

**Report to** Cabinet  
11 March 2015  
**Report of** Executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods  
**Subject** Safeguarding and safer communities

**Item**

**11**

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## **Purpose**

To consider the activities the council is undertaking to meet its safeguarding duties and responsibilities and to seek approval for a number of actions.

## **Recommendation**

To agree the actions that have been put in place to ensure the council is meeting its safeguarding duties and responsibilities and to endorse:

- (1) the work to raise awareness of the signs of neglect within the council and how officers and members should respond.
- (2) the recommendations from the all district councils task and finish group on safeguarding and licensing and that these are reported to Licensing committee for implementation.
- (3) the priorities and emerging themes contained within the Norfolk wide domestic abuse change programme led by the community safety partnership.
- (4) the council seeking White Ribbon Status for the city.

## **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority “A safe and clean city” and the service plan priority to ensure the council carries out its duties to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

## **Financial implications**

The costs arising for these actions will be met from approved budgetary provision or from partnership budgets.

**Ward/s:** All wards

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Harris – Customer services and safeguarding champion

## **Contact officers**

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**Background documents**

None

# Report

## Background

1. The city council has always taken great effort to ensure that it fulfils its duties and responsibilities for vulnerable people and cabinet has previously received reports on how actions have been progressed through the Every Child Matters initiative.
2. In recent years, the external environment for safeguarding has seen considerable change. Recent high profile child protection cases, including those that relate to child sexual exploitation and child abuse offences or allegations made against celebrities means the agenda is more visible in the public eye and has increased reporting of these issues.
3. The policy framework for safeguarding children and adults has also changed with a raft of new legislation and guidance often as a response to failures in the safeguarding system. This has included:
  - Updated national guidance issued for safeguarding children, referred to as *Working Together 2013*, which provides the requirements and expectations of how all public and voluntary organisations safeguard and promote the welfare of children and the framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs - locally this is the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board – the NSCB) to monitor the effectiveness of local services
  - Local Safeguarding Children Boards now being part of the *Ofsted inspection framework of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers*.
  - The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, that from 2011 introduced domestic homicide reviews
  - The inclusion of "coercive and controlling behaviour" within relationships as an offence within the Home Office definition of Domestic abuse from 2015 (regulations still outstanding)
  - The introduction of legislation in June 2014 in relation to so called 'honour' based abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, making them crimes under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act (2014)
  - The introduction in March 2014 of the Domestic violence disclosure scheme – often referred to as 'Clare's Law' - which allows the Police, along with input from multi agency partners, to disclose to individuals details of their partners' abusive past when they assess that individual to be at risk of harm
  - The Children, Schools and Families Act 2010 which followed Lord Laming's Review of child protection and provided greater information sharing powers to Local Safeguarding Children Boards in the event of a serious incident (a serious case review) and for Ofsted to review LSCBs
  - The Care Act 2014 that from April 2015 puts safeguarding adults onto a statutory footing.

4. In 2013, Ofsted undertook an inspection of the local authority arrangements for the protection of children in Norfolk including the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements for identifying children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, harm from abuse, neglect and the provision of early help.
5. The inspection found that these arrangements in Norfolk were inadequate, and since that time considerable effort has gone in to improving these arrangements and a child's journey through the child protection system.
6. This report sets out how the city council has responded to these changes, issues and improvements and details how it is contributing to this work internally and with partners through the various partnerships and boards where much of this work is discharged.

## **Safeguarding children**

7. Everyone in society has a responsibility to safeguard children and young people. In Norfolk, the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) holds the statutory duty to co-ordinate how agencies work together, to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
8. In 2014, the Board reviewed its focus and identified a number of key priorities for its work. The NSCB agreed that neglect, sexual abuse of children and child sexual exploitation (CSE) were areas of critical vulnerability for children and young people in Norfolk. The NSCB also prioritised that the activity of front line staff across all agencies was to be consistent and of a high quality.
9. The city council has contributed to the development of this work through participation in a CSE sub group of the NSCB, a neglect task and finish group and through regular participation in the local safeguarding children group and the at NSCB and Norfolk Adults Safeguarding boards. This work has been resourced to ensure that plans developed on a county wide basis as far as possible meet the needs of the children and young people and families in the city.
10. The review of the board also resulted in a change in structure with advisory groups being established for agencies where there are multiple partners including schools, health and district councils. The district council advisory group is led by the city council and has already proved effective in raising the profile of the work and importance of district council services within the NSCB and means the city council is represented on the NSCB leadership group.
11. The Board has therefore ensured that its work and structure is focussed on and reflects the core areas of business, using the right information to ensure that the required improvements to multi-agency working are embedded across all partners.

