington’s Safe Accommodation are achieved
- Continuing to support and develop local MARAC arrangements including embedding the use of the DARA and enhancing the DASH
- Embed the learning from local and national Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Identifying and effectively supporting hidden/vulnerable groups
- Understanding and supporting health system interventions
- Victim voice representation at all levels of the system

Tackling those who cause harm

- Develop a system that supports a graded response to challenging those who cause harm, from early intervention and awareness raising to behaviour change programmes
- Support, develop and embed Police led interventions including MATAC and Caution Plus
- Increase awareness and promote the use of the DVDS (Claire’s Law)
- Ensure a focus there is a systemwide focus on the risks associated with, and the impact of stalking and harassment

Our Enablers



Working in a victim centered approach meaning all agencies acting in ways that support what the victim needs and where possible promote choice.



Sharing skills and knowledge of effective governance and effective oversight, holding organisations to account for their delivery and engagement with the strategy and service users.

Ensuring quality and performance through effective governance and scrutiny processes.



Strong collaboration and communication to understand the landscape, increase effectiveness, reduce duplication and maximise co-commissioning opportunities.

Being prepared to challenge and disrupt existing structures to address gaps, taking opportunity to change the system



Communicating and engaging effectively with service users and across agencies and wider stakeholders.

Ensuring the priorities are imbedded in exiting structures with strong feedback loops.



Improve and introduce services through evidence of what works. Value the Victim Survivor Voice and promote co-production.

Using data and intelligence to guide future strategies, policy development and commissioning.

Our Impact

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**Safer & Stronger
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

24 February 2025

**Quarter Two, 2024/25
Performance Management Report**

Ordinary Decision



Report of John Hewitt, Chief Executive

Councillor Amanda Hopgood, Leader of the Council

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To inform members, senior managers, employees and the public of our progress towards achieving the strategic ambitions and objectives set out in our [Council Plan 2024-28](#).

Executive Summary

- 2 This report contains the most recent performance data available on 30 September 2024, alongside contextual information of activity and events taking place in the second quarter of the 2024/25 financial year (July to September).
- 3 It should be noted that since this report was written, the government has closed the [Office for Local Government](#). A new way of ensuring local authorities are fit, legal and decent, incorporating the benefits of relevant work completed by Oflog to date, is being developed. Therefore, although Oflog's suite of metrics is included in this report (as Oflog was still in operation over the reporting period) we intend to review their inclusion in future reports once clarity is received on the new assurance methodology.
- 4 We are a large organisation providing a broad range of services. Our operating environment, which can be challenging, is heavily influenced by many interconnected factors including inflationary and demand pressures, demographic shifts and the changing needs of our residents, economic uncertainties, and the ongoing impacts of global events.
- 5 The government presented its [Autumn Statement](#) to Parliament on 30 October. This set out the government's financial plans for this year and next, alongside the estimated impact of changes to tax, welfare and public spending.
- 6 A real term increase in total core spending power was announced, alongside additional funding to reform children's social care and pilot a Kinship Allowance, implement the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme and

improve recycling, support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, extend the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments to help vulnerable households, fund Bus Service Improvement and repair potholes.

- 7 Our [provisional finance settlement](#) has now been received and the detail presented to Cabinet in January 2025.
- 8 We continue to show strong performance across our key outcomes.
- 9 The overall crime rate in County Durham has fallen and compares favourably with many council areas in the region. Although the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police remained static, the number of victims referred to our support services increased. Of the private sector rented properties covered under the selective licensing scheme, 58% are fully licensed or have legal proceedings instigated.

Recommendation(s)

- 10 Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
 - (a) note the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter two performance (July to September), and the actions being taken to address areas of challenge.

Background

- 11 The Council Plan is our principal corporate planning document. It explains how we will effectively deliver our day-to-day services, our longer-term ambitions and contribute to achieving the [County Durham Vision¹](#).
- 12 Our plan is supported by other strategies and service plans. These contain the detail for the actions and projects we will undertake to help achieve our priorities. It also aligns to our Medium-Term Financial Plan which sets out how our priorities will be resourced, and our County Durham Plan which sets out a vision for housing, jobs and the environment until 2035, as well as the transport, schools and healthcare to support it.
- 13 We track progress towards achieving our strategic ambitions and objectives through our performance framework – a collection of key performance indicators contextualised with benchmarking data from similar authorities, and information from our service teams.
- 14 Progress is reported quarterly on an exception basis, using ‘easy to read’ dashboards focusing on trends, direction of travel, benchmarking and performance to target. Key messages are aligned to our five thematic areas (our economy, our people, our communities, our environment, our council) and are grouped into ‘things that are going well’ and ‘issues we are addressing’.
- 15 Our performance management processes align with [statutory guidance²](#) produced by the government. The guidance sets out the ‘characteristics of a well-functioning authority’ and the ‘indicators of potential failure’. In relation to performance management, this includes:

Characteristics of a well-functioning authority

- (a) The corporate plan is evidence based, current, realistic and enables the whole organisation’s performance to be measured and held to account.
- (b) The use of performance indicators to manage risk and to benchmark against similar authorities and manage risk.
- (c) The council has complete, timely and accurate data, and the skills to interpret it, to inform decisions.
- (d) There are clear and effective mechanisms for scrutinising performance across all service areas. Performance is regularly reported to the public to ensure that citizens are informed of the quality of services being delivered.
- (e) Partners and local residents are involved in developing indicators and targets, and monitoring and managing lack of performance.

Indicators of potential failure

- (a) A lack of ‘good quality’ data and insight to understand services.

¹ Developed with our County Durham Together partners, the Vision describes what we want the county to look like over the next decade and beyond.

² [Best Value Standards and Intervention](#)

- (b) A lack of corporate capacity or capability, resulting in a lack of strategic direction, oversight and sense of accountability.
 - (c) Performance management information is not consistently used, does not measure outcomes where relevant and underperformance is not effectively addressed.
 - (d) Data quality is poor and there is a lack of capacity or capability to interpret it to inform decisions.
 - (e) Services data suggests poor performance and outcomes compared to similar local authorities.
- 16 We continue to operate in line with the characteristics of a well-functioning authority, and over the last 18 months we have further strengthened these functions with:
- (a) A higher level, more strategic Council Plan which gives the reader a more immediate sense of the strategic direction of the council and what we are intending to do.
 - (b) A renewed service planning process which simplifies and brings together organisational planning into the strategic planning cycle.
 - (c) A refreshed approach to quarterly performance reporting which provides greater insight into how our services are performing.

Conclusion

- 17 This report informs members, senior managers, employees and the public of our progress towards achieving the strategic ambitions and objectives set out in our [Council Plan 2024-28](#).
- 18 It contains the most recent performance data available on 30 September. Contextual information relates to activity and events taking place in the second quarter of the 2024/25 financial year (July to September). It provides insights into what is going well and the issues we are addressing.

