



Notice of a public meeting of

Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities

To: Councillor Pavlovic

Date: Wednesday, 5 February 2025

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: West Offices - Station Rise, York YO1 6GA

AGENDA

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4:00 pm on Wednesday, 12 February 2025.**

*With the exception of matters that have been the subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent, which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00 pm on Monday, 3 February 2025.**

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive and note apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest (Pages 5 - 6)

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member is asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

[Please see attached sheet for further guidance for Members].

3. Minutes

To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on **4 December 2024**.

4. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting. The deadline for registering at this meeting is at **5.00pm on Monday, 3 February 2025**.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting whose details can be found at the foot of the agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The public meeting can be viewed on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

5. City of York Council Domestic Abuse Resident and Tenant Policy (Pages 7 - 64)

This report presents the City of York Council Housing Domestic

Abuse Resident and Tenant Policy 2025 - 2028 for approval. The Policy is designed to reduce the risk and consequences of domestic abuse and outlines how CYC's Housing Service and will respond to domestic abuse when it affects residents, tenants, and leaseholders.

6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Executive Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Alternative formats

If you require this document in an alternative language or format (e.g. large print, braille, Audio, BSL or Easy Read) you can:



Email us at: cycaccessteam@york.gov.uk



Call us: **01904 551550** and customer services will pass your request onto the Access Team.



Use our BSL Video Relay Service:
www.york.gov.uk/BSLInterpretingService

Select 'Switchboard' from the menu.



We can also translate into the following languages:

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (ہولی) میں بھی میا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

Democracy Officer: Ben Jewitt
Telephone No- 01904 553073
Email- benjamin.jewitt@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

Declarations of Interest – guidance for Members

- (1) Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:

Type of Interest	You must
Disclosable Pecuniary Interests	Disclose the interest, not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related) OR Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)	Disclose the interest; speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Affects) OR Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)	Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting, participate and vote <u>unless</u> the matter affects the financial interest or well-being: (a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interest or well-being of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward; and (b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest. In which case, speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise do not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.

- (2) Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.
- (3) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations,

and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.



Meeting:	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities (including the local plan).
Meeting date:	05/02/2025
Report of:	Director of Housing & Communities
Portfolio of:	Cllr. M Pavlovic- Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities (including the Local Plan)

Decision Report: City of York Council Domestic Abuse Resident and Tenant Policy.

Subject of Report

1. The report presents the City of York (CYC) Council Housing Domestic Abuse (DA) Resident and Tenant Policy 2025 - 2028 for approval. The Policy is designed to reduce the risk and consequences of domestic abuse and outlines how CYC's Housing Service and will respond to domestic abuse when it affects residents, tenants, and leaseholders.
2. The Policy builds on existing pathways, approaches and responses to domestic abuse as well as providing guidance on how the Service will improve current practice. To ensure victims and survivors of domestic abuse receive a victim centred, supportive response.
3. Supported by Public Health, Housing Services committed in 2023 to achieving the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation (DAHA). This accreditation gives social housing providers and local authorities a framework on best practice responses for domestic abuse victims/survivors, to develop and embed within Housing Services at a strategic and operational level. Within this framework 'policies and procedures' are an area of focus to develop. A requirement for this accreditation is to have a stand-alone domestic abuse resident policy outlining CYC's commitment and response to

domestic abuse victims/survivors. This Policy meets the required standard towards DAHA and is an important step for the service and council to take.

4. The Policy is important as it provides practical advice and support regarding domestic abuse to City of York Council tenants, residents, and leaseholders, setting standards and guidance regarding practices as a housing service to staff and the public. This Policy communicates the CYC and Housing Services organisational culture, values, and philosophy, making it clear to employees, customers, and the community what they can expect from CYC as a council and housing provider.

Benefits and Challenges

5. The benefits of this proposal is that it:
 - Provides tenants/residents/service users with clear and succinct reassurance on what they can expect from the Service's domestic abuse response.
 - Provides a commitment to a co-ordinated community response for domestic abuse victims/survivors. Setting out how the Service will work together with partner agencies to tackle domestic abuse as a multi-agency approach is paramount for victim/survivor safety.
 - This Policy will support towards achieving actions for the Housing Service, from the Domestic Abuse Joint Strategy, created by CYC, North Yorkshire Council (NYC) & the North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (NYPFCC).
 - Supporting the approved 2024 – 29 Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategy in which one of the key themes is 'tackling domestic abuse' within homelessness as well as legislative requirements within the Homeless Reduction Act 2018.
 - Meeting requirements from the Housing Regulator. An expectation from the Regulator is for social landlords to have a domestic abuse resident/tenant policy in place.
 - Supporting the council's core commitments expressed in the 2023 – 2027 Council Plan - Equality of Opportunity and Health and Wellbeing.
 - This policy will empower victims to feel confident, safe, and reassured to disclose domestic abuse and support staff to feel confident and knowledgeable on signs/indicators of domestic abuse, which in turn they will be able to provide early intervention

and support. Being firm and clear on the council's zero-tolerance approach to abuse and holding perpetrators to account provides further reassurance to victims/survivors.

- The Policy will be supported by an extensive programme of training to ensure that staff have the skills and confidence to implement the best practice set out in the Policy

6. The challenges of this proposal are:

- This Policy will require a culture shift to embed within practice. This Policy strives towards a more trauma informed victim centred approach, which may be a change to how staff currently operate. This could be a challenge to overcome while embedding the Policy, without complete buy in and support at a strategic and operational level. A plan is in development to roll out trauma informed training across the council and will be necessary for Housing staff to receive alongside the DAHA training.
- In the event this Policy is not embedded into practice across the entire Housing Service, victims/survivors may not receive a consistent service, therefore not meeting approved standards of practice, which could create an unequal response, which would have an adverse impact on victims/survivors navigating the council's various housing services.

Policy Basis for Decision

7. The Council Plan highlights that York reports a population of 202,821 residents (now over 204,000). In the 2022/2023 financial year there were 2,069 domestic abuse related crimes recorded by North Yorkshire Police that had occurred in York, but it is recognised that domestic abuse is an underreported crime. In the year 2021/2022 the national DA charity SafeLives conducted a strategic needs assessment for the City of York and their estimate tool suggests a total number of victims or adults who have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 is 32,500. The Council Plan demonstrates this administration's commitment to all York residents to enjoy happier, healthier, longer lives, in homes that meet their needs, able to actively participate in their communities, with access to the right support at the right time. This Policy complies directly with the ambitions set down in the Council Plan and the City's 10-year strategies on this basis as the data shows there are many York residents experiencing domestic abuse

and their specific needs require prioritising and addressing to ensure their happier, healthier, longer lives.

8. Domestic abuse has a huge effect and burden of distress placed on people's mental, emotional, social, and physical health. The Council Plan and its Core Commitment to Health recognises this. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032 also states 'Take a council-wide approach to tackle domestic abuse and support victims and Survivors'.
9. The Patchwork of Provision report, released by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's office in 2022 analyses the effect of existing services on victims and survivors and assesses the accessibility and availability of resources. The report identifies UK wide, the noteworthy gaps in service, including for those with protected characteristics, multiple, complex, or additional needs, face challenges accessing services and the lack of specialised 'by and for' domestic abuse services. This Policy supports the council's Equalities and Human Rights Core Commitment, providing clear standards on how the council's response will be accessible for all, a commitment to understanding intersectionality and removing those systemic barriers for all to access and have support. As the Policy sets out a robust and supportive response to victims/survivors it also demonstrates a commitment to 'how the council operates' priority within the Council Plan, providing improvement on customer experience to make a positive difference.

Financial Strategy Implications

10. The adoption of the Policy presented in this paper will be covered within the existing annual Housing Revenue Account (HRA) operating budget. Any areas of additional cost, such as investment in properties to ensure security will be off set against the cost of managing neighbourhood incidents and tenancy moves and termination.