## **Neglect**

12. Information from the Department of Education nationally and the NSCB locally indicates that neglect is a common feature found in child protection cases. A major study of child abuse and neglect published by the NSPCC in 2011, found neglect to be the most prevalent type of maltreatment in families for all age groups where there were child protection concerns.

13. In Norfolk, neglect is overwhelmingly the most common category for children on Child Protection Plans in Norfolk, with 69.45% of cases having this as the identified main area of significant harm (for the period ending April 2014). There have been a number of multi-agency case reviews in recent years where neglect has been a major theme.
14. Despite this, cases of neglect are still being identified across Norfolk and agencies acknowledge that it is a prevalent issue in the county.
15. The NSCB has led the development of a neglect strategy which sets out how all agency front line services recognise and respond consistently to this issue and how all agencies develop a shared response. See appendix 1.
16. The NSCB is currently implementing awareness raising training which relevant council officers will attend. Internally, the council will be complementing this with learning modules for staff that require a more basic level of information. This will ensure that all front line staff can recognise the signs of neglect and have the knowledge and confidence to respond in a timely manner. Neglect will also be incorporated into the safeguarding briefings for members so that councillors are equally aware of the signs and escalation routes.

### **Recommendation for the NSCB neglect strategy**

17. Cabinet is requested to endorse the work being undertaken within the council to ensure staff and members are aware of the issues and signs of neglect in the city and how to respond.

### **Child sexual exploitation**

18. One of the most concerning of child protection issues that is being responded to across the country are those that relate to child sexual exploitation where mostly vulnerable young girls and sometimes young boys, are groomed including on-line grooming.
19. Cases in Rotherham and Rochdale for example have attracted high levels of media coverage and provided a further challenge to local partnerships to understand the extent of local issues and how partners should respond.
20. Within the council the safer communities' co-ordinator has developed and implemented briefing sessions for council staff that relate to the level of contact that staff will or may have with children and young people at risk.
21. The feedback from attendees has been very positive and has indicated how frequently council staff may come across children and young people at risk of grooming and sexual exploitation in for example, parks, play areas and licensed food establishments, which was what was found in other cities.
22. The NSCB and Norfolk constabulary are leading on an awareness raising campaign in relation to CSE in 2015 and the council's safer communities co-ordinator is contributing to this work.
23. The issues in Rotherham and Rochdale have also highlighted the role that the council as licensing authority can play to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

24. Members will know that, licensing arrangements were introduced as all activities that are licensable carry a level of risk of “harm” either of a personal, financial, environmental or amenity nature. The requirement for a licence enables a licensing authority to make a judgement so that the potential harm is eliminated, reduced or balanced against the benefits of society. The overriding philosophy underpinning licensing is that public safety must always outweigh the need for a person or organisation to work or trade.
25. In recent weeks all seven district councils have come together with Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk County Council in a task and finish group to review how safeguarding considerations inform the decisions of each licensing authority.
26. The task and finish group have made a number of recommendations that will improve the information available for licensing decisions; provide an opportunity to increase the awareness in license holders of their role to safeguarding children and adults and incorporate best practice into licensing policies as they are reviewed. See appendix 2.

### **Recommendation – child sexual exploitation**

27. Cabinet is requested to endorse the recommendations from the safeguarding and licensing task and finish group and request that they are reported to licensing committee for implementation.

### **Children Act 2014: Section 11 – self assessment**

28. To understand if partners have robust and effective safeguarding arrangements in place, the NSCB requests that all partners undertake a self-assessment of its duties and responsibilities under section 11 of the Children Act 2004.
29. Section 11, places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure that their functions – and any services that they contract out to others – are discharged, having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
30. The 2014-15 self-assessment was undertaken by the corporate safeguarding champions and portfolio holder for customer services in attendance which highlighted good progress against the section 11 requirements.
31. A comprehensive action plan to ensure continual improvement has been developed as part of this work and a progress report on these actions will be reported to cabinet towards the end of 2015.
32. The independent Chair of the NSCB noted at a recent challenge session with council officers that the City Council is playing its part in the NSCB and is alert to its duties and responsibilities.

### **Domestic abuse**

33. During 2013-14, the Norfolk community safety partnership (CSP) undertook a review of its priorities to ensure that the partnership was adding value to the community safety agenda, the work of partners individually and the other related partnerships.

34. A common concern for all partners was that no one agency held sole responsibility for domestic abuse (DA), and it was unclear what the Norfolk response was or should be for this area of concern.
35. With funding secured from the East of England Local Government Association, the CSP undertook an in depth multi-agency review of the response to domestic abuse led by a steering group chaired by the Chief Executive Officer in her role as chair of the Norfolk community safety partnership. See figure 1.