Background papers

- [County Durham Vision](#) (County Council, 23 October 2019)

Other useful documents

- [Council Plan 2024 to 2028](#) (current plan)
- [Quarter One, 2024/25 Performance Management Report](#)
- [Quarter Four, 2023/24 Performance Management Report](#)
- [Quarter Three, 2023/24 Performance Management Report](#)
- [Quarter Two, 2023/24 Performance Management Report](#)

Author

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality measures are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Climate Change

We have declared a climate change emergency and consider the implications of climate change in our reports and decision-making.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

A number of performance indicators and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with the Safe Durham Partnership and its sub-groups.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health indicators has been included to monitor staffing issues.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly performance management report.

Procurement

Not applicable.



Corporate Performance Report

Quarter Two, 2024/25



Contents (blue text links to sections of the report)

[Executive Summary](#)

[Our Communities:](#)

[Performance Report](#)

[Road safety](#)

[Crime](#)

[Protecting vulnerable people from harm](#)

[Anti-social behaviour](#)

[Data Tables](#)

[Glossary](#)

Executive Summary

- 1 This report shows how we are performing against the priorities set out in our Council Plan 2024-28.
- 2 We are reporting performance on an exception basis with key messages structured around the five thematic areas of, our economy, our environment, our people, our communities, and our council.
- 3 We are reporting the most recent performance available as at 30 September. Contextual information relates to activity and events taking place in the first quarter of the 2024/25 financial year (July to September).

Our communities

- 4 The aim of this priority is to ensure our communities are well connected and supportive of each other, with vibrant and accessible towns and villages which are well-used, clean, attractive and safe. We will support our most vulnerable residents, particularly those isolated or financially vulnerable. We will maintain a strong focus on tackling poverty throughout the cost-of-living crisis.

Issues we are addressing

- 5 Of the private sector rented properties covered under the selective licensing scheme, 58% are fully licensed or have legal proceedings instigated.

Risk Management

- 6 The government's statutory guidance for best value authorities sets out the characteristics of a well-functioning authority. This details the arrangements that councils should have in place for robust governance and scrutiny including how risk awareness and management should inform decision making. The latest [Strategic Risk Management Progress Report](#) provides an insight into the work carried out by the Corporate Risk Management Group between January and May 2024.

Priority Aims:

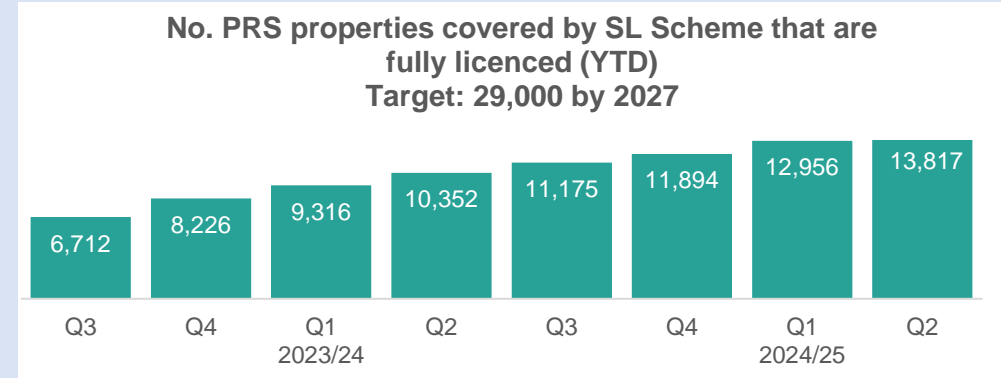
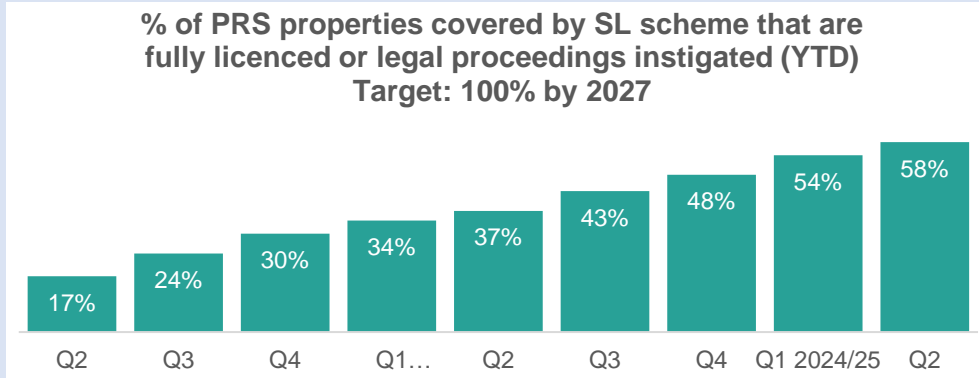
Durham is a great county in which to live, with flourishing communities which are connected and supportive of each other. We aim to,

- ensure standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock
- have towns and villages which are vibrant, well-used, clean, attractive and safe
- ensure people will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities
- ensure communities will be able to come together and support each other
- deliver new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs of our residents
- ensure our rural communities will be sustainable whilst maintaining those characteristics which make them distinctive
- narrow the inequality gap between our communities
- build inclusive communities

Housing Standards Dashboard

(discrete quarterly data)

Selective Licensing (Private Rented Sector properties - PRS)



Selective Licensing

- 7 Our selective licensing scheme covers an estimated 29,000 privately rented properties, and their status at 30 September was:

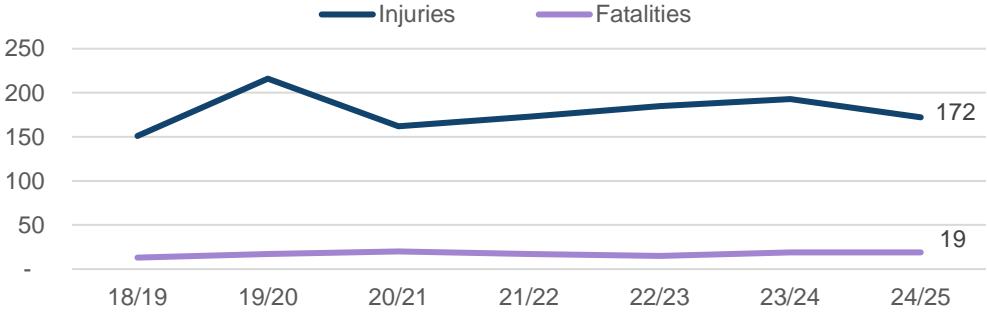
Status	Number	% of total
Fully licenced or legal proceedings instigated	16,607	58%
Fully licensed	13,817	48%
Being processed	1,080	4%
Live temporary exemptions in place	12	0%
Family exemptions in place	449	1.5%