Recommendation and Reasons

11. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - a) Approve the Domestic Abuse Resident and Tenant Policy 2025-2028.

Reason: To provide victims/ survivors of domestic abuse the best housing response which will contribute to achieving positive outcomes supporting them to lead happy confident and safe futures, while meeting legislation and strategic requirements.

12. Approve the publication of the Domestic Abuse Resident and Tenant Policy 2025 - 2028.

Reason: To raise the profile and awareness to the public of the positive changes introduced to best support victims/survivors of domestic abuse. This will further awareness raising of domestic abuse, the impacts on those affected by domestic abuse, the support available and the councils' actions and response. This will provide reassurance and confidence to all residents of York including staff implementing this practice.

13. Approve that 6 monthly updates be provided to the executive member on the progress and implementation of this policy and the Domestic abuse housing alliance (DAHA) action plan.

Reason: To provide the executive member with confidence on the implementation of this policy across the housing service. This will also support with addressing the challenges set out in this report and collectively holding the housing service accountable to achieving the successful introduction and embedment of the policy.

11. Approval of the Policy will trigger the following management actions:

- To develop and implement a full communications plan including the development of quick and easy to read information, advice, and guidance.
- To develop a Domestic Abuse housing procedure to support the Policy.
- The development of internal training on domestic abuse and the implementation of this Policy.
- To monitor and embed within everyday practice across all Housing Services.

Background

14. In December 2019 the Government was elected with a manifesto commitment to “support all victims of domestic abuse and pass the Domestic Abuse Bill” originally introduced in the last Parliament. The Act aims to ensure that victims have the confidence to come forward and report their experiences, safe in the knowledge that the state will do everything it can, both to support them and their children and pursue the abuser. This year the Government demonstrated their commitment to tackling domestic abuse as their pledge is to halve violence against women and girls in a decade. The 2021 Domestic Abuse Act included changes to the Homeless Reduction Act that guarantees that all victims/survivors will be in priority need for housing and will keep a secure tenancy in social housing if they need to escape an abuser, demonstrating the important link between domestic abuse and housing.
15. SafeLives are a UK wide charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse for everyone for good and they work with organisations across the UK to transform the response to domestic abuse. SafeLives were commissioned to provide support and coordination to CYC and NYC in carrying out the Safe Accommodation needs assessment in line with their statutory duty under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The charity’s report outlines their findings, following review and analysis of data provided by agencies and organisations across City of York and North Yorkshire, and from hearing the voice and experiences of victims and survivors. The report, finalised in 2023, provided insight on the areas within CYC that would need improvement, to ensure statutory duties are met and victims and survivors experience the best response. Within the report the Housing Service’s response was one of the areas highlighted for improvement, this led to the introduction of the DAHA accreditation to best support improving the Housing Service response to domestic abuse.
16. The Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) endorses DAHA as national best practice in the national Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy. The council has committed to DAHA as the goal is to facilitate the building of new and better responses to domestic abuse within housing practices at both operational and strategic levels. The DAHA framework sets out the values, principles and 8 priority areas for the accreditation, these are detailed within Annex C. A requirement for this accreditation is to have a stand-alone domestic abuse and resident policy outlining the council and Housing Service’s

commitment and response to domestic abuse victims/survivors alongside this being the right action for victims/survivors accessing Housing services.

17. Between 1st April– 30th June 2023, the second most common reason for those owed a homeless relief duty in England was domestic abuse, accounting for 6,460 or 16.6% of households. This was an increase of 4.5% from the same quarter in the previous year (source: the then Department for Levelling up Housing & Communities 30.11.2023). This demonstrates the vast impact on housing and homelessness that domestic abuse has, highlighting the need for this area to have a focus and clear direction on how housing tackles domestic abuse.
18. The Policy at Annex A responds to these challenges and covers:
 - Introduction and policy purpose
 - Policy Scope
 - Definition of Domestic Abuse
 - Our Values: The councils' values and key priorities are at the core of the organisation. Providing guidance on how the council engages and works with communities and residents, including the how the council supports those affected by domestic abuse.
 - Our Aims & Practices
 - Standards for responding to Domestic Abuse
 - Support Services
 - How to access support if you are concerned about your own behaviour or that of someone you know
 - Confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
 - Consultation
 - Link to other policies and policy review expectations.

Consultation Analysis

19. The proposed Policy has been developed in consultation with a range of organisations and individuals, including those working with

lived experience of domestic abuse as well as staff and organisations involved in delivering services to communities, both in York and elsewhere. The majority of those involved in the consultation were a part of an operational DAHA task and finish group, collaboratively working to achieve DAHA, these include:

- Staff working within statutory homeless services.
- Staff working in hostels, support services and local area co-ordinators.
- Staff working within allocation of social housing.
- Staff working with City of York Council tenants.
- Public Health
- IDAS charity
- Changing Lives
- Halo Project
- Foundation (+Choices)
- Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board
- Refugee Resettlement Team
- Anti-social Behaviour Team
- Neighbourhood Enforcement Team
- STADA Charity (Standing together against domestic abuse)

20. Consultees were engaged via one operational group, one-to-one conversations, group discussion and consultation in team meetings and via written submission.
21. This Policy was taken to tenant scrutiny panel on 3rd December 2024. The panel thought the Policy is excellent, easy to read and to understand although very long. The panel did have queries regarding the implementation of the Policy with staff and whether training will be offered in which panel members were assured alongside the proposal of the Policy there are actions recommended to be taken including training to ensure staff have the tools, knowledge, and confidence to commit to the response set out within the Policy.
22. The panel suggested that a summary of key points could be put together when advertised to the public linking to the full Policy. This might be more easily accessible for someone needing quick and brief information and signposting to services.

23. The conclusions drawn from the consultations supported with the development of the Policy. A few highlighted conclusions that have been included in the Policy are:
- a) Victims/Survivors need a trauma informed, victim centred approach. The response should focus on the individuals, wishes, wants, and needs as each case is different. Committing to this approach will ensure all victims/survivors feel empowered, valued, and listened to, which will support the journey to safe and happier lives.
 - b) The response must be non-judgemental and believing. Disclosing domestic abuse is a crucial and sensitive step in a victim/survivor's life. The Service must build trust with individuals by having this response to be able to work with them in securing or maintaining safe and suitable accommodation.
 - c) Multi-agency working is key to success. Individuals experiencing domestic abuse or perpetrating harmful behaviours may have complex needs (for example, substance misuse support as well as mental health care and physical medical needs) and the delivery of these services in a co-ordinated and timely way is important.
 - d) Stating the council's commitment to holding perpetrators to account is important, as well as offering support to those exhibiting harmful behaviours. The council must recognise that long-term domestic abuse prevention requires behavioural change from those who cause harm, where appropriate and safe for the victim this option should be explored with perpetrators to promote positive engagement.
 - e) Information sharing and building relationships between teams are important in successful partnership working especially for victims/survivors of domestic abuse. Information sharing is key for safeguarding and this Policy clearly sets who, how and why information may be shared after a domestic abuse disclosure, providing transparency to victims/survivors who may access our services.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

24. The options available are below:

- a) Approve the Domestic Abuse Resident and Tenant Policy 2025 – 2028 and publicise the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Resident and Tenant Policy 2025 - 2028 once approved.
- b) Reject the proposals above.

25. As a social housing provider, the council is required by the Housing Regulator to have a domestic abuse tenant and resident policy. The recommendations in paragraph 11 a) and 11 b) will ensure this requirement is met and will support management actions to implement and embed the Policy.

26. Rejecting or delaying the implementation of this Policy would not be advised due to the adverse long-term effects on residents and tenants without this commitment, and failure to meet the requirements set down by the Housing Regulator both in relation to domestic abuse and meeting standards around equalities.

