

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
C O U N C I L

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 000799  
Date            19 January 2017

### ***Threats made to Staff***

**Request:**

Under the FOIA can you confirm the following:

Do you have a policy/process/procedure around management of threats to staff?

Yes

If yes can I have copies of these? [Please see attached](#)

Do you record statistics for number of threats made to staff (either physical or verbal, please specify)? [Yes but we do not specify whether threat is physical or verbal](#)

If yes can you provide numbers of incidents per year for:

[Number of recorded/reported incidents of threatening behaviour;](#)

2014 -2015: 42

2015- 2016: 16

2016 current: 20

## HEALTH & SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

Corporate Assurance

Aggression at Work Procedure

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

Issue: 1

Version Number: 1

Date: 16.12.16

December 2016

Item	Process	Responsibility
1.0	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>This document is to be read in conjunction with the Aggression at Work Policy. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that City of Wolverhampton Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that 'suitable and sufficient' risk assessments are undertaken to reduce the risk to employees from verbal abuse, threats and violence and aggression at work.</li><li>• Ensure all risk assessments relating to aggression are reviewed on a regular basis, especially where they involve lone working and/or out of normal working hour visits.</li><li>• Provide a suitable forum where employees who may be exposed to aggression are able to raise concerns regarding their personal safety.</li><li>• Provide and maintain systems to support and protect employees, such as, mobile phones, Lone Working Device, Microsoft Outlook and the Potentially Violent Persons Register (PVPR).</li><li>• To ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated in the workplace.</li></ul>	Manager
2.0	<p><b>LEGISLATION</b></p> <p><b>The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974</b> Employers have a legal duty under this Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees.</p> <p><b>The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999</b> Employers must assess the risks to employees and make arrangements for their health and safety by effective: planning, organising, controlling, - monitoring and reviewing. The risks covered should, where appropriate, include the need to protect employees from exposure to reasonably foreseeable violence.</p> <p><b>The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)</b> Employers must notify their enforcing authority in the event of an accident at work to any employee resulting in death, major injury or incapacity for normal work for three or more consecutive days. This includes any act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work.</p>	General

Health & Safety Team  
November 2016

	<p><b>Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996</b></p> <p>Employer's must inform, and consult with, employees in good time on matters relating to their health and safety. Employee representatives, may make representations to their employer on matters affecting the health and safety of those they represent.</p>	
3.0	<p><b>ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p><b>Responsibility – <i>the designated Manager shall;</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that risk assessments consider the potential for aggression and violence and the controls available, for example, signing in/out arrangements, undertaking visits with colleagues, provision of mobile phones, training provision and the use of the council's Lone Working Device.</li> <li>• Maintain existing arrangements in place to control and mitigate aggression and violence in the workplace.</li> <li>• Provide information and instruction to employees regarding the arrangements in place for their protection.</li> <li>• Ensure employees use the council's potentially Violent Person's Register (PVPR) before attending site and provide information to alert perpetrators to be entered onto the system.</li> <li>• Check to ensure all employees are using the Lone Working device when provided.</li> <li>• Ensure all incidents involving aggression are investigated, employees are de-briefed after the incident, given appropriate support and the incident is recorded on the IR1 form and iCASS accident/incident recording system.</li> <li>• It is the employees decision to report any incident to the Police, the manager can only provide appropriate advice.</li> </ul>	Manager
	<p><b>Responsibility - <i>the designated Employee shall;</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take reasonable care of themselves and others.</li> <li>• Follow risk assessments, safe systems of work, safety policies and procedures put in place by their employer.</li> <li>• Make full use of equipment and systems provided by the authority, such as mobile phones, Lone Working Device and Potentially Violent Persons Register (PVPR).</li> <li>• Raise any health and safety concerns relating to verbal abuse and violence and aggression in the workplace.</li> <li>• Colleagues provide mutual support to each other to maintain their safety at work.</li> <li>• Report all incidents of verbal abuse and violence and aggression in the workplace and complete the IR1 (Accident/Incident Form).</li> <li>• It will be the decision of the employee to report any incident to the Police.</li> </ul>	Employees