- 8 We have raised a further 918 service cases. These are informal enquiries, requests to licence properties or requests to make repairs (if already licensed). Once the facts have been established, some cases could progress to investigations. However, we would encourage landlords to apply for a licence to avoid legal action.
- 9 We are progressing prosecution files for 22 properties (a further three already successfully prosecuted) and have issued 86 civil penalty notices for not obtaining a licence (relating to 54 properties). 255 properties are no longer private rented sector properties.
- 10 Our recently implemented financial penalty policy continues to assist with enforcement action (as an alternative to prosecution) and encourage unlicensed landlords to apply.
- 11 It requires significant effort and resource throughout the lifetime of a selective licensing scheme to promote the scheme and identify properties subject to licensing. No scheme receives all applications for licences in the first two years. Many schemes do not reach the 100% target by the end of the five years and continue enforcement action beyond the five-year period.
- 12 There are also additional challenges to a vast county wide scheme (split into smaller designations) compared to a complete smaller city or borough scheme which is simpler to administer.
- 13 There is currently no requirement for a person to register their property as privately rented. Therefore, we do not have a complete list of all PRS addresses, which is why the PRS figure was modelled. The team utilise multiple sources of data to identify properties that may require a licence. Where the owner and/or managing agent is committing an offence, we commence enforcement action. A dedicated team of officers has been assigned to target properties without a licence and has been successful by using a combination of informal measures and pursuing robust enforcement action.

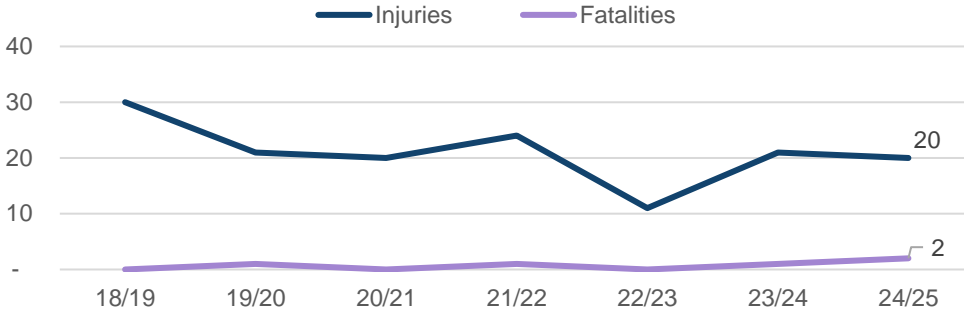
Road Safety Dashboard

(October to September 12 month rolling trend)

Killed or seriously injured - all injuries and fatalities



Killed or seriously injured - children



- 16-20 age group accounted for the most casualties over the last two years.
- Car occupants, motorcyclists and pedestrians account for the most casualties
- Collision hotspot areas tend to be more urban areas

Data for 2023 and 2024 is provisional and subject to change.