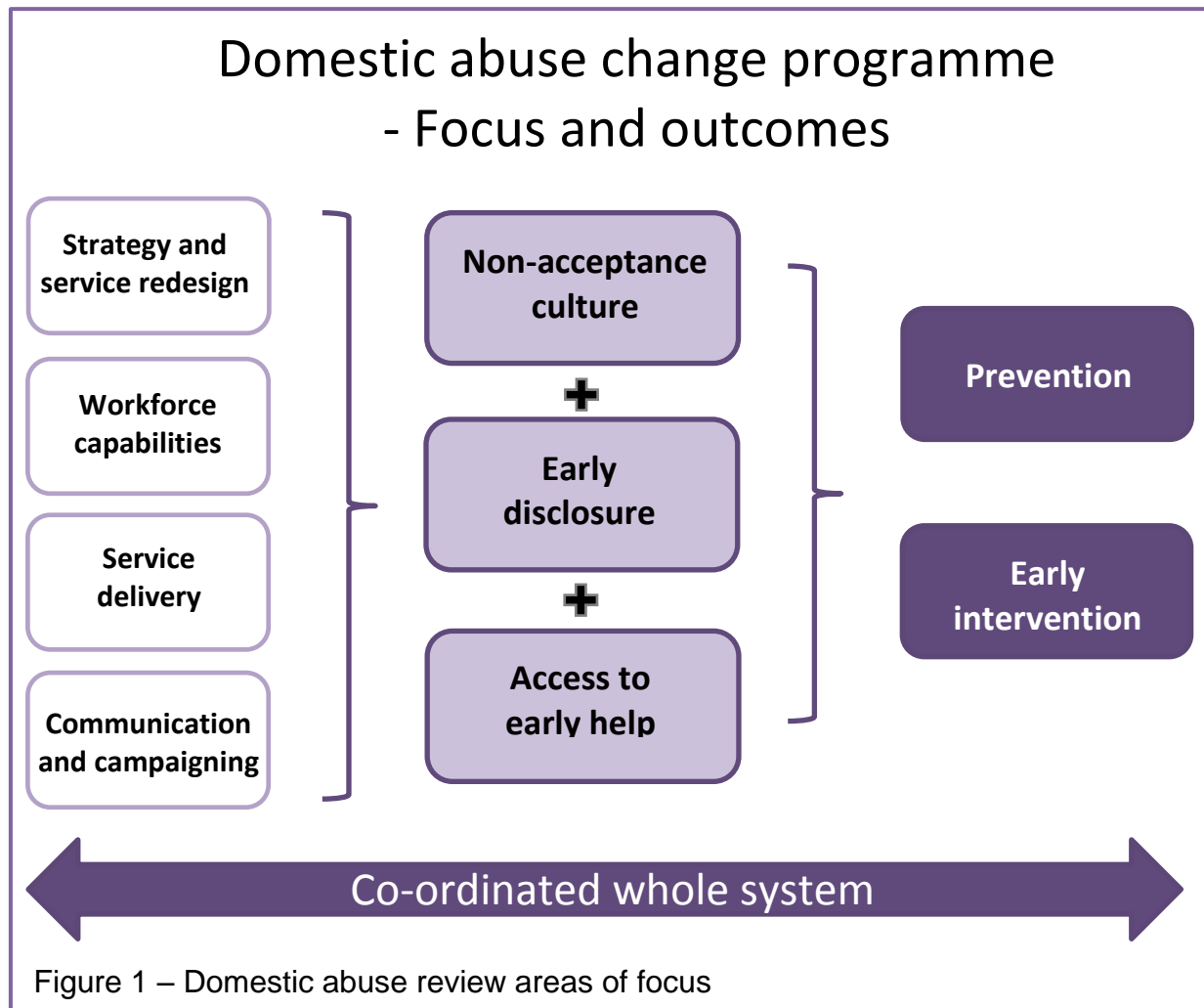


Figure 1 – Domestic abuse review areas of focus

36. This review resulted in the proposal for a single, early intervention approach to domestic abuse that increases levels of early disclosure and supports the development of a culture of non-acceptance on domestic abuse across Norfolk.
37. This would be delivered through:
- Collection, analysis and use of information across all partners to inform priorities, budget and commissioning decisions.
  - Identification, understanding and management of specific client groups who are most at risk.
  - Co-ordination and targeting of all available resources to address the early prevention needs of client groups.