	<p><b>Responsibility – Safety Representatives shall;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be meaningfully consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could increase the risk of violence in the workplace.</li> <li>• Consult with members on the issue of verbal abuse, threatening behaviour and violence and aggression including guidance and support offered to employees.</li> <li>• Provide suitable support and advise to members involved in aggressive incidents.</li> <li>• Be meaningfully involved in the risk assessment process relating to violence at work.</li> </ul>	Safety Representatives
	<p><b>Responsibility – Human Resources shall;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give guidance to managers on the violence at work policy.</li> <li>• Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to occupational workplace counsellors where appropriate.</li> </ul>	Human Resources
	<p><b>Responsibility - Occupational Health shall;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support individuals who have been off sick with violence related illnesses (physical and mental conditions) and advise them and their management on a planned return to work.</li> <li>• Contact employees off-work from violence related illness.</li> </ul>	Occupational Health
	<p><b>Responsibility - the Health &amp; Safety Team shall;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support advice and guidance on all issues relating to violence at work including the provision of suitable risk assessments.</li> <li>• Ensure all incidents are recorded onto the iCASS (Accident/Incident Reporting System) and support management with investigations when required.</li> <li>• Maintain and support systems and equipment provided to protect employees, such as the Lone Working Device and Potentially Violent Persons Register (PVPR).</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	The Health & Safety Team
4.0	<p><b>DEFINITIONS</b></p> <p><b>The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines Work-Related Violence as:</b> Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or circumstances relating to their work.</p> <p><b>Aggression – Oxford Dictionary</b> Feelings of anger or antipathy resulting in hostile or violent behaviour; readiness to attack or confront, for example, 'his chin was jutting with aggression' and 'territorial aggression between individuals of the same species'.</p>	

5.0	<p><b>TRAINING REQUIREMENTS</b></p> <p>Ensure all employees are provided with ‘sufficient’ risk assessments to manage aggression at work.</p> <p>All employees need to be made aware of the risks from verbal abuse, threats and violence and aggression in the workplace.</p> <p>Where identified, employees are able to complete Personal Safety e-learning available on the Learning Hub, attend the one day ‘Dealing with Aggression Training’.</p> <p>Employees working in the Place Directorate and who support Service Users may be required to attend Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) one day training. It provides a basic introduction and covers the core components and principles of PBS. It covers the minimum knowledge that everyone should have in an organisation that wishes to implement PBS Approaches.</p>	Manager
6.0	<p><b>MONITORING AND REVIEW</b></p> <p>This procedure will be reviewed annually.</p>	Health & Safety Team
7.0	<p><b>GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION</b></p> <p>Further information can be found at:</p> <p><b>Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - Work Related-Violence</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence/">http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence/</a></p> <p><b>Health and Safety Executive (HSE)</b></p> <p>Violence at Work – A Guide for Employers -  <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indq69.pdf">http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indq69.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Unison Guidance – it’s Not Part of The Job</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2013/07/On-line-Catalogue216963.pdf">https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2013/07/On-line-Catalogue216963.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Bild – Positive Behaviour Support Training (PBS)</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.bild.org.uk/our-services/positive-behaviour-support/capbs/pbstraining/">http://www.bild.org.uk/our-services/positive-behaviour-support/capbs/pbstraining/</a></p> <p><b>Live life Safe – Suzy Lamplugh Trust</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.suzylamplugh.org/">http://www.suzylamplugh.org/</a></p>	Managers/ Employees

## HEALTH & SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

Corporate Assurance

Aggression at Work Policy

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
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City of Wolverhampton Council recognises that the possibility of being abused, threatened or assaulted at work is a frequent risk and the impact on council employees can have immediate and long term affects. Physical attacks are obviously dangerous, but serious or persistent verbal abuse can be a significant problem too, as it can cause damage to employees' health through anxiety and stress.

Both can represent a real financial cost - through low staff morale, increased absenteeism and high staff turnover. Further costs may arise from compensation payments and increased insurance premiums.

The council recognises its responsibility to ensure all reasonably practicable precautions are taken to provide and maintain working conditions and systems of work that ensure 'so far as is reasonably practicable' that employees are kept safe and healthy while at work. When an employee loses confidence to put themselves in a similar position to where they have been abuse, threatened or assaulted, they can lose the confidence to undertake their role.

City of Wolverhampton Council is not prepared to tolerate:

- Verbal or physical harassment of its employees, including racial or sexual harassment, or harassment on the grounds of disability;
- Physical assault upon employees by clients or other members of the public, either during or outside working hours, which are as a direct result of their employment by the authority;
- Attacks on, or damage to, the property of employees that result from carrying out their duties and in the course of their employment.

The objective of this document is to set Policy for aggression at work at City of Wolverhampton Council. The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) definition of Violence at Work is 'Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.'