Road Safety

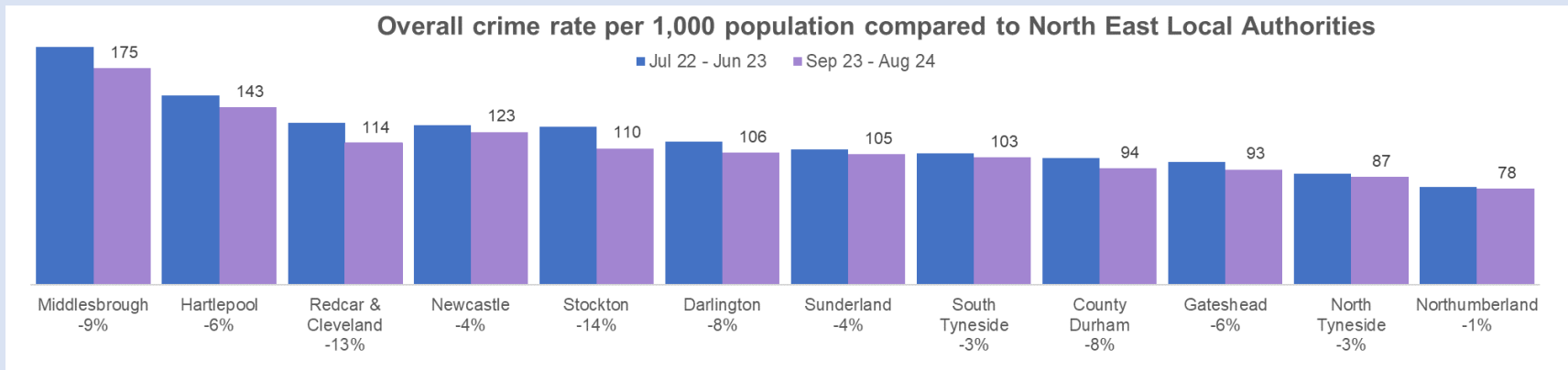
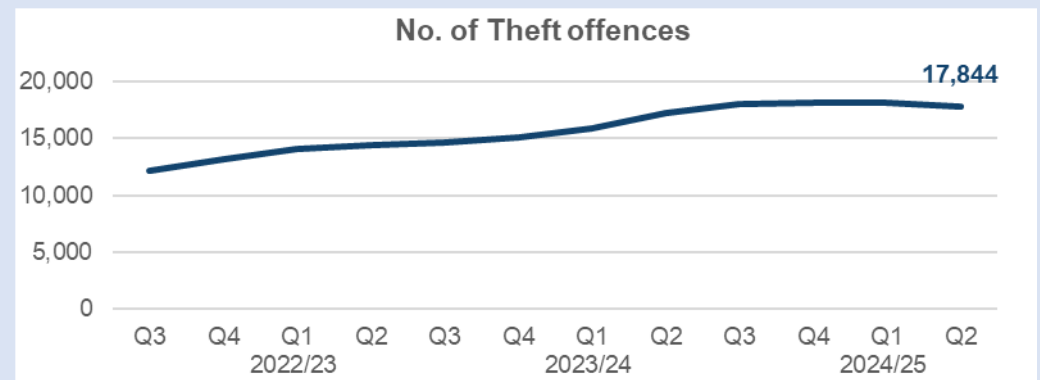
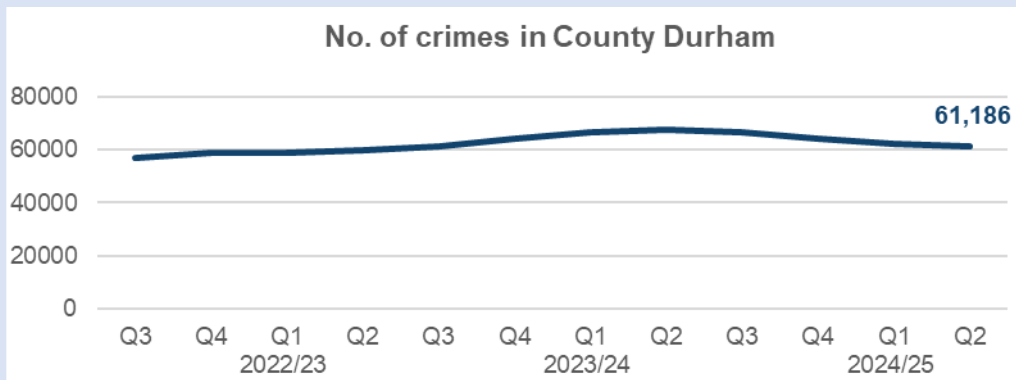
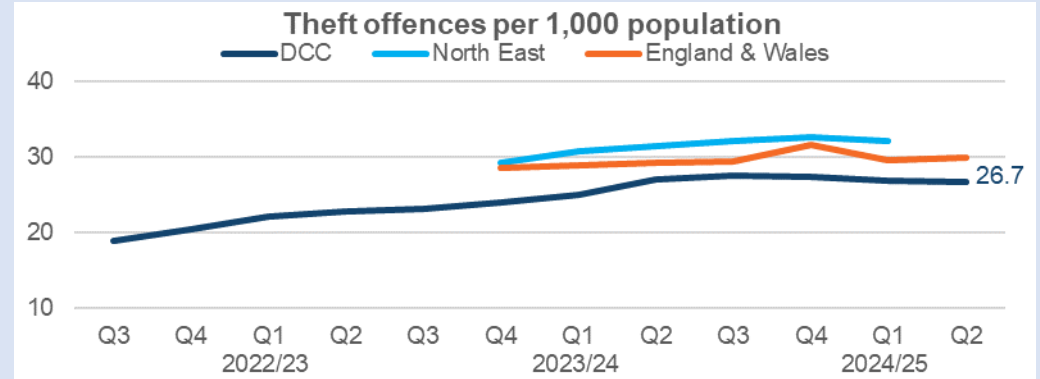
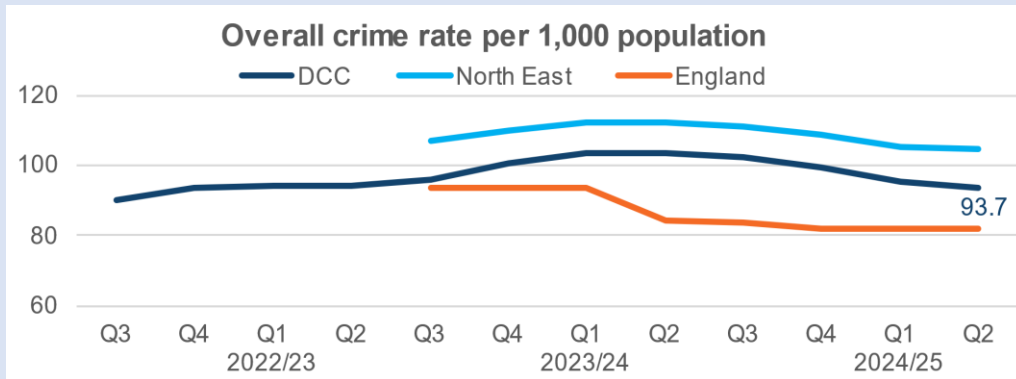
- 14 During the 12 months ending September, 172 people were seriously injured and 19 died in road traffic collisions across the county. There has been no increase in fatalities and a decrease of 22 serious casualties compared to the same period last year (12 months ending September 2023).
- 15 The 16-20 age group accounted for the most casualties over the last two years. Although there were six fewer casualties during the 12 months ending June 2024, compared to the same period last year.
- 16 Car occupants, motorcyclists and pedestrians account for the most casualties. During the two reported years, pedestrians increased by one and pedal cyclists increased by three, however, car occupants decreased by 22.
- 17 Collision hotspot areas tend to be more urban areas, including Durham City, Bishop Auckland, Peterlee, Chester-le-Street, Consett and Stanley.
- 18 We are working to reduce road traffic casualties through education programmes, training courses and road safety campaigns. During quarter two (July to September), we delivered:

Education programmes / training courses	No. of children
Bikeability cycle training	679
Face-to-face visits and activities with children	2,445
Child pedestrian training	273
Young driver and passenger workshop sessions (with Durham Police)	547

- 19 Our campaign work during quarter two (July to September) focused on the Euros Final football drink/drug drive awareness, cyclists and motorbike riders' safety, car maintenance, safe journey planning for summer, back to school and school parking safety, children's (early secondary age) campaign and young drivers project.
- 20 Our road safety Facebook page reached an audience of more than 22,000 people this quarter. Although the audience reached is significantly lower than quarter one, this is due to our corporate social media post and press article on young driver & passenger safety sessions reaching approximately 80,000 people during quarter one.