- Building community based capacity and confidence so local people are able to safely identify risks and facilitate early disclosure and access to specialist support.
  - Develop workforce capacity and confidence to identify and know how to effectively deal with DA risks as they come upon them.
  - Make most effective use of all advisory and specialist resources and expertise (including the provision and access to information and advice).
  - Promote awareness of issues and services in relation to DA – for front line staff and the general public – to reduce stigma and increase knowledge: Making it easier to ask about DA and making it easier to respond about DA.
38. With the core themes now agreed, detailed work is now being undertaken to develop the Norfolk response to domestic abuse across four areas of improvement:
- **Strategy and service re-design** – deliver a strategic approach to integrated service provision using the NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) domestic abuse commissioning guidelines
  - **Workforce capabilities** – all public sector staff to have a ‘Public Welfare Responsibility’ and are skilled up to recognise both domestic abuse and wider safeguarding & welfare issues, and how they take positive action.
  - **Service delivery** – embedding domestic abuse as part of coordinated early help service delivery. Three domestic abuse coordinators providing specialist support to partners and the community within developing early help arrangements in South Norfolk and proposed for Norwich and King’s Lynn and West Norfolk.
  - **Communication and campaigning** – improving visibility and knowledge about domestic abuse and wider safeguarding issues across all the relevant countywide partnerships and boards that play a role in safeguarding and keeping people safe.
39. The City Council has a long history of supporting people experiencing domestic abuse, helping them to increase their confidence and re-build their lives. Domestic abuse is a common cause of homelessness in Norwich and the council provided the initial grant to establish the first refuge in Norwich. This led to the formation of Leeway; which provides vital services to victims of abuse including young people and children who are present in families where domestic abuse occurs.
40. During the past two years, the council’s safer communities co-ordinator has been active in the role of Vice chair of the county Domestic abuse and sexual violence board (DASVB) and has led the development and increased profile of the Norfolk Says No campaign. This is a week long campaign held annually in November, incorporating White Ribbon day (25 November), which seeks to raise awareness of the issues of DA and the support services available locally.

### **Recommendation – domestic abuse change programme**

41. Given the importance of this work and the council’s track record in this vital area, Cabinet members are requested to endorse the programme and ask officers to report the final recommendations to cabinet in due course.



42. In 2012, Council resolved to ask the cabinet to consider seeking white ribbon status for the city. White ribbon status is a valuable mechanism to highlight and champion a public authority's commitment and the activities they undertake to raise awareness and support the victims of domestic abuse.
43. At that time, portfolio holders agreed that the commitments required to achieve white ribbon status, went beyond the services and capacity of the city council alone and it was agreed that officers worked with the Norfolk domestic abuse and sexual violence board to develop white ribbon status in conjunction with our partners at a county level.
44. This has been raised at a county level and it does not appear possible, at least in the short term, to develop a county wide application for white ribbon status. Therefore it will be undertaken at district level.

### **Recommendation – white ribbon status**

45. Therefore, Cabinet are asked to endorse that the council will seek White Ribbon status for the city in its role as a civic leader and service provider. The outcome of this will be reported to cabinet later in the year.

### **Safeguarding adults and the Care Act 2014**

46. Until very recently, safeguarding adults did not have the same statutory footing as children, which changes with the Care Act 2014 which received Royal Assent in May 2014.
47. The main elements of the Act overhaul and modernise the existing complex system of care and support by bringing together a number of existing laws and introducing new duties upon local authorities. These changes will affect people who require social care and their carers, as well as local authorities and service providers.
48. The majority of the changes will be the responsibility of Norfolk County Council. However, the Act will have some implications for the city council including duties for safeguarding, a role to promote wellbeing and early intervention (where this is required) and closer co-operation and partnership working.
49. This work will be led by the Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board where the council is represented by the Tenancy Support Manager. As this work progresses and the council's duties become clear, information on the new responsibilities will be reported to Cabinet.

**Key Principles**

These principles underpin the strategic aim and are vital to the delivery of the strategic objectives.

- The over-riding priority is a shared understanding of the impact of neglect upon children's safety, health and development; including, crucially, the impact of emotional neglect. Without this shared understanding, it will not be possible to respond in an appropriate and timely way.
- Early indicators of neglect and causal factors must be recognised if early assessment and intervention is to be achieved.
- Early assessment and intervention will be promoted and supported where sufficient progress is seen to be possible within the child's timescale.
- Where there is insufficient progress, intervention on a statutory basis will take place appropriately and without delay.
- Collaboration between agencies is vital at all stages and levels of intervention; and there must be joint and shared assessments.
- Children and their families should be able to expect consistency from the practitioners they work with and in the support they are offered.
- Agencies need to ensure that practitioners are trained to be aware of, identify, assess and deal with neglect for children who may be particularly vulnerable, e.g. as a result of disability.
- All assessment and intervention undertaken will be based on research evidence.
- Historical information will always be taken into consideration.
- Professionals need to be curious and inquisitive about circumstances and events. They need to challenge each other, as well as the families themselves, about the improvements made and their sustainability.
- The work which underpins the strategy will be informed by service users.
- Neglect must be understood within a context which may include other forms of abuse. The strategy must therefore link with other relevant strategies and work streams.