## **Employer's Responsibilities**

Employers have a moral duty to protect employees and members of the public.

### **Health & Safety at Work Act 1974**

'Employers have a legal duty to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. The words 'reasonably practicable' mean if risks are known the employer has a duty of care to assess and manage these risks.

### **Safety Representative and Safety Committee Regulations 1977**

Employers have a duty to inform and consult with employees in good time on all matters relating to their health, safety and wellbeing.

### **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**

'Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of' -

- The risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work, and
- The risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertakings.

Employers must assess the risks to employees and any others who may be affected by their work or business, for example, contractors, customers and visitors.

### **Dynamic Risk Assessments**

Dynamic Risk Assessments refer to the assessment process that should be continuously undertaken by employees to keep themselves safe in real time during a meeting or situation. It is a duty of employees to keep themselves safe while at work.

Employees need to assess their risk to personal safety in a given situation by considering them in relation to the **framework P.E.T.T.** Any assessment of risk should include an assessment of the different aspects of the person(s) you are meeting, where you are meeting, the task you are to perform and any relevance the time might play on increasing or decreasing the risks.

**Person** – What do you know about the person? How do they appear and how are they dressed? Is the person showing signs of alcohol, drugs, stress or rapid mood swings? Is there a change to the pattern of non-verbal behaviour? Have they stopped responding to you (calm before the storm).

**Environment** – How are you able to get out of the room/flat? Do you have control of the door? Is there an escape route? Are there other people who might cause the person to perform aggressively? Are there any obstacles preventing escape (wet floors or slippery stairs)? Are there weapons or other cues to violence about? Are there safe areas you can get to? Where do you park your car (proximity to the location, will you have to reverse and street lighting arrangements in place).

**Task** – Are you enforcing legislation? Are you delivering bad news? Are you cash handling? Are you removing somebody or something?

**Time** – Is there a better time that would make the situation safer? Are there times when you feel less safe, hours of darkness, out of core hours and weekends?

In addition to considering the Person, Environment, Task and Time (P.E.T.T.) before and during a meeting and visit, the following **three factors (The 3 A's)** need to be considered when meeting a member of the public;

- Under the influence of **Alcohol (and Drugs)**
- Experiencing the full flow of **Adrenaline**
- Playing up to an **Audience**.

The annual England and Wales Crime Survey concludes that alcohol and drugs play a significant role where people are abused, threatened or attacked at work.

The aggression at work Policy is an addendum to the City of Wolverhampton Health and Safety Policy and is intended to reinforce the council's commitment to the all areas that require noise to be controlled at work. The Aggression at Work Policy must be read in conjunction with the Aggression at Work Procedure document.

## **Aim**

This policy applies to all City of Wolverhampton Council employees and any person who may be affected by the work activity conducted by the council. This includes contractors, visitors and customers. This document applies to all verbal abuse, threats and physical aggression in the workplace.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Managers**

Ensure that risk assessments consider the potential for aggression and violence and the controls available, for example, signing in/out arrangements, undertaking visits with colleagues, provision of mobile phones, training provision and the council's Lone Working Device.

Maintain existing arrangements in place to control and mitigate aggression and violence in the workplace.

Provide information and instruction to employees regarding the arrangements in place for their protection.

Ensure employees use the council's potentially Violent Person's Register (PVPR) before attending site and provide information to alert perpetrators to be entered onto the system.

Check to ensure all employees are using the Lone Working device when provided.

Ensure all incidents involving aggression are investigated, employees are given appropriate support and recorded on the IR1 form and iCASS accident/incident recording system.



## **Employees**

Take reasonable care of themselves and others.

Follow risk assessments, safe systems of work, safety policies and procedures put in place by their employer.

Make full use of equipment and systems provided by the authority, such as mobile phones, Lone Working Device and Potentially Violent Persons Register (PVPR).

Raise any health and safety concerns relating to verbal abuse and violence and aggression in the workplace.

Colleagues provide mutual support to each other to maintain their safety at work.

Report all incidents of verbal abuse and violence and aggression in the workplace and complete the IR1 (Accident/Incident Form).

## **Senior Executive Board (SEB)**

SEB is responsible for establishing and implementing this Policy, although they may delegate certain responsibilities of their authority through Heads of Service. Their specific duties are to ensure:

- Resources are available for implementing all elements of the Policy.
- Responsibilities are delegated to Heads of Service.

## **Health & Safety Team**

Provide all necessary advice and guidance to comply with this Policy when required

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Team.