Organisational Impact and Implications

25.

- **Financial**, there are no financial implications.
- **Human Resources (HR)** The report identifies that the development and delivery of training for staff employed across Housing Services is key in ensuring the proposed Policy can be effectively implemented. Whilst awareness workshops are currently being provided on Domestic Abuse via the Workforce Development Unit any bespoke training for specific roles and the wider housing team will need to be developed, a budget for which will initially be provided from Public Health.
- **Legal** This Policy provides the basis for City of York Council to meet its statutory duties under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to ensure that victims of domestic abuse and their children can access the correct support and safe accommodation when needed. Ongoing consideration of these duties will be

required on development of the supporting Domestic Abuse Housing Procedure.

- **Procurement** There are no procurement implications.
- **Health and Wellbeing**, Public Health have supported Housing to undertake work to enable housing providers and housing teams to identify and respond to domestic abuse sooner, reducing the escalation of harm and homelessness, and the negative health and wellbeing impacts suffered by victims of domestic abuse and their families. Development of this policy is key to this work and its adoption helps deliver on our strategic commitment to ensure everyone can live free from abuse and harm. The Public Health team have been involved in the development of this strategy and support the recommendation for the Executive Member to approve the policy.
- **Environment and Climate action** There are no direct environmental impacts.
- **Affordability** As outlined in the attached EIA at Annex B the Policy will apply to all residents and tenants including those on a low income. An element of domestic abuse relates to economic abuse, and training will be provided to staff so that they have a better understanding of this. Economic abuse can have wide-reaching and long-lasting effects (such as bankruptcy) and can be a factor relating to homelessness and debts. By supporting people to obtain specialist support victims and survivors will be in a stronger position to move forward to rebuild their lives.
- **Equalities and Human Rights** A full EIA has been attached at Annex B and considers how this Policy will impact all of those with protected characteristics, and particularly those who are more vulnerable to domestic abuse.
- **Data Protection and Privacy** The data protection impact assessment (DPIAs) screening questions were completed for the recommendations and options in this report and as there is no personal, special categories or criminal offence data being processed to set these out, there is no requirement to complete a DPIA at this time. However, this will be reviewed following the approved recommendations and options from this report and a DPIA completed if required.
- **Communications** The communications Team supports all the recommendations regarding this important Policy. We will support the publicity of the Policy with a detailed communications plan and will advise on internal communication methods to support cultural shift.

- **Economy** There are no economy implications.

Risks and Mitigations

26. The risks associated with the options set out are detailed within the benefits and challenge section of this report. The implementation of this Policy will require the implementation of the management actions at paragraph 12 above and the delivery of trauma informed training across Housing Services.

Wards Impacted

27. All wards with Council Housing tenancies would be impacted by the implementation of this Policy.

Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

Author

Name:	Tiana Brown
Job Title:	Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Project -Co-Ordinator
Service Area:	Housing Services Housing & Communities Directorate
Report approved:	Yes
Date:	05/01/2025

Co-author

Name:	Pauline Stuchfield
Job Title:	Director of Housing & Communities
Service Area:	Housing & Communities
Report approved:	Yes
Date:	05/01/2025

Background papers

See Policy at Annex A – pages 17 & 18 for linked policies in addition to:

Homelessness and Rough sleeper Strategy 2024-27 Executive
12/12/2024 – Item 6:

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MId=14503&Ver=4>

Annexes

Annex A: City Of York Domestic Abuse Resident & Tenant Policy

Annex B: Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

Annex C: Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Framework

Abbreviations:

CYC	City of York Council
DA	Domestic Abuse
DAHA	Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance
DPIA	Data protection Impact Assessment
DHLUC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
EIA	Equalities Impact Assessment
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
HR	Human Resources
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MATAC	Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NYC	North Yorkshire Council
NYPFCC	North Yorkshire Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
CYSCP	City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies & Procedures

MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
VAWG	Violence Against Women & Girls
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IDAS	Independent Domestic Abuse Services
STADA	Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour

City Of York Council Domestic Abuse Resident & Tenant Policy 2025 - 2028



Contents

Introduction and policy purpose

Policy Scope

Definition of Domestic Abuse

Our Values

Our Aims & Practices

Standards for responding to Domestic Abuse

Support Services

How to access support if you are concerned about your own behaviour or that of someone you know

Confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Consultation

Link to other policies and policy review expectations.

Housing Services City of York Council

Date: February 2025

Version: 1.0

Current Document Status			
Version	1.0	Approved	
Issue Date	Oct 2024	Date of Formal Approval	

Version History			
Date	Version	Reviser	Comments
09.10.24			

Review History			
Review Period: 3 Years		Next Review Date:	
Date Reviewed	Reviewed By	Next Review Date	Comments

Introduction and Policy Purpose

We believe that everyone has the right to live free from fear of abuse or violence. We know that domestic abuse can be experienced by anyone, regardless of gender, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity differences. Although it can happen to anyone, we acknowledge the gendered nature of domestic abuse and that it disproportionately affects women and girls.

In November 2023 the Office for National Statistics reported that between March 22 – March 23 an estimated 4.4% of people aged 16 years and over (5.7% women and 3.2% men) experienced domestic abuse in 2023 in England & Wales. This equates to an estimated 2.1 million adults (1.4 million women and 751,000 men).

We believe that as a local authority and housing provider, we are best placed to recognise and respond to domestic abuse. We have a duty to support our tenants in social housing by training our staff to identify domestic abuse and respond appropriately. We recognise that there are many barriers to disclosing domestic abuse and certain characteristics may make someone more vulnerable to abuse, such as a physical disability, a language barrier, immigration status etc. We want to reassure our residents, tenants, leaseholders, and members that any concerns they raise will be met with an empathetic and appropriate response. City Of York Council will recognise the need to take these barriers in to account when responding to Domestic Abuse and offering support services to victims and survivors.

This policy acts in the intention of reducing the risk of domestic abuse and outlines how we will respond to domestic abuse when it affects our residents, tenants, leaseholders, and members. The policy details the support we will provide to those victims and survivors of domestic abuse. We take a zero-tolerance approach to domestic abuse and this policy outlines how we will hold perpetrators of abuse accountable for their actions.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to residents within the York area, City of York Council tenants and leaseholders, and City Of York Council officers.

Although this policy is primarily for City Of York residents, the national support services listed within this policy can be used by anyone who needs to access support as a victim of domestic abuse or information is available on our website; <https://www.york.gov.uk/DomesticAbuse>

Definition of domestic abuse

This policy uses an abridged version of the definition of domestic abuse provided by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if “A” and “B” are each aged 16 or over and are “personally connected” to each other:

“Personally connected” means:

- they are, or have been, married to each other
- they are, or have been, civil partners of each other
- they have agreed to marry one another (whether the agreement has been terminated or not)
- they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether the agreement has been terminated or not)
- they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- they are relatives

And

- the behaviour is abusive

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse

It does not matter whether the behaviour is a single incident or a course of actions: behaviour of this kind is domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse includes ‘Honour Based Violence’. There is currently no statutory definition of Honour Based Abuse in England and Wales, but

Karma Nirvana, along with partners from the domestic abuse sector, have come together to adopt the following definition:

This is an incident or pattern of violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion, control or abuse (including but not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, economic, spiritual, faith-related or emotional abuse) motivated by the perpetrator's perception that an individual has shamed, or may shame, the perpetrator, the family, or the community, or has otherwise broken, or may break, the perceived norms of the community's accepted behaviour's. Including by speaking out about the abuse and where the perception of shame may also prevent a victim from accessing support or help. For further information:

<https://karmanirvana.org.uk/get-help/what-is-honour-based-abuse/>

It can be distinguished from other forms of violence, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members. Women, men, and younger members of the family can all be involved in the abuse. (Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy July 2021).

