

**COUNCIL MEETING – 9 July 2025
NOTICE OF MOTIONS 175 AND 176**

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NOS. 4.28 – 4.34

MOTION NO.	PROPOSER	SECONDER	MOTION
175	Councillor Storey		<p>We welcome the Governments commitment to halve Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in the next decade. However, this bold ambition cannot be realised by national government alone – we need action from our local leaders to turn the tide on VAWG in our communities.</p> <p>An estimated one in four women experience domestic abuse in their lifetime and an average of one woman per week is killed at the hands of their male partner or ex-partner (ONS, 2023).</p> <p>Annually, domestic abuse costs the public purse an estimated £78 billion per year (Women’s Aid, ResPublica, 2023).</p> <p>Attitudes towards healthy relationships in young people are also showing concerning trends, with research indicating a direct correlation between exposure to misogynistic social media content and unhealthy views on relationships (Women’s Aid, 2023). In addition to this, young people don’t know where to access support; a worrying 61% of children surveyed who said they would seek support if they experienced domestic abuse were unsure of where to go for help (Women’s Aid, 2023). Sexism and misogyny as the root causes of domestic abuse must be addressed through prevention work with children and young people.</p> <p>The importance of preserving specialist services</p> <p>Specialist domestic abuse services are independent from the state, and specifically designed to support survivors of domestic abuse, offering holistic and trauma informed wrap- around support. Often, they have a long history of supporting women within their local community and are embedded into referral pathways, working closely with other statutory services. 'By and for' services are run by and for the women they represent, making them uniquely placed to foster trust and meet the specific needs of survivors.</p> <p>Specialist services are not only best placed to support survivors, but they also reduce pressure on other local services, for every £1 invested in specialist domestic abuse services £9 is saved to the</p>

		<p>public purse (Women's Aid, 2023). Statutory guidance for the commissioning of domestic abuse services highlights the importance of commissioning specialist services and encourages flexible commissioning practices such as grant funding. However, competitive procurement practices, based on the assumption that domestic abuse services should operate within a competitive market, are threatening to erode our network of lifesaving specialist services</p> <p>This council commits to urgently address the epidemic of violence against women and girls. This council pledges to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report to Full Council within 12 months on the progress of actions it has undertaken to seek to fulfil the pledges of this motion. 2. Work with survivors and local specialist and 'by and for' services to understand the impact of VAWG in Middlesbrough and develop a multi-agency strategy to address this. 3. Ensure comprehensive education on healthy relationships is available in all schools across Middlesbrough. 4. Conduct a review into Middlesbrough's procurement practices for commissioning VAWG services to ensure they align with statutory guidance and meet the needs of all survivors, including the most marginalised survivors and encourage our strategic partners to do the same. 5. Change the Women's Champion role to a VAWG champion, to hold the council to account on these pledges and amplify the voice of survivors.
176	Councillor Storey	<p><u>Debate not hate motion</u></p> <p>The intimidation and abuse of Councillors, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy; preventing elected members from representing the communities they serve, deterring individuals from standing for election, and undermining public life in democratic processes.</p> <p>This council therefore commits to challenge the normalisation of abuse against councillors and officers and uphold exemplary standards of public and political debate in all it does. This council further agrees to sign up to the LGA's Debate Not Hate campaign. The campaign aims to raise public awareness of the role of Councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the response to and support those in public life facing abuse and intimidation.</p>

		<p>In addition, this council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Write to the local Members of Parliament to ask them to support the campaign. Letter to be sent from Council and to be sent within 28 days of the motion being passed.2. Write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of politicians. Letter to be sent from Council and to be sent within 28 days of the motion being passed.3. Ensure the council has a clear reporting mechanism which councillors can use to can use to monitor and record incidents of harassment and abuse of councillors and officers. An email will be sent to all Councillors from the Monitoring Officer to advise of the process within 28 days of the motion being passed4. Regularly review the support available to councillors in relation to abuse and intimidation and Councillor safety. This will be reviewed annually.5. Work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors and their families and discuss the need to take a preventative approach that accounts for the specific risks that Councillors face, as they do with other high-risk individuals, like MPs.6. Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of Councillors and officers. All incidents should be recorded in accordance with the process set out at point 3 above.
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