Economic Note	Number: HO EN 1063
Title of regulatory proposal	Tackling 'honour'-based abuse (statutory guidance)
Lead Department/Agency	Home Office
Expected date of implementation	End of 2026
Origin	Domestic
Date	18/02/2026
Lead Departmental Contact	CrimeandPolicingBillTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk
Departmental Assessment	GREEN

Rationale for intervention, objectives and intended effects

The intervention addresses inconsistencies in how agencies identify and respond to 'honour'-based abuse (HBA). Introducing multi-agency statutory guidance, supported by a statutory definition, will create a shared language and understanding of HBA, improve the consistency and quality of frontline practice, and strengthen multi-agency coordination to better safeguard victims and support earlier, more effective intervention.

Policy options (including alternatives to regulation)

Option 0: 'Do nothing'. Rely on existing non-statutory materials (for example, the HBA Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) definition used operationally).

Option 1: Legislate for a power to issue multi-agency statutory guidance on HBA accompanied by a statutory definition. Statutory agencies would be required to have due regard to the guidance. **This is the government's preferred option.**

Costs and benefit summary

The statutory guidance is in early stages and a fully monetised appraisal has not been possible. Costs and benefits have been qualitatively assessed.

Risks

The statutory guidance is still in early stages of development and its final length is not yet known. As a result, it is not possible to quantify any familiarisation costs to police and other agencies at this time.

Total Cost (£m PV)	Transition Cost (£m Constant)	Cost to Business (£m PV)	
N/A	**N/A**	**N/A**	
Total Benefit (£m PV)	**NPSV (£m PV)**	**BNPV (£m PV)**	**EANDCB (£m PV)**
N/A	N/A	N/A	n/A
Price Base Year	**PV Base Year**	**Appraisal period (Years)**	**Transition period (Years)**
2026/27	**2026/27**	**10**	**N/A**

Departmental sign-off (*SCS*):	Gisela Carr	Date: 13/02/26
Chief Economist sign-off:	Tim Laken	Date: 27/03/26
Better Regulation Unit sign-off:	Emma Kirk	Date: 31/03/26

Evidence Base

A. Policy objectives and intended effects

1. The proposal introduces multi-agency statutory guidance on HBA, underpinned by a statutory definition, to create a common language and clear expectations for professionals with safeguarding responsibilities (for example, policing, health, education, and social care). The objective is to improve the identification of HBA, enable earlier and more consistent safeguarding, and strengthen multi-agency working, including recording, data collection and information-sharing practices. Although agencies do collect data, the information gathered is not always the right information, largely due to challenges in identifying HBA and uncertainty about best practice. There have been several case studies demonstrating that more effective information-sharing between agencies could have led to better outcomes for victims. The statutory guidance will address these issues by setting out clear expectations, practical examples, case studies, and best-practice approaches, using the new definition as a shared language to support consistent identification and improved multi-agency responses.

2. Public authorities will be required to have due regard to the guidance, providing a firmer basis for consistent adoption than non-statutory products.

3. This aligns with previously agreed ministerial direction to introduce a statutory definition and accompanying guidance of HBA as set out in the August 2025 announcement of HBA[1] measures and underpinned by its inclusion in the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy[2], as part of the government's aim to halve VAWG in a decade. The intended effects are better frontline understanding of HBA, more consistent use of risk assessment and referral pathways, clearer multi-agency roles and responsibilities, and, over time, improved recording that supports more reliable monitoring of prevalence and outcomes. As a result, this should lead to a better overall response ensuring victims and those at risk are properly considered and safeguarded.

4. The guidance will not create any new statutory duties, but it will consolidate expectations and best practice to improve operational consistency and victim outcomes across agencies.

B. Policy options considered, including alternatives to regulation

Option 0: 'Do-nothing'

5. Under this option the government would rely on existing non-statutory materials (for example, the HBA CPS definition used operationally). This would not address persistent inconsistency in identification and multi-agency response, nor the absence of a single, authoritative framework that agencies must have regard to. It risks continued variability in practice and under-identification of HBA, especially in non-domestic contexts.

Option 1: Legislate for a power to issue multi-agency statutory guidance on HBA accompanied by a statutory definition. Statutory agencies would be required to have due regard to the guidance

6. This option provides a clear, shared understanding and interpretation of HBA, strengthens multi-agency coordination, and sets consistent expectations on identification, recording, information-sharing, and response. It also delivers on a commitment in the VAWG strategy. **This is the government's preferred option.**

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1 August 2025 HBA measures - https://www.gov.uk/government/news/honour-based-abuse-crackdown-in-raft-of-new-measures

2 VAWG Strategy - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/freedom-from-violence-and-abuse-a-cross-government-strategy

Non-regulatory option

7. The government could issue non-statutory guidance, but this would not have the same effect as there would not be a requirement in legislation for professionals to have due regard. This reduces the likelihood of consistent uptake across agencies and weakening delivery of the intended effects (shared language, consistent practice, early identification).

8. Non regulatory option discounted as issuing non-statutory guidance would not deliver the intended effects. Without a legislative duty for professionals to have due regard, uptake would likely be inconsistent across agencies.

C. Past evaluations and rationale for government intervention

9. There has been no formal post-implementation review in this area because no statutory guidance on HBA currently exists, and previous responses/feedback have relied on the non-statutory CPS definition and fragmented references within wider VAWG and domestic abuse guidance, which stakeholders consistently report leads to inconsistent identification and variable multi-agency practice. Government intervention is required because only a statutory framework—with a duty for agencies to have regard to the guidance—can address these gaps, create a shared language, and enable the consistent, system-wide safeguarding improvements needed to effectively deal with HBA.