### **Safeguarding and licensing T&F group – draft recommendations**

#### **Information sharing – to improve inter-agency information sharing across Norfolk so that licensing teams have access to all the relevant information to ensure licensing decisions are safe**

1. Develop a Norfolk wide information sharing template and procedure hosted by Norfolk Constabulary to share:
  - decisions by each Licensing Authority when a premises, hackney carriage or private hire license is refused, suspended or revoked as a result of safeguarding issue
  - details of when Norfolk County Council remove a drivers badge for safeguarding reasons
  - share concerns raised about a license or county badge holder, or applicant (individual or premises) that may contribute to a wider pool of intelligence and concerns

This will contribute to resolving some of the information sharing issues in Norfolk relating to hackney carriage and private hire licences. However, there remains a risk with licensing decisions across the county boundary which requires a national change in the licensing framework. It is recommended that these concerns are raised with the LGA and the Chair of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) nationally.

2. Childrens services to invite licensing officers to LADO Meetings where this relates to licensable activities.

#### **Procedures and guidance – to ensure licensing procedures are robust capturing all relevant information from applicants and consultees**

3. Each licensing authority to review Hackney Carriage and private hire license application templates and ensure that all relevant information is requested. This may include:
  - Tests for applicants to complete
  - References
  - Previous licenses held and through which licensing authority

The decision to amend any templates to be taken by each authority

4. Develop a Norfolk wide awareness raising safeguarding leaflet for taxi licensees.
5. Develop a Norfolk wide awareness raising safeguarding leaflet for licensed premises and personal license holders
6. Develop an approach to increase the knowledge of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Drivers to widen their understanding and pilot in each district council area.
7. Develop an approach to increase the knowledge of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults for premises licence holders to widen their understanding and pilot in each district council area.

8. Request that safeguarding children and adults forms part of the Best Bar None scheme in Norwich.
9. Agree a guidance note for the NSCB on how it should respond to licensing consultations relevant reviews and supports the work of the licensing authorities.
10. Request the LGA and independent Chair of the NSCB to ask the Government to amend the Licensing Act 2003 so that applications for personal license come under the framework for consultation with responsible authorities for comment on the suitability of the applicant.
11. Request the LGA and independent chair of the NSCB to ask Government to amend the (Licensing Act 2003) so that criminal background checks undertaken for personal license applications can be carried out by the Disclosure Barring Service at an enhanced level.

**Guidance – to improve guidance available to applicants, members and partners ensuring it is capturing best practice**

12. Incorporate safeguarding best practice and guidance into the revisions of licensing policies at the next policy review. This includes the Licensing Act, Gambling Act ), taxi policy and sexual entertainment venue policy
13. Develop a briefing session for licensing teams and licensing related committee members to improve their understanding of safeguarding
14. Improve the understanding of the role and responsibilities of licensing authorities within the NSCB and NSAB

**Guidance – to improve guidance available to applicants, members and partners ensuring it is capturing best practice**

15. Incorporate safeguarding best practice and guidance into the revisions of licensing policies at the next policy review. This includes the Licensing Act, Gambling Act (which are both due for renewal in 2015), taxi policy and sexual entertainment venue policy (these are likely to be in future years).
16. Develop a briefing session for licensing teams and licensing and licensing related committee members to improve their understanding of safeguarding
17. Improve the understanding of role and responsibilities of licensing authorities within the NSCB and NSAB

## Integrated impact assessment



**NORWICH**  
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with completing the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

### Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	11 March 2015
Head of service:	Bob Cronk
Report subject:	Safeguarding and safer communities
Date assessed:	4.2.15
Description:	

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The actions and recommendations in the report show how the council with its partners are discharging its duties and responsibilities to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The actions and recommendations in the report will make a significant contribution to the council's work to ensure Norwich is a safe city in conjunction with its partners.
Human Rights Act 1998	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Health and well being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The actions and recommendations in the report will contribute to the council's work with partners to improve the health and well being of residents and communities.
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment

Positive

Social, Equality and Diversity

Negative

Neutral

Economic, Environmental

Issues