More information about domestic abuse, "Honour Based Violence" and other forms of abuse is included in our joint multi-agency safeguarding adults' policy and procedure, (West Yorkshire, City of York and North Yorkshire) available on this link: <https://www.york.gov.uk/DomesticAbuse>

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises that children can be victims of domestic abuse, even when the abusive behaviours are not directly aimed at them.

They can also be victims if they:

- See, hear, or experience the effects of abuse
- Are related to the victim or perpetrator of the abuse (or both)

Our Values

Our values and key priorities are at the core of our organisation, guiding what we do, how we engage with our communities, our residents and each other, including how we support those affected by domestic abuse.

We will:

- Work together with our council services departments, specialist domestic abuse services and partner agencies to provide a co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse as it requires a multi -agency response to best support those affected.
- Continuously seek opportunities to improve our response to domestic abuse. This includes considering feedback and guidance to support improvement and having the voice of the victims at the heart of our response.
- Be honest and transparent with the guidance, help and options available to those affected by domestic abuse.
- Strive for all York residents to enjoy, happier, healthier, longer lives in homes that meet their needs including those affected by domestic abuse. Ensuring we are considering the needs of victims/survivors to achieve this.
- Respect Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in everything we do, including how we recognise and respond to domestic abuse. We will consider intersectional needs when responding to domestic abuse by understanding how a person's experience of domestic abuse may be impacted by their sex, age, gender identity, race, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, pregnancy status, social background, or a combination of these differences. We will stand up to hate and work hard to champion our communities.

Our Aims & Practices

We will:

- Support our employees to confidently recognise and appropriately respond to domestic abuse by providing domestic abuse training for all employees in housing roles. The training will be relevant to the employee's role and their level of engagement with residents, tenants, leaseholders, and members. This policy will be supported

by internal procedures and guidance that our employees can refer to.

- Strive towards providing a trauma informed response. Empowering victims by building trust and working in collaboration regarding their housing needs.
- Enable and support victims to disclose domestic abuse. Ensuring victims especially our City of York tenants, feel confident and reassured that disclosing domestic abuse will not negatively affect their tenancy.
- Provide relevant advice and help, including information about victims' rights and options to remain in their home where it is safe, and their wish to do so. This could include discussions and signposting regarding protection orders (such as Non-Molestation Orders or occupation orders), including additional security measures in the home if appropriate and suitable, as well as ongoing support from specialist organisations.
- Help victims consider their housing options if there is a feeling of immediate or near future fear for them and their households' safety. This could include a homeless application, temporary accommodation, refuge, or a managed move if there is no prospect of a safe return.
- Be honest and realistic regarding housing options, being realistic about options available and time scales, which can support victims making informed choices about next steps and taking that first step towards regaining control of their future.
- Strive towards achieving the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation which began as of 2023. This will enable us to provide our residents, tenants, leaseholders, and members with an exemplary response to domestic abuse.
- Work closely and in partnership with local specialist domestic abuse services and agencies (such as the Police, IDAS & Probation Services) to provide a co-ordinated response to domestic abuse. Completing referrals where appropriate for

ongoing support, this could include referrals for mental health or substance misuse to ensure wrap around support is offered. We will have suitable representatives attending and contributing to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC), being active contributors in the Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination process of identifying and tackling serial perpetrators of domestic abuse perpetrators (MATAC) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

- Take a zero-tolerance approach to domestic abuse and will hold perpetrators of abuse to account while ensuring victims safety. Further information on how we may do this is cited within our standards for responding to domestic abuse.
- Ensure safeguarding referrals are completed when needed to protect and support vulnerable adults and children. As a significant number of adults or children who experience domestic abuse will also require safeguarding.
- We will make sure anyone can report domestic abuse to us and that our services are accessible and inclusive. By providing interpreters and translating information into other languages or formats as needed.
- Provide advice and signposting to all including those that may not be eligible for housing assistance. For example, for victims who may be subjected to immigration control, there are avenues for support available, such as, the home office or specialist by and for services. We will strive to provide everyone with practical forms of advice especially in cases of domestic abuse disclosures.

Standards for responding to Domestic Abuse for our tenants.

If you believe that you are a victim of domestic abuse, and you decide to share your experience with us, you can expect:

- To be treated empathetically with a believing and nonjudgmental response

- To be able report domestic abuse in various ways that best suit you. For example, this could be via telephone, email, in person and if you are a City of York council tenant, via your housing portal.
- For your disclosure to be treated as a priority. We will respond within 24 hours during working hours, including the option outside of working hours, via our out of hours services for emergencies.
- Us to discuss and agree safe methods of contact you wish to use when communicating with us. This could include the type of communication, safe locations, safe dates/times, safe words, and any other reasonable adjustments tailored to your circumstances.
- A victim centred approach, wherever possible, considering your views and ensuring your ongoing safety when deciding the most appropriate course of action.
- To be signposted or referred to local and national domestic abuse specialist services, including by and for specialist services where appropriate. Employees will be working with and be guided by partners specialist advise, the police, as well as senior officers and domestic abuse champions to provide the best outcome.
- To have the option to receive assistance, where possible, from a member of staff of a specific gender or the same ethnic origin, alternatively from referrals to specialist advocacy services to provide this representation, where not possible through a City Of York employee.
- If you have disclosed domestic abuse we will remain in regular contact, agreeing frequency and safe methods. Providing alternative contact arrangements in case of absences, for reassurance of continued support.
- To be provided information and reassurance on any safety measures, if residing in temporary accommodation provided by City of York Council.
- Your rights to privacy to be respected in line with our Data Protection Policy. Your information will be sensitively handled,

reassuring your confidence to be able to disclose domestic abuse if you are personally or professionally connected to City of York council or partners. Information will only be shared with your permission unless there is a risk and need for safeguarding out of our duty of care.

- Us to hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour in various ways. This may include the right to take enforcement action against City of York tenants, using the powers available under the Housing Act, up to and including recovering possession of a property, for domestic abuse related offences. If taking any action against perpetrator/s, we will prioritise the safety and wishes of their victim/s and ensure that their wishes and housing needs are considered.
- To consider and refer perpetrators to specialist support for positive engagement as we recognise that long-term domestic abuse prevention requires behavioural change from those who cause harm. Where its safe and appropriate to do so without increasing risk to that victim, this can be discussed and actioned for those who recognise their behaviour and would like support. Further information regarding our local specialist service 'Foundation, +Choices' can be found within the policy.
- Those from specific housing services, such as housing options, to have trained housing employees to carry out a Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence Risk Identification Checklist, which is a UK wide accredited form used by us and partner organisations. This will support with assessing risks, discussions for further support/signposting and to help create a plan on how we will support you and any children.
- If you are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse and you are a City of York Council employee. We have a domestic abuse charter that is available to you which details the support and actions we can take as an employer. This can be found on the intranet; if you wish you can also discuss your situation with an internal domestic abuse champion. More information can be found on the internal intranet.

Support Services from other organisations:

If you are at immediate risk of harm, please contact the police by dialling 999 (If it is not safe to speak press 55 when prompted) If you have a hearing impairment text register to 999 then send a text using relay.