10. Home Office will ensure monitoring of this measure is considered throughout policy development and once the legislation and operational delivery have been finalised. As this legislation largely relates to providing clarity on processes that are already in place, rather than bringing in new laws/processes, the level of monitoring will likely be light touch to be proportionate with the use of government resources.

D. Appraisal

General assumptions and data

11. While efforts have been made to understand the costs and benefits to all affected groups, all costs and benefits are non-monetised. The policy development is currently at an early stage meaning evidence is not strong enough to produce a monetised appraisal and therefore costs and benefits have been qualitatively assessed.

Costs

Monetised costs

12. Due to the absence of suitable data, this economic note provides a qualitative assessment of the impacts of the proposed legislation only. The measure does not introduce new statutory duties, offences, or service delivery models, and does not require agencies to undertake activities beyond familiarisation with consolidated guidance.

13. Familiarisation costs are expected to be minimal because the guidance formalises and brings together material that frontline professionals are already broadly familiar with, rather than introducing new requirements or changes in practice. As a result, any attempt to monetise familiarisation would be disproportionate to the scale of the impact.

Non-Monetised costs

Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance Public Sector Familiarisation

14. There will be set-up familiarisation costs whereby police officers, education professionals, healthcare professionals, courts and any other professions in scope of the updated guidance will be required to read guidance.

15. Familiarisation costs to the police and other agencies are expected to be negligible, because agencies already work to existing definitions and non-statutory guidance on HBA. The proposed statutory guidance consolidates and formalises material that frontline professionals are already broadly familiar with, rather than introducing new duties or substantial changes in practice.

Benefits

Monetised Benefits

16. Due to an absence of available data, this economic note will provide only qualitative assessment of the possible benefits of the proposed legislation.

Non-Monetised Benefits

Improved Identification of HBA

17. A statutory definition and shared language will help frontline professionals more consistently recognise HBA across policing, health, education, and social care.

18. Earlier and more accurate identification may lead to timelier safeguarding support.

Greater Consistency in Multiagency Practice-Agency Practice

19. Clear expectations around risk assessment, recording, referral pathways, and information sharing reduce variability in practice across regions and sectors.

20. This should support more coherent and joined up responses to individuals at risk.

Strengthened Safeguarding and Victim Outcomes

21. Better coordination and clearer roles across agencies mean victims are more likely to receive consistent, appropriate interventions.

22. Over time, improved multiagency working is likely to lead to safer outcomes and fewer cases falling through gaps, therefore improving victims' wellbeing.

Supports Government Commitments on VAWG

23. Delivers a specific commitment within the VAWG Strategy[3], to 'legislate to introduce a statutory definition of HBA with accompanying multi-agency statutory guidance'. This supports the government's aim to halve VAWG within a decade.

24. The Government is clear that this must include all forms of VAWG in all communities, and this aligns with wider work and funding such as investment into victim support to ensure victims from all communities receive the appropriate support.

NPSV, BNPV and EANDCB

25. This proposal does not introduce new statutory duties, offences, or service delivery models, and no monetised costs or benefits have been identified. As a result, it has not been possible or proportionate to quantify impacts in monetary terms. The expected impacts of the measure are qualitative in nature, relating primarily to improved clarity, consistency and coordination in existing multi-agency practice rather than changes that would generate measurable fiscal or economic effects. Consequently, Net Present Social Value (NPSV), Business Net Present

[3] Freedom from violence and abuse: a cross-government strategy - GOV.UK: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/freedom-from-violence-and-abuse-a-cross-government-strategy

Value (BNPV) and the Equivalent Annual Net Direct Cost to Business (EANDCB) cannot be calculated.

E. Wider impacts

26. These measures are concentrated on improving clarity around police and other related agencies operational processes and no wider impacts have been identified.

F. Sensitivity

27. The proposed measure consolidates and formalises guidance that frontline agencies are already broadly familiar with, rather than introducing new statutory duties or substantial changes in practice. As a result, the overall impacts are expected to be minimal, with any familiarisation requirements limited in scope. Therefore, it is not considered necessary or proportionate to produce a full Impact Assessment for this measure.

G. Risks

a) The proposed measures do not appear to pose any large risks; however, it is not yet known how long the guidance will be or which frontline professionals will be required to read it, and therefore the level of familiarisation that will be needed across agencies cannot currently be quantified. As the agencies in scope are already familiar with existing definitions and the offence of HBA any, associated familiarisation costs are expected to be minimal.

H. Annex

Mandatory specific impact test - Statutory Equalities Duties	Complete
The equalities impact of introducing a statutory definition and accompanying multi-agency statutory guidance were analysed. A summary has been provided of the main considerations below: 1. The options to introduce a statutory definition of HBA and multi-agency guidance could have positive impacts under limb 1 ('eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010'), on people with protected characteristics who are more likely to experience HBA. This includes younger people, women, people with disabilities, LGBT+ people, people who are married and people of certain ethnicities. 2. Under limb 2 ('advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it'), the definition and guidance must have accessibility requirements for people with disabilities and consideration should be given to whether elements should be translated. The Home Office did not find any evidence under limb 3 ('foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'), for consideration in relation to these options. **The SRO has agreed these findings**	**Yes**