Crime Dashboard

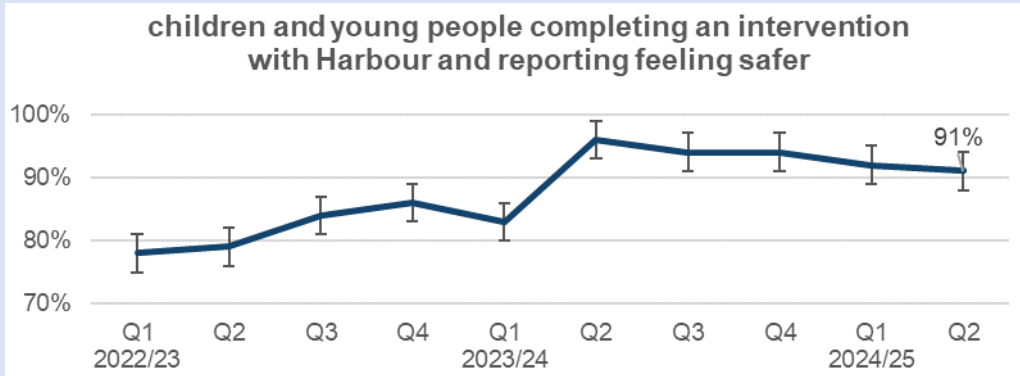
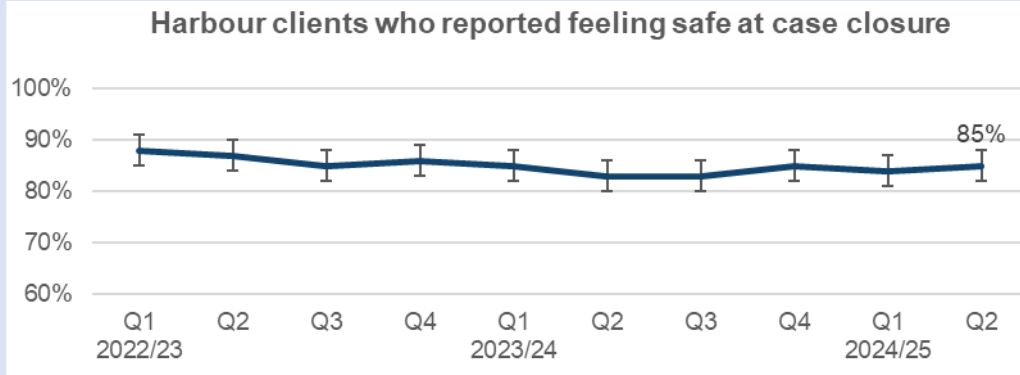
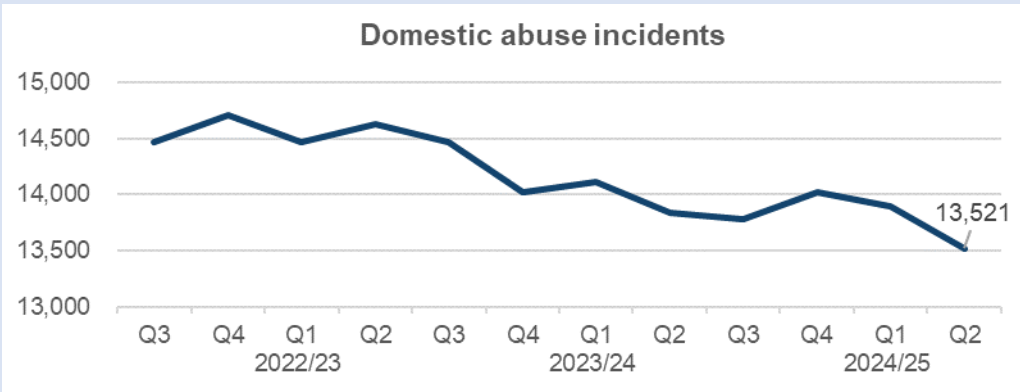
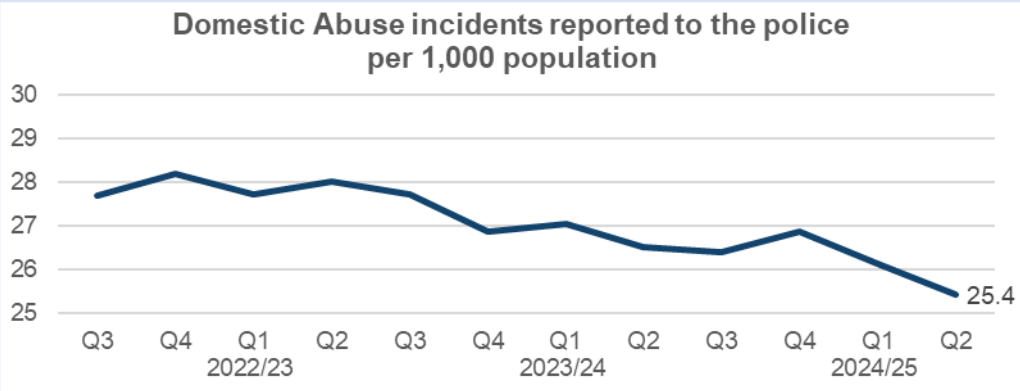
(12 months ending 30 September 2024)



Protecting Vulnerable People from Harm Dashboard

(12 months ending 30 September 2024)

Domestic Abuse Incidents



Crime

- 21 Between 1 October 2023 and 30 September 2024, the overall recorded crime rate was 93.7 crimes per 1,000 population. This is better than the same period last year (103.4 crimes per 1,000 population).
- 22 There has been a steady decrease in overall recorded crime over the last fifteen months. Although most of the underlying crime types have decreased, there have been increases in robbery (up 5% from 184 to 194), miscellaneous crimes against society (up 3%, 1,577 to 1,627), possession of weapons (up 2%, 367 to 373) and theft offences (up 1%, 14,135 to 14,308).
- 23 Between 1 October 2023 and 30 September 2024, there were 26.7 theft offences recorded per 1,000 population. Of these, 20% were solved. This is better than the same period last year when 26.9 theft offences per 1,000 population were recorded and 15% solved. However, it remains higher than previous years.
- 24 Over the latest 12 months, 76% of all theft offences related to shoplifting, burglary or vehicle offences. Compared to the same period the year before, shoplifting decreased by 58 (-3%), burglary by five (-1%) and vehicle offences by 60 (-10%).
- 25 The challenges remain in terms of the difficulties faced by the courts with prisons in England and Wales almost full. Shoplifting offences are quite lenient even with repeat offenders with very few receiving custodial sentences.

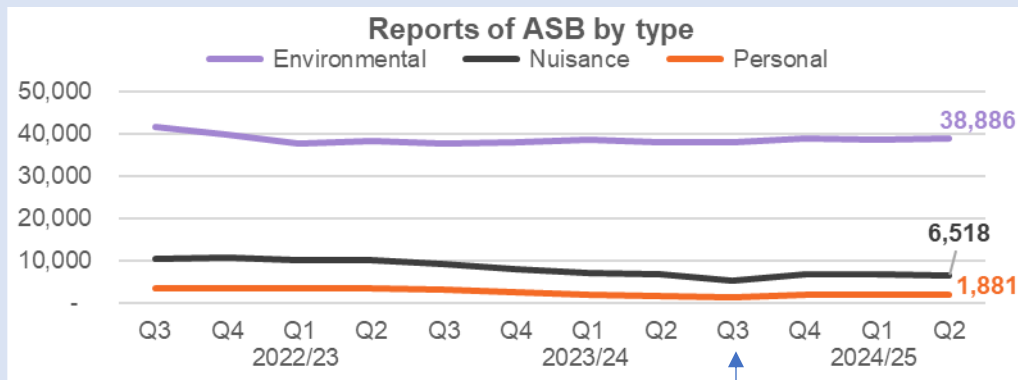
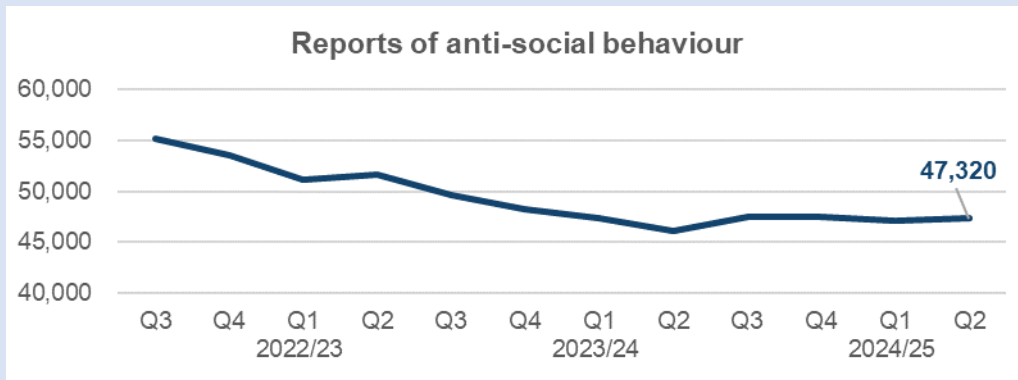
Domestic Abuse