Support is Available from the following organisations:

Local Support:

- Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS) 03000 110110, specialist support agency in Yorkshire - <https://idas.org.uk/> - Adding a line on specialists IDAs
- North Yorkshire Fire Service – provide fire safety advice - <https://www.northyorksfire.gov.uk/your-safety/book-a-visit/domestic-abuse-arson-threat-referral/>
- [Halo](#) – 01642 683045 - advice about forced marriage, honour-based violence, female genital mutilation - www.haloproject.org.uk
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre - Bridge House – 0300 2230099 confidential healthcare and support for people in York or North Yorkshire who have experienced sexual assault or rape www.bridgehousesarc.org
- Kyra Women's Project - a registered charity in York that exists to help local women make positive and lasting improvements to their lives. <https://www.kyra.org.uk/>
- Changing Lives Wellness Centre - [Changing Lives](#) - 01904 526259 Is an inclusive and supportive service that provides holistic, trauma-informed pathways for women.
- [City Of York Council Housing Options](#) - 01904 554500 - Advice about your housing options if you are homeless or threatened with homelessness - <https://www.york.gov.uk/>
- [North Yorkshire Police](#) – co-ordination (MARAC) Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences where there is a high risk of domestic abuse identified <https://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/police-forces/north-yorkshire-police/areas/about-us/marac/>

- [City Of York Safeguarding Adults Board](https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/safeguarding) - Guides are available on various topics including Domestic Abuse
<https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/safeguarding>

National Support Available:

- [Childline](http://www.childline.org.uk) – 0800 1111 - support for children - www.childline.org.uk
- [Citizens advice](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) - 0800 144 8848 - www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk) - 0800 2000247 - free 24 hr helpline - www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- [Galop](http://www.galop.org.uk) – 0800 9995428 - support for LGBT+ experiencing domestic abuse – www.galop.org.uk
- [GOV.UK's Forced Marriage Unit](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage#contact) – 0207 0080151- public helpline - www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage#contact
- [GOV.UK website](http://www.gov.uk) for easy read, information in languages other than English and British Sign Language
- [Hourglass](http://www.wearehourglass.org) – 0808 8088141 - support for older people – www.wearehourglass.org
- [Karma Nirvana](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk) – 0800 5999247 - national honour-based abuse helpline – www.karmanirvana.org.uk
- [Loving Me](http://www.lovingme.uk) – 07902 478958 - Domestic Abuse Service Support for trans and non-binary victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence www.lovingme.uk
- [Men's Advice Line UK](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk) – 0808 8010327 – for male victims of domestic abuse – www.mensadviceline.org.uk
- [NSPCC](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe) - 0808 8005000 – advice for anyone concerned about child abuse - www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe
- [National Stalking Helpline](http://www.suzylamplugh.org/refer-someone-to-us) – 0808 8020300 – advice for anyone affected by stalking www.suzylamplugh.org/refer-someone-to-us
- [Refuge](https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en) - 0800 2000247 - support for women and their children affected by domestic abuse - <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en>
- [Relay](http://www.relayuk.bt.com) - enables people with hearing or speech impairment to contact emergency services – www.relayuk.bt.com
- [Respect](http://www.respect.org.uk) – 0808 8024040 – confidential support for men to stop violence - www.respect.org.uk

- [Revenge Porn Helpline](http://www.revengepornhelpline.org.uk) - 0345 6000 459 – support for adults experiencing intimate image abuse
www.revengepornhelpline.org.uk
- [Surviving Economic Abuse](http://www.survivingeconomicabuse.org) – support and advice about financial abuse and information about [how financial institutions can provide support](#) www.survivingeconomicabuse.org
- [Vesta](http://www.vestasfs.org) – 0754 5075093 - advice about domestic abuse for the Polish community www.vestasfs.org
- [Victim Support](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/) – 0808 1689111 – provide specialist advice for victims of domestic abuse - <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>
- [Women's Aid](http://www.womensaid.org.uk) – national charity working to end domestic abuse against women and children – website has comprehensive advice and links to specialist support www.womensaid.org.uk
- [Refugee Council](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/get-support/) -national charity which works to support refugee and asylum seekers. The website has detailed advice and links to specialist support <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/get-support/>
- [Rights of women](https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/) – National charity dedicated to providing frontline legal advice to women and girls experiencing all forms of violence against women and girls in England and Wales.
<https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/>

How to access support if you are concerned about your own behaviour or that of someone you know:

We understand that it may be difficult to recognise and acknowledge that you, or someone you know is acting, or has acted abusively. If you or someone you know are displaying behaviours listed under the definition of the domestic abuse act 2021, there is support available.

Positive Choices (+Choices) is available for anyone aged 16 years or above, regardless of gender or sexuality, who are engaged in abusive behaviour towards their current or former intimate partners, or immediate family members, providing the opportunity to recognise, acknowledge and change that behaviour. Positive Choices provides Respect accredited commissioned perpetrator services in the City of York and

North Yorkshire. These services are designed to reduce risk to the victim-survivor and to work with the perpetrator in changing their behaviour.

Positive Choices provides support to a person causing harm, at all risk levels, offering different pathways of support including disrupt, triage and short-term support, one to one or group interventions, with the opportunity to then become a peer mentor. These services work alongside other agencies, including social care where there are children involved, specialist victim based domestic abuse services (IDAS) and the criminal justice system.

The aims are for individuals to be better able to recognise, acknowledge and change their abusive behaviours and to maintain a positive behaviour change. The service offers, a non-judgemental and supportive approach, whilst holding people to account and providing opportunities for them to choose to change.

Individuals must voluntarily want to address their behaviours in their relationships to engage with this service. An individual can self-refer or be referred by another professional or service.

If you are concerned about your own behaviour, or that of someone close to you, we would encourage you to contact +Choices program, telephone 01904 557491 or email foundationdapp@foundationuk.org.

For more information visit their website

<https://www.foundationuk.org/team/choices-domestic-abuse-perpetrator-programme/>

Respect is a national charity which also provides support to those who cause harm whilst holding them to account. For more details, please contact their helpline or visit their website: 0808 8024040

<https://www.respect.org.uk/>

Confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Any information related to domestic abuse will be treated with sensitivity, and if it is recorded, it will be stored securely on our systems in accordance with GDPR. We will maintain confidentiality and prioritise gaining consent from victims/survivors before making referrals or taking further action, as far as it is practicable to do so.

We may have to share information with agencies such as the Police or City of York Council if an adult, with care and support needs is at risk of, or experiencing abuse or neglect, or a child is at serious risk of harm. An adult safeguarding concern may be raised without consent, if you are concerned about an adult, (with care and support needs) and there is a vital interest, risk to life or it is in the public interest as others at risk, or if there was a concern that the person lacked mental capacity to consent, their capacity had been assessed and it was in their best interests. For more information, please visit: <https://www.york.gov.uk/adult-social-care/report-adult-abuse-york-safeguarding-adults>
<https://www.york.gov.uk/ChildProtection>

If an instance of domestic abuse meets the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) risk threshold or if there are child protection concerns, we have a legal duty to share information with relevant partner agencies in the interest of reducing risk to those concerned. We will ensure to inform those that may meet the MARAC risk threshold prior to any referral being made, as well as providing information on why this referral is being made and the support that can be available following on from this referral. For further information please visit: <https://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/police-forces/north-yorkshire-police/areas/about-us/marac/>

Consultation

We involved employees from across our organisation, including residents of the City, when developing this policy. We also consulted with key staff across the council including specialists in safeguarding and local statutory and non-statutory agencies. We worked with members of our Local Domestic Abuse Partnership and sought feedback from the national specialist agency the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and consulted local specialist domestic abuse support

services. All the feedback which we received during consultation was used to improve and adapt the original draft document and provide clarity on the support the council will provide to victims of domestic abuse.

Link to other policies and policy review expectations.

We will review this policy, related strategy, and information sources every three years at minimum to ensure that it aligns with changes in research, national legislation, policies and local support and service provision.

We may also review this policy in response to (but not limited to): employee and resident/tenant/leaseholder feedback; local Domestic Abuse Related Death Review; Serious Case Review and Safeguarding Adult Review recommendations and findings.

