

# People and Health Overview Committee

15 September 2025

## Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy 2025-2028

### For Recommendation to Cabinet

**Cabinet Member:**

Cllr G Taylor, Health and Housing

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Senior Leadership Team:**

J Price, Executive Director of People - Adults

**Report author and job title:** Ian Grant, Programme Coordinator for Community Safety, Adults and Housing

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**Statutory Authority:** Domestic Abuse Act 2021

**Report status:** Public

### Executive summary (maximum of 500 words)

1. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was passed into law on the 01 April 2021.
- 1.1 Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a duty on Tier One local authorities, such as Dorset Council, to assess the need for support and prepare strategies for its provision to victims and their children [who need to reside] in relevant accommodation. The Act places a duty on each Tier One local authority in England to:
  - appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (LPB) which it must consult as it performs functions (below). In Dorset, the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has adopted the role and functions of the LPB.
  - assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for domestic abuse support in their area for all victims (and their children) who reside in relevant safe accommodation, including those who come from outside of their area.
  - prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their area having regard to the need's assessment.
  - give effect to the strategy (through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions)
  - monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.
  - report back annually to central government.

- 1.2 In January 2022, Dorset Council in conjunction with the Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP) released its first Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy.
- 1.3 Whilst the primary focus responded to statutory guidance in relation to support for people and their families in safe accommodation, the strategy aimed to go further, recognising the whole system and aligning to partners' existing ambitions and activity in tackling domestic abuse.
- 1.4 Since the first strategy was released good progress has been made in delivering on the recommendations. This includes the commissioning of additional services for people and their families within safe accommodation, strengthening pathways, undertaking further research and evidence, and raising awareness of the services available to support people affected by domestic abuse.
- 1.5 Under the Act, the council is required to update their strategies, based on an updated needs assessment, every three years.
- 1.6 This revised strategy for 2025-2028 aims to continue the work of the Council and the CSP, setting out the areas it will focus on for the next three years.
- 1.7 The updated strategy has been informed by years of evidence and research, combined with an updated needs assessment.
- 1.8 Whilst this latest strategy adopts a similar approach to the outgoing strategy, noticeably adopting a whole systems approach, a significant driver for the new strategy is the focus on improving accessibility. This is to make sure partners' focus is on actions that help set up effective systems and support services that meet the needs of everyone in the community.
- 1.9 The Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy 2025-2028 has been endorsed by the Community Safety Partnership and now requires formal approval by the Council.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That the committee comment on, endorse, and recommend adoption of the Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy 2025-28 to Cabinet.

## **3. Reason for the recommendation(s)**

- 3.1 To ensure the Council meets its statutory duty under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 relating to preparing and publishing a domestic abuse strategy.

#### 4. The report

4.1 Details covered under the executive summary and appended strategy.

#### 5. Alternative options considered

5.1 None.

#### 6. Legal considerations

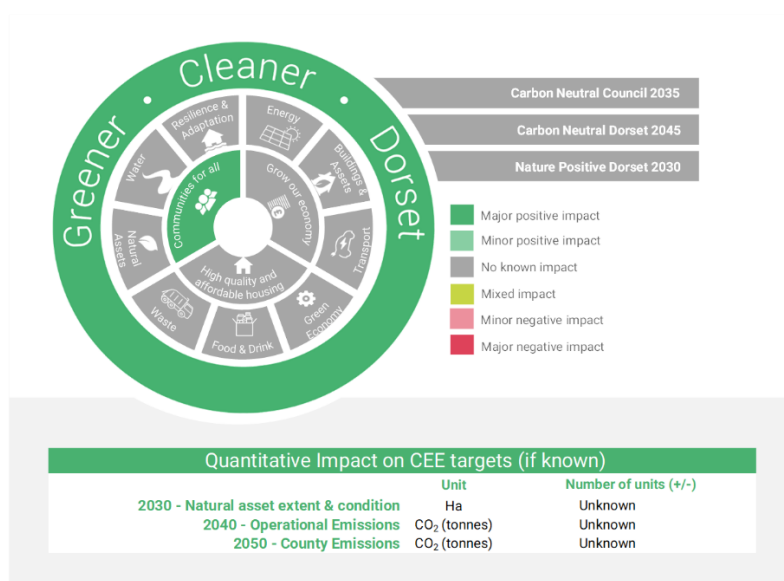
6.1 The Council must have a strategy for supporting people and their families affected by domestic abuse, in safe accommodation.

#### 7. Financial implications

7.1 The Council receives new burdens funding to deliver duties under the Domestic Abuse Act. From 2025/26, this funding has been incorporated into the Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS).

#### 8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

8.1 None.



#### 9. Well-being and health implications

9.1 Domestic abuse has a significant impact on people's physical and mental health.

9.2 The Council's work to tackle domestic abuse, including responding to requirements in the Domestic Abuse Act, helps strengthen the local response, providing people and their families with the right support.

10. **Other implications**

- 10.1 The Council's response to meeting its new duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 forms part of its wider work to tackle crime and ensure Dorset's communities are safe.

11. **Risk implications**

- 11.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

12. **Equalities**

- 12.1 The appended EQIA (Equality Impact Assessment) was undertaken as part of the development of the strategy.

13. **Appendices**

- 13.1 Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy 2025-2028 Final Draft  
13.2 Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy EQIA.

14. **Background papers**

- 14.1 None.

15. **Report sign-off**

- 15.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)