- 26 Although 316 fewer domestic abuse incidents were reported to the police in the 12 months ending September 2024 (compared to the same period the previous year), the number of victims referred to Harbour Support Services increased by 2%.
- 27 On average, a victim will experience domestic abuse for four years before accessing help from Harbour.
- 28 Between July and September 2024, 1,721 domestic abuse adult victims were referred to Harbour. Of these, 69 were considered high risk (4%) and 268 had been referred at least twice in the previous 12 months (16%).
- 29 The proportion of clients who reported feeling safe after involvement with Harbour remains stable at 85%. The proportion of children completing an intervention with Harbour and indicating they feel safer is lower (-5 percentage points) than 12 months ago.

Anti-Social Behaviour Dashboard

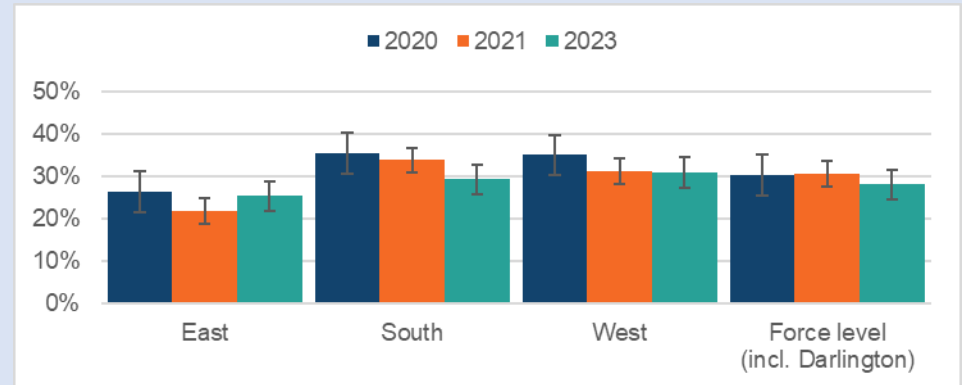
(12 months ending 30 September 2024)

	Last year	This year	change	
Environment ASB	37,730	38,886	+1,156	+3%
Nuisance ASB	6,602	6,518	-84	-1%
Personal ASB	1,547	1,881	+334	+22%
All ASB	45,923	47,320	+1,397	+3%



A change in National Crime Recording Standards has resulted in more ASB incidents being categorised as a crime, leading to a reduction of traditional ASB reports through the Police.

Proportion of respondents who agree that the police and local authority are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter to them



No significant change

Q: What do you feel is the single, biggest issue, negatively impacting on your local community at this time?

The main theme was ASB (including youth-related and drug-related). The top three issues identified as having the greatest negative impact on individuals were speeding and driver related ASB, general negative view of the police and police behaviour, and off-road bikes.

Incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- 30 Following a steady decrease over the last two years, latest data from Durham Constabulary shows a slight increase in ASB reports over the 12 months ending 30 September 2024.
- 31 This increase coincided with a change in National Recording Standards and how ASB incidents were recorded and likely contributed to the increase in incidents as Durham Constabulary adapted to the new process, and also with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams utilising their local social media pages to increase public awareness on how and who to report incidents to, and actively encouraging them to do so.
- 32 This most likely contributed to the slight increase in reports, as public confidence grows in reporting ASB and the Police dealing with ASB. This initial increase can be expected before the data can then be used to target high visibility patrols at specific hotspot locations on days and times that are most likely to reduce and prevent incidents from occurring.
- 33 Operation Trailblazer specifically tackles ASB using this data and provides high visibility patrols to hotspot areas across the county. It provides additional resources to assist in dealing with ongoing issues, supporting the local Neighbourhood Police Teams. In comparison to the slight increase in reports to Durham Constabulary, Operation Trailblazer has seen a 2% decrease in reports in the hotspot areas (compared to the same period last year), and most notably in the last quarter, Operation Trailblazer has seen an 11% reduction in ASB incidents across all hotspot areas.
- 34 Multi-agency operations in Durham City, supported by additional high visibility patrols from Operation Trailblazer, are being utilised by the Neighbourhood Police Teams to specifically target issues of ASB. Ongoing activity like this is being used in conjunction with the recent addition of a public spaces protection order, upgraded CCTV and securing criminal behaviours orders against some of the most persistent offenders to help reduce ASB going forward, and this is starting to be replicated by other areas across the county.
- 35 In the last six months alone more than 6,000 hours of additional high visibility patrols have been provided by Operation Trailblazer, in addition to Neighbourhood Police patrols specifically to target ASB. Use of Section 59 designated areas, Operation Endurance and drone capability continues to see Durham Constabulary actively tackling vehicle related ASB, particularly off-road bikes.

Public confidence that the Police and Local Authorities are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter to them

- 36 Latest survey data shows a smaller proportion of respondents agree that the police and council are dealing with ASB and crime issues that matter to them. However, the rate is an estimate from a sample survey and as it is within the estimated confidence intervals of +/-3.5pp it is possible the decrease is due to random sample variation.

Community Safety Activity

- 37 Between April and June, we worked with partners and the local community in Newton Aycliffe and actioned 260 pieces of casework, during the quarter:
- we issued 52 legal notices to remedy the defective state of premises and remove noxious matter,

- we identified 32 private empty properties. Of these, 10 are back in use, three are to let, six are for sale/sold and five are being refurbished, and
- we carried out 200 safe and wellbeing visits and 103 arson reduction activities.

38 We undertook five enforcement operations resulting in the seizure of 32,000 cigarettes and 1,651 non-compliant vapes. Three retail premises were the subject of three month closure orders.

Horden Together Project

39 Twenty-seven clients were accepted on 'Making Every Adult Matter' during quarter two (July to September). This brings the current caseload to 61. The priority areas of engagement has been managing money and managing tenancy and accommodation.

40 During the same period, we investigated reports relating to issues of unauthorised access, drainage, noise, pests, public health, housing and accumulations. We served 80 notices on properties.

Data Tables

D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated
				Household waste re-used, recycled or composted	Oct 22-Sep 23	36.5%	Tracker	37.7%	Apr 21-Mar 22	38.1%	42.5%	33.5%	Yes

D = Direction of Travel	T = compared to target	C = compared to England average	G = Gap between our performance and England average
meeting or exceeding the previous year	Meeting or better than target	meeting or better than the England average	The gap is improving
worse than the previous year but is within 2%	worse than but within 2% of target	worse than the England average but within 2%	The gap remains the same
more than 2% worse than the previous year	more than 2% behind target	worse than the England average	The gap is deteriorating

This is the overall performance assessment. Its calculation is dependent upon whether the indicator has an agreed target.

