



# National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Devolved Decision Making Pilot

Shropshire Council's has been selected for the national pilot to accelerate support for Child Victims of Exploitation

Shropshire Council is proud to announce its successful selection as one of eight new pilot sites for the Government's Devolved Decision-Making Process, aimed at delivering faster decision making to child victims of exploitation and modern slavery.

The pilot, which officially launched in Shropshire on 29 September 2025, transfers decision-making powers from the Home Office to specially trained local safeguarding teams – for Shropshire this will be our own embedded with our own TREES (Together, Reducing and Ending Exploitation in Shropshire) team.

This shift enables quicker, more informed decisions about whether a child referred through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a victim of modern slavery—and therefore entitled to vital support services.

Nationally, the pilot has already demonstrated significant impact, reducing average decision times from 471 days to just 101 days. By placing decisions in the hands of professionals who know the child and their circumstances best, the scheme ensures timely access to specialist care and protection.

As part of the pilot, each participating area is required to appoint a dedicated NRM Coordinator. Shropshire Council is pleased to confirm that George Davies ([george.r.davies@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:george.r.davies@shropshire.gov.uk)), former Young People's Drugs and Alcohol Advisor, will take on this key role.

Andy Hall, Shropshire Council's cabinet member for children and education, said:

*"As an Outstanding local authority for children's services we are always seeking to further develop our services and improve outcomes for children."*

*"We recognise the learning from other pilot authorities and, in particular, the shortened timescales for decision making for conclusive grounds decisions for children and young people following completion of the NRM referral. This can only be a positive factor when seeking to minimise and address the impact of harm for a young person when they have suffered harm and abuse through modern slavery."*

*"We remain resolute in supporting these young people in any way we can, and will work with our local partners to achieve this. The pilot offers a unique opportunity to take the leading role in decision making for these young people."*

The pilot supports the Government's wider Plan for Change, which includes eliminating the NRM case backlog and improving outcomes for victims of modern slavery.

Shropshire Council looks forward to working closely with partners across health, education, police, and the voluntary sector to ensure the success of this initiative and to advocate for its national rollout.

The NRM process have not changed and practitioners are encouraged to continue to use Complete NRM Referral to submit NRM applications to the Single Competent Authority (SCA)/Home-Office.

[Council leaders welcome role in national pilot to speed up support for child victims of exploitation | Shropshire Star](#)  
[Social workers take on child trafficking cases as pilot slashes support wait times | Social Work News](#)