This policy can be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- City of York & North Yorkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-2028: <https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/9587/north-yorkshire-and-city-of-york-domestic-abuse-strategy-2024-2028>
- City Of York Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies & Procedures CYSCP: <https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/resources/cyscp-documents-resources>
- City Of York Safeguarding Adults Board Policies & Procedures: <https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/policy-procedures-4>
- City of York Allocations Policy: <https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/7784/city-of-york-council-housing-allocations-policy>
- City Of York ASB: <https://www.york.gov.uk/AntiSocialBehaviour>

This policy supports the following legislation:

- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Homeless Reduction Act 2017
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- Care Act 2014 and Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2024.
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Violence Against Women and Girls National Statement of Expectations 2022

City of York Council
Equalities Impact Assessment

Who is submitting the proposal?

Directorate:	Housing and Communities Directorate		
Service Area:	Housing Services		
Name of the proposal :	Domestic Abuse Resident & Tenant Policy		
Lead officer:	Tiana Brown		
Date assessment completed:	21/11/2024		
Names of those who contributed to the assessment :			
Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
Tiana Brown	DAHA Project Co-Ordinator	City Of York Council	Domestic Abuse within Housing

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	<p>What is the purpose of the proposal?</p> <p>Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.</p>
	<p>The domestic abuse resident & tenant policy is a new policy to be introduced which supports the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) and associated guidelines that requires local authorities in England and Wales to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and ensure those who are perpetrators are brought to account. The policy builds on existing pathways, approaches and responses to domestic abuse as well as providing guidance on how we will improve current practice. To ensure victims and survivors of domestic abuse receive a victim centred, supportive response.</p> <p>An independent needs assessment and a wider system review was undertaken by the specialist domestic abuse charity SafeLives in 2022 across City of York and North Yorkshire. Safe lives are a UK wide charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse for everyone for good and they work with organisations across the UK to transform the response to domestic abuse. Safe lives were commissioned to provide support and coordination to City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council in carrying out the Safe Accommodation needs assessment in line with our statutory duty under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This report outlines their findings following review and analysis of data provided by agencies and organisations across City of York and North Yorkshire, and from hearing the voice and experiences of victims and survivors. The report, finalised in 2023, provided insight on the areas within City of York Council that would need improvement, to ensure we are meeting our statutory duty and victims and survivors experience the best response. Within this report the housing service's response was one of the areas highlighted for improvement, this led to the introduction of the DAHA accreditation to best support improving the housing response to domestic abuse.</p> <p>Supported by Public Health, Housing have committed to achieving the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation (DAHA) in 2023. This accreditation gives social housing providers and local authorities a framework on best practice responses for domestic abuse victims/survivors, to develop and embed within housing services at a strategic and operational level. Within this framework 'policies and procedures' are an area of focus to develop. A requirement for this accreditation is to have a stand-alone domestic abuse resident policy outlining our commitment and response to domestic abuse victims/survivors. This policy meets the required standard towards DAHA and is an important step.</p>

	The proposal demonstrates how this policy will ensure as a housing service we recognise those with protected characteristics, how these could be barriers for accessing support and how we will work with victims and survivors of domestic abuse to overcome these barriers to raise equality of opportunity and access to support.
--	--

1.2	Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)
	<p>This proposal is responding to the Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) and associated Neighbourhood and Community Consumer Standard which requires local authorities with housing stock in England and Wales to provide information about specialist support agencies to victims of domestic abuse, to consider staff training on how to support people affected by domestic abuse and how to make referrals. The policy will clearly show how the team will respond to reports of domestic abuse and consider the unique needs of individuals including their protected characteristics.</p> <p>In December 2019 the Government was elected with a manifesto commitment to “support all victims of domestic abuse and pass the Domestic Abuse Bill” originally introduced in the last Parliament. The act aims to ensure that victims have the confidence to come forward and report their experiences, safe in the knowledge that the state will do everything it can, both to support them and their children and pursue the abuser. This year the government demonstrated their commitment to tackling domestic abuse as their pledge is to halve violence against women and girls in a decade. The 2021 domestic abuse act included changes to the homeless reduction act that guarantee’s that all victims/survivors will be in priority need for housing and will keep a secure tenancy in social housing if they need to escape an abuser, demonstrating the important link between domestic abuse and housing, and the governments directive on this subject.</p>

1.3	Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?
	<p>Stakeholders: All CYC’s housing services customers, CYC staff working within statutory homeless services and allocation of social housing, CYC staff working in hostels, support services and working with CYC tenants, local area coordinators, IDAS, Public Health, children and adult social services, North Yorkshire Police, Changing lives, Halo Project, Foundation (+Choices), Refugee resettlement team and Neighbourhood enforcement team. The stakeholders are integral to support with embedding a co-ordinated community response to tackling domestic abuse within the City of York.</p>

1.4	<p>What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom? This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2019- 2023) and other corporate strategies and plans.</p>
	<p>This policy will empower victims/survivors to feel confident, safe, and reassured to disclose domestic abuse as well as supporting staff to feel confident and knowledgeable on signs/indicators of domestic abuse, which in turn they are able to provide early intervention and support. Being firm and clear on our zero-tolerance approach to abuse and holding perpetrators to account provides further reassurance to victims/survivors.</p> <p>The policy provides practical advice and support regarding domestic abuse to our City of York Council tenants, residents, and leaseholders. Setting consistent standards and guidance regarding our practices as a housing service to staff and the public.</p> <p>The Council Plan 2023 to 2027, One City, For All, sets a strong ambition to increase opportunities for everyone living in York to live healthy and fulfilling lives, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health-Improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities, taking a Health in All Policies Approach. • Equalities and Human Rights- Equality of opportunity <p>This policy supports the equalities and human rights priority, providing clear standards on how our response will be accessible for all, our commitment to understanding intersectionality and removing those systemic barriers for all to have support.</p> <p>As the policy sets out a robust and supportive response to victims/survivors it also demonstrates a commitment to 'how the council operates' priority within the council plan, providing improvement on our customer experience to make a positive difference.</p> <p>The Council Plan demonstrates commitment to all York residents to enjoy happier, healthier, longer lives, in homes that meet their needs, able to actively participate in their communities, with access to the right support at the right time. Having this stand-alone domestic abuse policy which sets out the housing service's response to domestic abuse and its commitment to a co-ordinated community response for domestic abuse victims/survivors. Demonstrating our understanding that there are York residents</p>

	experiencing domestic abuse and their specific needs require prioritising and addressing to ensure their happier, healthier, longer lives which links directly to the council plan and its 10-year strategies.
--	--

Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

2.1	What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights? Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.	
	Source of data/supporting evidence or consultation details:	Reason for using:
	Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Task & Finish Group: This is an operational group which has a wide membership of all housing managers/Team Leaders, charities which work with victims, survivors and perpetrators of domestic abuse, domestic abuse specialist 'by and for' charities, public health and other partner agencies working directly with those with lived experience.	This policy was created collaboratively via the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Task & Finish group. As this group has varied members with extensive expertise within the domestic abuse and housing field, we were able to create a policy that internal and external agencies were able to shape together and consider all feedback and views. The domestic abuse specialist 'by and for service' were able to provide invaluable input to support with intersectionality and protected characteristics to ensure all victims/survivors were able to understand the policy and a vast range of advice and support services were included.
	Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board: Which has a wide membership including statutory agencies such as the police and probation, social housing providers, commissioned services, and charities.	This policy was consulted via members of the domestic abuse local partnership board which is also the strategic governance of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance project.