Key Target Indicator	Key Tracker Indicator
targets are set as improvements, can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners. When setting a target, the D, C and G have already been taken into account.	no targets are set as they are long-term and / or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners. Therefore, D, T, C and G are used to assess overall performance
better than target	Direction of Travel (D) is meeting or exceeding the previous year AND the gap with England (G) is improving
worse than but within 2% of target	Direction of Travel (D) is worse than the previous year OR the gap with England (G) is deteriorating
more than 2% behind target	Direction of Travel (D) is worse than the previous year AND the gap with England (G) is deteriorating

More detail is available from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

Our Communities: summary data tables

Housing Standards KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated
					Properties covered by Selective Licence Scheme that are licensed, or legal proceedings instigated	Jul-Sep 24	58%	100% (by 2027)	37%					Yes
					ASB incidents per 10,000 population within the Selective Licensing Scheme	2023/24	966	976	962					No

Road Safety KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated
					Road traffic accidents: fatalities	Jul-Sep 24	7	Tracker	7					Yes
					Road traffic accidents: seriously injured	Jul-Sep 24	41	Tracker	56					Yes
					Road traffic accidents: fatalities (children)	Jul-Sep 24	1	Tracker	0					Yes
					Road traffic accidents: seriously injured (children)	Jul-Sep 24	2	Tracker	5					Yes
					Road traffic collisions per billion vehicle miles – all	2023	610	Tracker	685	2023	610	132,063	4,018	No
					Road traffic collisions per billion vehicle miles – fatal	2023	22	Tracker	16	2023	22	1,645	68	No

Protecting Vulnerable People from harm KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated
					Domestic Abuse incidents reported to the Police per 1,000 population	Oct 23-Sep 24	25.4	Tracker	26.5					Yes
					Harbour clients feeling more confident on case closure	Jul-Sep 24	79%	Tracker	85%					Yes
					Harbour clients feeling their quality of life has improved on case closure	Jul-Sep 24	80%	Tracker	81%					Yes
					Children and young people completing an intervention with Harbour and reporting feeling safer	Jul-Sep 24	91%	Tracker	96%					Yes
					Children and young people reviewed as at risk to Child Sexual Exploitation			Tracker						No

Crime KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	England and Wales average	NE average	updated
					Respondents who agree that police and LA are dealing with ASB and crime issues that matter to them. <i>(confidence intervals +/-3.5pp)</i>	Sep 23	46.9%	Tracker	28.2%					No
					Crime rate per 1,000 population	Oct 23-Sep 24	93.7	Tracker	103.4	Oct 23-Sep 24	93.7	81.8	104.4	Yes
					Theft offences per 1,000 population	Oct 23-Sep 24	26.7	Tracker	26.9	Jul 23 – Jun 24	26.9	29.8		Yes
					Offenders who re-offend in 12 month period	2021/22	27.9%	Tracker	28.7%	2021/22	27.9%	25.2%	28.1%	No
					Proven re-offending by young people	2021/22	41.5%	Tracker	39.0%	2021/22	41.5%	32.2%	32.6%	No
					First time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10 to 17 per 100,000 population aged 10 to 17	2022	146	Tracker	141					No
					Violent crime incidents which were alcohol related	Jul-Sep 24	34.9%	Tracker	31.6%					Yes

Anti-Social Behaviour KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated
					Reports of anti-social behaviour	Oct 23-Sep 24	47,320	Tracker	46,107					Yes
					Reports of environmental ASB	Oct 23-Sep 24	38,886	Tracker	37,913					Yes
					Reports of nuisance ASB	Oct 23-Sep 24	6,518	Tracker	6,603					Yes
					Reports of personal ASB	Oct 23-Sep 24	1,881	Tracker	1,547					Yes
					ASB alcohol related incidents	Jul-Sep 24	12.5%	Tracker	11.2%					Yes
					ASB enforcement action taken	Jul 22-Jun 23	6,069	Tracker	5,057					No

Our People: summary data tables

Public Health KPIs

Region	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated
										Suicide rate per 100,000 population	2021-23	16.4	Tracker	16.8
					Successful completions of those in alcohol treatment	Mar 23-Feb 24	37.5%	Tracker	34.2%	Mar 23-Feb 24	37.5%	34.5%		Yes
					Successful completions of those in drug treatment: opiates	Mar 23-Feb 24	5.6%	Tracker	5.5%	Mar 23-Feb 24	5.6%	5.2%		Yes
					Successful completions of those in drug treatment: non-opiates	Mar 23-Feb 24	35.3%	Tracker	32.5%	Mar 23-Feb 24	35.3%	29.4%		Yes

Glossary

Term	Definition
ACD	Automatic Call Distribution Telephone calls are received either through our ACD system, which routes calls to groups of agents based on a first-in-first-answered criteria, or directly to a telephone extension (non-ACD). Only calls received via our ACD system are included in our telephone statistics.
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area Geographical area where air pollution levels are, or are likely to, exceed national air quality objectives at relevant locations (where the public may be exposed to harmful air pollution over a period of time e.g., residential homes, schools etc.).
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
ASCOF	Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework Measures how well care and support services achieve outcomes that matter most to people (link)
BATH	Bishop Auckland Town Hall A multi-purpose cultural venue situated in Bishop Auckland. It offers regular art exhibitions, live music, cinema screenings and theatre performances, as well as a library service.
BCF	Better Care Fund A national programme that supports local systems to successfully deliver the integration of health and social care.
Budget	An annual statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the House of Commons that sets out the UK government's planned spending and revenue gathering for the foreseeable future. Two major financial announcements are given in a financial year (the Autumn Budget and the Spring Budget).
CAP	Customer Access Point A location where residents can get face-to-face help and information about council services. There are eight CAPs across County Durham.
CAT	Community Action Team Project team which includes members of our community protection service, planning, neighbourhood wardens and housing teams, who work alongside police and community support officers, fire and rescue teams and residents to tackle housing and environmental issues in a specific area by identifying local priorities and making best use of resources.
CDP	County Durham Plan Sets out the council's vision for housing, jobs and the environment until 2035, as well as the transport, schools and healthcare to support it (link)
CED	Community Economic Development
CERP	Climate Emergency Response Plan A community-wide call to action to help align all sectors on the actions required to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve our resilience to the impacts of climate change.
CLD	Client Level Dataset A national mandatory person-level data collection (to be introduced) that will replace the existing annual Short and Long Term (SALT) Support data collected by councils. CLD will be added to the single data list and will become mandatory for all local authorities.
CNIS	Child Not In School
CPN	Community Protection Notice Can be issued to anyone over the age of 16 to deal with a wide range of ongoing anti-social behaviour issues or nuisances which have a detrimental effect on the local community. There are three stages: the first stage is a written warning (CPW), the second a notice (CPN) the third is an FPN or further prosecution for failure to comply with the previous stages
CRM	Customer Relationship Management system

