

**REPORT TITLE: UPDATED DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY REVIEW**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	<b>Cllr Moses Crook Highways and Housing</b>
<b>Key Decision</b> <b>Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes</b> <b>Yes</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b> To present Cabinet with the Homes and Neighbourhoods updated Domestic Abuse Policy.	
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review and endorse revised Domestic Abuse policy</li> </ul>	
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current Domestic Abuse policy requires review.</li> </ul>	
<b>Resource Implications</b>  <p>Currently within Kirklees Council, there is a <a href="#">Domestic Abuse Strategy</a> that we align with yet believe having a specific domestic abuse policy in social housing is essential for protecting victims, preventing homelessness, and fostering a supportive and stable community environment.</p> <p>The policy facilitates partnerships with local organisations and authorities, enhancing the overall support system available to victims.</p> <p>Updating our domestic abuse policy as a social landlord can have several important implications for the community and the individuals involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increased Awareness: A formal policy raises awareness about domestic abuse encouraging tenants and staff to recognise the signs and understand the resources available.</li> <li>– Support for Victims: It provides a clear framework for supporting victims.</li> <li>– Empowerment: It empowers tenants by giving them the knowledge and resources to seek help and report incidents without fear of stigma or retaliation.</li> </ul>	
<b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b>	David Shepherd Executive Director for Place 18th December 2024 at Place SLT
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>	Kevin Mulvaney 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?**

Samantha Lawton – 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Electoral wards affected: All**

**Ward councillors consulted: No**

**Public or private: Public**

**Has GDPR been considered? Yes**

## **1. Executive Summary**

1.1 Kirklees Council Homes & Neighbourhoods (KHN) believes that every resident has the right to a home free from all forms of abuse. We are committed to tackling domestic abuse by working in partnership, sharing best practice, and ensuring staff respond to this issue in a coordinated and consistent way. Currently within Kirklees Council, there is a [Domestic Abuse Strategy](#) that we align with yet believe having a specific domestic abuse policy in social housing is essential for protecting victims, preventing homelessness, and fostering a supportive and stable community environment. Kirklees Homes & Neighbourhoods Domestic Abuse policy was last published in August 2019 and due for review in April 2022. Due to this not having taken place at that time, the policy was reviewed in October 2024 and an updated 'Domestic Abuse Policy' has now been written ready to be published in early 2025, following the relevant flightpath.

1.2 The Domestic Abuse policy compliments Homes and Neighbourhoods' Vulnerable Tenant and Anti-Social Behaviour policies. By working together, these policies help to identify and address issues early, preventing escalation and ensuring tenants' well-being and by these policies being implemented together, they provide a robust and interconnected support system that enhances tenant safety, well-being, and community cohesion. Each policy addresses specific aspects of tenant needs, and their combined efforts lead to a more comprehensive and effective approach to housing management.

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

2.1 The expired Domestic Abuse policy is attached at Appendix 1, with the updated policy for approval is attached at Appendix 2, with the latter covering the following sections:

- Purpose of the policy
- Legal context
- Definitions
- Objectives and scope
- Reports and concerns of domestic abuse
- Risk management
- Strategic approach
- Data privacy
- Roles and responsibility

- Review and monitoring

### **3. Implications for the Council**

#### **3.1 Working with People**

This report relates to the introduction of the reviewed and updated Homes and Neighbourhoods (H&N) Domestic Abuse Policy and does not impact any staffing posts.

Updating our domestic abuse policy as a social landlord can have several important implications for the community and the individuals involved:

- Increased Awareness: A formal policy raises awareness about domestic abuse, encouraging tenants and staff to recognise the signs and understand the resources available.
- Support for Victims: It provides a clear framework for supporting victims.
- Empowerment: It empowers tenants by giving them the knowledge and resources to seek help and report incidents without fear of stigma or retaliation.

#### **3.2 Working with Partners**

Collaboration with Local Services: The policy facilitates partnerships with local organisations and authorities, enhancing the overall support system available to victims.

#### **3.3 Place Based Working**

A Domestic Abuse policy supports placed based working as it creates a framework for collaboration with local agencies.

#### **3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality**

Not Applicable.

#### **3.5 Improving outcomes for children**

A domestic abuse policy can significantly improve outcomes for children in several ways from supporting children to be in a safe environment to access to support services. Empowering parents to make informed decisions that prioritise children's well-being and facilitating collaboration between services, increasing the sustainment of their tenancy providing stable housing.

#### **3.6 Financial Implications for the people living or working in Kirklees**

There is no financial implication with introducing this revised Domestic Abuse Policy.

#### **3.7 Other (e.g., Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)/Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions**

An Integrated Impact Assessment was completed on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2024 case reference: IIA-656598892

## **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 The draft policy was presented and discussed at the Tenant Led Panel (TLP) on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and was supported by them. It was also discussed and endorsed at the Homes & Neighbourhoods Improvement Board (HNIB) 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

## **5. Engagement**

- 5.1 To inform this updated policy it has been shared with the H&N policy officer in addition to conversations taking place with the Information Governance team regarding GDPR and shared with colleagues from the Communities Service. Presented and discussed at an informal meeting with the Place Scrutiny Panel 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025 who welcomed the policy, and comments made by the scrutiny committee were considered and included in the policy.

## **6. Options**

### **6.1 Options considered**

Not applicable

### **6.2 Reasons for recommended option**

Not applicable

## **7. Next steps and timelines**

- 7.1 Once approved it will be ready for publishing and rolling out across H&N in conjunction with the new vulnerable tenant and anti-social behaviour policies. This will require a comms plan that will include visiting teams to ensure understanding of the rationale behind the policy, highlighting legal context and ethical obligations, understanding of role officers place and accountability in implementing the policy.

## **8. Contact officer**

Claire Felvus – Housing Services Strategic Manager  
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## **9. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Not applicable

## **10. Appendices**

Appendix 1 - HN Domestic Abuse Policy Final  
Appendix 2 - KNH Domestic Abuse Policy 2019-2022

## **11. Service Director responsible**

Janet Sharpe- Interim Service Director for Homes and Neighbourhoods.  
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