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance: These are the specialists supporting the domestic abuse housing alliance accreditation, working with the project lead on securing the accreditation for City Of York Council.	This policy was consulted on with the regional lead from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance, they provided valuable feedback to ensure the policy would meet the standards for the accreditation, in which it would need to demonstrate and touch on the following 8 priorities: Staff development/Support, perpetrator accountability, Intersectionality & Anti Racism, Victim/Survivor safety, Partnership & Collaboration, Policies & Procedures, Publicity & Awareness raising and Safety led case management.
Tenant Scrutiny?	This section will be updated after tenant scrutiny has taken place on 3 rd Dec 24.
The Council Plan 2023 to 2027, One City, For All https://www.york.gov.uk/council-plan-1/one-city-2023-2027	In the creation of this policy the council plan's priorities and how this policy can directly support this plan was included throughout consultation.
North Yorkshire & City Of York Domestic Abuse Joint Strategy 2024 – 2028 https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/9587/north-yorkshire-and-city-of-york-domestic-abuse-strategy-2024-2028	Details the priorities and commitments from North Yorkshire Council & City of York Council and partner agencies on tackling domestic abuse across the county.

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

3.1	What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.	
Gaps in data or knowledge		Action to deal with this
Case supervision /performance management		Updating case management system to support with performance management
		Training which will include a mixture of internal and professional training. A domestic abuse procedure outlining how to put the policy into practice within staff's roles will also support with staff's confidence to implement the policy.

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

4.1	Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.		
Equality Groups and Human Rights.	Key Findings/Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
Age	Someone of any age can be affected by domestic abuse. In the 2022/2023 financial year there were 2,069 domestic abuse related crimes recorded by North Yorkshire Police that had occurred in York. Of the 2,069 reported crimes, 72% of victims were female, typically aged between 20-39 years, whilst 73% of suspects were male of the same age range.	Positive (+)	

	<p>However domestic abuse is an underreported crime, In the year 2021/2022 the strategic needs assessment estimate tool suggests, a total number of victims or adults who have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 is 32,500.</p> <p>Within York the older population is growing year on year and has risen 12.7% since 2011 and there are currently 9,854 people over the age of 80 living in York. The needs assessment prevalence tool estimated that there were 1000 victims aged over 65 who will have experienced domestic abuse in 2022. Research and evidence show that those over 60 experience domestic abuse for much longer, on average 12.9 years compared to the national average of 4.5 years. Further evidence suggests, older people are more likely to normalise abusive behaviour and may not perceive themselves as being a victim due to generational knowledge gap.</p> <p>Training will be designed to inform staff that young people and older people can be affected by domestic abuse and specialist support is available. The policy should enable domestic abuse victims and survivors of all ages to get access to support more quickly and therefore help reduce future harm.</p>		
Disability	<p>The needs assessment which reviewed the current service provision landscape for safe accommodation between 2019 – 2022, looked at the number of victims identified who were disabled and unfortunately this was often not recorded therefore there was not accurate data between those dates.</p>	Positive (+)	

	<p>However, the estimate tool from the needs assessment, estimated that there were 3500 victims or survivors of domestic abuse who are disabled in City of York in 2022. Research and data have shown disabled people are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse because of their situational vulnerabilities, they also experience domestic abuse for longer periods of time, and more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people. Through training associated with the implementation of this policy and the accreditation, staff will be better skilled to spot the signs of domestic abuse and respond appropriately when working with disabled people.</p>		
Gender	<p>According to the needs assessment, the gender of victims reporting domestic abuse in North Yorkshire and in the City of York remained consistent across the two years 2019-20 to 2021-22, with between 67% and 68% of identified victims recorded as being female, and between 18% and 19% recorded as male. While domestic abuse can happen to all genders, women are particularly at higher risk. The policy is inclusive of all genders whilst training will acknowledge that domestic abuse is a gendered issue.</p>	Positive (+)	
Gender Reassignment	<p>According to the needs assessment, the gender of victims reporting domestic abuse in North Yorkshire and in the City of York across all two years, 5-6% of victims were recorded as unknown, and fewer than 1% of victims were recorded as identifying as non-binary, transgender or other, combined across all two years. The new policy is inclusive and people who have been through gender reassignment should not be adversely affected. National specialist support is available for</p>	Positive (+)	

	people from this community and staff will be made aware of this. We therefore anticipate that services will improve for people who have had their gender reassigned.		
Marriage and civil partnership	The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises that domestic abuse can occur in a variety of intimate and family relationships and is not limited to persons within a marriage or civil partnership. There will be no detriment to married people or those in a civil partnership.	Positive (+)	
Pregnancy and maternity	During pregnancy there can be an increase or escalation in domestic abuse, this poses risks to unborn children and expectant mothers. This policy will improve awareness of domestic abuse and strengthen knowledge of referral pathways to reduce harm.	Positive (+)	
Race	7.3% of residents in York are from Black or minority ethnic groups, 5.5% are from White but non-British background and 10.8% were born outside the UK. There is evidence to show that black women are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse and have less confidence to report the abuse to authorities, this policy will improve opportunities to support victims and reduce harm to them. This new policy and the associated training that will follow focuses on breaking down barriers for people from minoritized groups so that they are able to access support. Within the policy we have committed to understanding and considering victims/survivors intersectional needs and ensuring there is support available to all including those subject to immigration control. Therefore, services should improve for people with lived experience with the protected characteristic of race.	Positive (+)	

Religion and belief	<p>The traditional relationship dynamic may be different in some cultures, and research shows that people within certain cultures may be more likely to suffer domestic abuse. This could have several effects including victims being more reluctant to report or resistant to their partner or any other personally connected person being arrested.</p> <p>In City of York there is a diverse community. Some residents have recently arrived in the UK and are not familiar with the legal protections afforded to victims of domestic abuse. Therefore, it is important to provide cultural awareness to staff of these communities and ensure that staff are trained about how domestic abuse, honour-based abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation may occur and how to respond. Training will include awareness raising of cultural issues and the importance of using independent translators when working with victims who do not speak English as well as improving our written translation services across the housing service. We anticipate that the service will improve for people in this category.</p>	Positive (+)	
Sexual orientation	<p>York has a higher-than-average LGBTQ+ population compared to the regional and national statistics (5.5% York, 3.0% region, 3.1% England & Wales). Currently, there are not specific domestic abuse commissioned services for LGBTQIA people locally; however commissioned services are using innovative trauma-informed methods to meet the needs of this group. Training and this policy address the needs and importance of staff being able to signpost to national specialist services for support that meets their needs.</p>	Positive (+)	

Other Socio-economic groups including :	Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?		
Carer	The policy covers all residents and tenants and there will be no detriment to carers.	Positive (+)	
Low income groups	The policy will apply to all residents and tenants including those on a low income, an element of domestic abuse can be economic abuse, and training will be provided to staff so that they have a better understanding of this. Economic abuse can have wide-reaching and long-lasting effects (such as bankruptcy) and can be a factor relating to homelessness and debts. By supporting people to obtain specialist support victims and survivors will be in a stronger position to move forward to rebuild their lives.	Positive (+)	
Veterans, Armed Forces Community	The policy covers all residents and tenants and there will be no detriment to veterans or members of the armed forces or their dependents.	Positive (+)	
Other	The policy covers all residents and tenants and there will be no detriment to any other socio-economic groups.	Positive (+)	
Impact on human rights:			
List any human rights impacted.	There are no human rights negatively impacted.	Positive (+)	

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups

- Where you think that the proposal could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

High impact (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)	There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.
Medium impact (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)	There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or across services, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights
Low impact (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)	There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights

Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

5.1	Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?
	<p>There is no unlawful or prohibited conduct predicted from this policy. This policy will improve services and should have no negative or unwanted adverse impact. Some of the positive impacts of this policy that have been identified are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides tenants/residents/service users with clear and succinct reassurance on what they can expect from our domestic abuse response. • Provides a commitment to a co-ordinated community response for domestic abuse victims/survivors. Setting out how we will work together with partner agencies to tackle domestic abuse as a multi-agency approach is paramount for victim/survivor safety. • Supporting the 2024 – 29 draft homeless strategy in which one of the key themes is ‘tackling domestic abuse’ within homelessness as well as legislation requirements within the homeless reduction act 2018. • Meeting requirements from the regulator. An expectation from the regulator is for social landlords to have a DA resident/tenant policy in place. • This policy will empower victims to feel confident, safe, and reassured to disclose domestic abuse and supports staff to feel confident and knowledgeable on signs/indicators of domestic abuse, which in turn they are able to provide early intervention and support. Being firm and clear on our zero-tolerance approach to abuse and holding perpetrators to account provides further reassurance to victims/survivors.