Term	Definition
CS&T	Culture, Sport and Tourism
CTR	Council Tax Reduction reduces council tax bills for those on low incomes
DCC	Durham County Council
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs A ministerial department, supported by 34 agencies and public bodies responsible for improving and protecting the environment. It aims to grow a green economy and sustain thriving rural communities. It also supports our world-leading food, farming and fishing industries (link)
DHP	Discretionary Housing Payments Short term payments which can be made to tenants in receipt of the housing benefit element of Universal Credit, to help sort out housing and money problems in the longer term.
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care Supports the government in leading the nation's health and care system.
DLE	Daily Living Expenses Available for those whose circumstances have changed unexpectedly. Payments can be made for up to seven days to help with food, travel and some clothing (restrictions apply).
DoLS	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Set of checks that are part of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, which applies in England and Wales. The DoLS procedure protects a person receiving care whose liberty has been limited by checking that this is appropriate and is in their best interests.
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme Confidential employee benefit designed to help staff deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting their home or work life, health, and general wellbeing.
EET	Employment, Education or Training Most often used in relation to young people aged 16 to 17, it measures the number employed, in education or in training.
EHCP	Education, Health Care Plan Legal document which describes a child or young person's (aged up to 25) special educational needs, the support they need, and the outcomes they would like to achieve.
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund Funding that helps to create economic development and growth; it supports businesses, encourages new ideas and supports regeneration. Although the UK has now left the EU, under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement, EU programmes will continue to operate in the UK until their closure in 2023-24.
EHE	Elective Home Education A choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full-time.
ETA	Extension of Time Agreement An agreement between the council and the customer submitting a planning application to extend the usual deadline beyond 13 weeks due to the complex nature of the application.
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notice Conditional offer to an alleged offender for them to have the matter dealt with in a set way without resorting to going to court.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent Total number of full-time employees working across the organisation. It is a way of adding up the hours of full-time, part-time and various other types of employees and converting into measurable 'full-time' units.
GVA	Gross Value Added Measure of value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

Term	Definition
HSF	Household Support Fund Payments support low income households struggling with energy and food costs, or who need essential household items.
ICO	Information Commissioner's Office The UK's independent body's role is to uphold information rights in the public interest (link)
IES	Inclusive Economic Strategy Clear, long-term vision for the area's economy up to 2035, with an overarching aim to create more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy (link)
JLHWS	Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy JLHWS supports vision that County Durham is a healthy place where people live well for longer
KS2	Key Stage 2 The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called 'key stages.' At the end of each key stage, the teacher will formally assess each child's performance. KS2 refers to children in year 3, 4, 5 and 6 when pupils are aged between 7 and 11.
KS3	Key Stage 3 The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called 'key stages.' At the end of each key stage, the teacher will formally assess each child's performance. KS3 refers to children in year 7, 8 and 9 when pupils are aged between 11 and 14.
LGA	Local Government Association The national membership body for councils which works on behalf of its member councils to support, promote and improve local government.
LINKCD	Programme that brings together a number of delivery partners to support people with multiple barriers to address these underlying issues and to move them closer to or into the labour market or re-engage with education or training.
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategies Propose how and where to recover nature and improve the wider environment.
MTFP	Medium Term Financial Plan A document that sets out the council's financial strategy over a four year period
MW	MegaWatt is one million watts of electricity
NESWA	North East Social Work Alliance A social work teaching partnership made up of 12 North East councils and six Higher Education Institutes. The Alliance is one of several teaching partnerships across the country which were created to improve the quality of practice, learning and continuous professional development amongst trainee and practicing social workers.
NQSW	Newly Qualified Social Workers a social worker who is registered with Social Work England and is in their first year of post qualifying practice.
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification A work-based qualification that recognises the skills and knowledge a person needs to do a job.
PDR	Performance and Development Review Is an annual process which provides all staff with the valuable opportunity to reflect on their performance, potential and development needs.
PRS	Private Rented Sector This classification of housing relates to property owned by a landlord and leased to a tenant. The landlord could be an individual, a property company or an institutional investor. The tenants would either deal directly with an individual landlord, or alternatively with a management company or estate agency caring for the property on behalf of the landlord.
PSPO	Public Space Protection Order To deal with a nuisance or problem in a particular area that is detrimental to local community.
QoL	Quality of Life

Term	Definition
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations A RIDDOR report is required for work-related accidents which result in a reportable injury .
RQF	Regulated Qualifications Framework RQF helps people understand all the qualifications regulated by government and how they relate to each other. It covers general and vocational in England, and vocational in Northern Ireland.
SALT	Short and Long Term Relates to the annual Short and Long Term (SALT) Support data collected by councils. It is to be replaced by a national mandatory person-level data collection (Client Level Data).
SEN	Special Educational Needs Term is used to describe learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for children to learn than most children of the same age. Children with SEN are likely to need extra or different help from that given to other children their age.
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities SEND can affect a child or young person's ability to learn and can affect their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ behaviour or ability to socialise (e.g., they struggle to make friends) ▪ reading and writing (e.g., because they have dyslexia), ▪ ability to understand things, ▪ concentration levels (e.g., because they have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) ▪ physical ability
SG	Settlement Grants Help people stay in their home or move back into housing after living in supported or unsettled accommodation (such as leaving care or being homeless). They provide help towards furniture, white goods, flooring, curtains, bedding, kitchen equipment, removal costs etc.
SME	Small to Medium Sized Enterprise A company with no more than 500 employees.
Statistical nearest neighbours	A group of councils that are similar across a wide range of socio-economic. Durham County Council uses the CIPFA nearest neighbours model which compares us to Northumberland, North Tyneside, Barnsley, Rotherham, Wakefield, Doncaster, Redcar and Cleveland, Wigan, St Helens, Cornwall, Sefton, Sunderland, Wirral, Plymouth and Calderdale
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. Children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers. While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a council.
UKSPF	UK Shared Prosperity Fund Part of the government's Levelling Up agenda that provides funding for local investment to March 2025. All areas of the UK receive an allocation from the Fund to enable local decision making and better target the priorities of places within the UK that will lead to tangible improvements to the places where people work and live.
WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Any electrical or electronic waste, whether whole or broken, that is destined for disposal. The definition includes household appliances such as washing machines and cookers, IT and telecommunications equipment, electrical and electronic tools, toys and leisure equipment and certain medical devices.
Yield	Proportion of potential income achieved