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	<p>Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No major change to the proposal – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adjust the proposal – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance quality or to foster good relations. - Continue with the proposal (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty - Stop and remove the proposal – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed. <p>Important: If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.</p>
Option selected	Conclusions/justification
No major change to the proposal	<p>There is no unlawful discrimination, the policy supports and upholds accessibility, inclusion and intersectionality therefor improving quality and removing barriers for residents to access support. This policy communicates our organisation's culture, values, and philosophy, making it clear to employees, customers, and the community what they can expect from us as a council and housing provider.</p>

--	--

Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

7.1	What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.		
Impact/issue	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Timescale
Ensuring implementation across the whole of housing service to ensure the whole housing service is delivering the standards and best practices we have committed too.	Internal training, development of a domestic abuse procedure to support the policy, publication of the policy and management of performance via case review and KPI's.	DAHA co-ordinator in partnership with housing and communities, public health directorates and housing management of all levels.	6 months from policy being introduced – This is an estimated timeline and may be less or greater dependant on timescales to train housing colleagues

Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

EIA 02/2021

8. 1	<p>How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward?</p> <p>Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?</p>
	<p>This Policy will be monitored by Housing Managers and case files audits will be undertaken as part of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation assessment. The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Strategic and operational Boards will monitor the introduction and embedding of the new policy. Progress will be reported to the York Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board.</p> <p>We are planning to train our staff about intersectionality, and this new policy includes measures to improve the way that we work with customers who have more than one protected characteristic, or more complex needs and may need services to be delivered in a unique way to meet their individual needs. We will consider how staff may need to adapt service delivery to accommodate a person's neurodiversity.</p>

--	--

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Framework

This summarises the values and principles that underpin the DAHA framework and the 8 priority areas. The framework helps staff approach clients with a domestic abuse lens and helping identify domestic abuse early and provide early interventions. These principles, values and the priority area standards need to be embedded throughout the housing service.

The values and principles should be reflective in policy, procedures, training, and practice. Within policies that directly impact victims, survivors, or perpetrators, should be explicitly stating commitment to these values and principles.

The values:

Integrity: City Of York Council (CYC) should be completing accreditation because it is the right thing to do for residents and staff. Ensuring within decision making and support the attitude is to hold perpetrators to account and to increase victim safety and housing security.

Collaboration: Internal and external collaboration must be the head of the services response to domestic abuse. Ensuring there are relationships with by and for specialised DA services and recognised for their independence. Ensuring there is good working relationships with all partner agencies and can demonstrate good protocols and procedures with these partners. Ensuring victims/survivors are heard and taken into consideration on what they need to have housing safety. It would be meaningful to have victim/survivor participation in development, delivery and evaluation of the services.

Empathy: This should be present in any/every decision making that may impact victims/survivor. It is crucial to have a person-centred approach, and the procedures are flexible to allow support to that individual's needs. Ensuring not to re-traumatise victims going over the same information. Being able to understand the barriers they may face with disclosing and being able to support through this. Ensuring support/training regularly is offered to staff to do this.

Empowerment: Ensuring victims/survivors feel empowered to disclose, but also that they can make their own choices in respect to their housing safety and that collaborative support to resolve their housing issues and

not things done to them. Also, that victims/survivors feel empowered to help influence how services are provided to further support victims/survivors.

Respect: Should have a culture of respect both internally and externally so people can openly express their needs. This is imperative to ensure there is a non-judgemental need led approach. This includes respect within case notes, referral language and decisions on how to support victims.

Accountability: Ensuring CYC are accountable and have humility towards gaps in knowledge and services. Ensuring staff are transparent with gaps and mistakes and can demonstrate changes to prevent any future harm. Accountability on holding perpetrators to account and have the attitude that it is not victims' responsibility to engage with services.

The principles:

Non-Judgemental & Belief: Should be creating an environment to enable victims to disclose knowing they will be heard, non-judged and believed. Staff and the organisation need to create this environment.

Being person centred: Ensuring the work staff do is tailored and meets the individuals needs and not just a blanket response, ensuring staff have the knowledge skills, confidence, and support to provide this.

Amplifying victim/survivor voice: Ensuring CYC seek, value, and incorporate feedback from diverse victims including staff and residents to help improve policies and practices. Ensuring minority communities and those that have lacked engagement with services.

Victim/survivor safety: Creating communities in which perps are held accountable for their behaviour. Also speaking with victim/survivor on what they need and want to happen.

Working towards a coordinated community response (CCR): Considering the organisations response and how they work collaboratively in partnership with others and communities, how they promote and contribute to an effective coordinated response and hold perps accountable.

Below are the basics of the priority areas and standards in which housing must demonstrate they meet to achieve the DAHA accreditation.

Priority Area 1: Policies & Procedures

Standard 1: A resident/tenant DA policy is in place and embedded in practice

Standard 2: A staff DA policy in place

Standard 3: Procedures for responding to DA are in place and embedded in practice. The accreditation will only review the housing policies.

Priority Area 2: Staff Development & Support

Standard 1: All staff are aware of DA and the impact on families.

Standard 2: Relevant staff receive DA training from specialists.

Standard 3: Continued staff learning & development.

Standard 4: DA champions including champions for staff in place

Standard 5: Staff wellbeing

Standard 6: Staff DA policy

Standard 7: Response to staff disclosures

Priority Area 3: Partnerships & Collaboration

Standard 1: Shared governance and leadership

Standard 2: Information sharing

Standard 3: Participation in safeguarding & multi agency information forums – I.e. MARAC

Standard 4: Referral pathways and relationships

Standard 5: Support for specialist DA services by and for

Priority Area 4: Safety-led case management

Standard 1: A CMS that supports safe practice

Standard 2: Non-judgemental and believing language

Standard 3: Risk identification and safeguarding

Standard 4: Recording information

Standard 5: Case supervision

Standard 6: Data collection, monitoring and evaluation

Priority Area 5: Victim/survivor led support

Standard 1: Creating physical and emotional safety within the home

Standard 2: Creating physical safety with professionals or services

Standard 3: Creating emotional safety, trust and boundaries with professionals

Standard 4: Enabling autonomy and choice through a needs based approach

Standard 5: Collaboration, participation, and empowerment

Priority Area 6: Intersectional & Anti racist practice

Standard 1: Embedding intersectional and anti-racist practice through values, principles and policies

Standard 2: Creating awareness and understanding through staff training, development and support

Standard 3: Understanding intersection needs of residents/tenants through data collection and effective case management

Standard 4: Providing victim led support which considers the intersectional needs of victims

Standard 5: Publicity and awareness raising.

Standard 6: Removing systemic barriers

Standard 7: Identifying and understanding all forms of VAWG/VAWDASV (violence against women/girls)

Standard 8: Understanding the needs of local communities

Standard 9: Supporting by and for services

Priority Area 7: Perpetrator accountability

Standard 1: Values and principles reflect perp accountability

Standard 2: Identifying perps of abuse, recording and sharing relevant perp information

Standard 3: Enforcement action

Standard 4: Positive engagement

Standard 5: Perp response does no harm to victims

Priority Area 8: Publicity & Awareness raising

Standard 1: Publicising DA response to tenants/residents

Standard 2: Targeting communication to reach everyone

Standard 3: Awareness raising: hosting, organising and supporting events and campaigns

This page is intentionally left blank