

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Protection of Staff</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Personnel Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 September 2010
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	N/a

**Purpose of Report:** To outline a range of proposals to protect staff.

**Recommended Action:** Approve proposed policies and procedures set out in this report.

**Reason for decision to be taken:** to reduce the risk of harm to staff.

**Other options considered:** As set out in the report

**Key background documentation:** None

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Themes

- CPT13 - Value for Money**
- CPT14 - Effective People**
- CPT16 - Excellent Performance Management**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:

Mitigating the risk to staff safety and health

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<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2010

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### **Implications**

**Policy:** This report outlines policies to support staff in dealing with violence and aggression, lone working and clients of concern

**Financial:** none

<b>Personnel:</b>	none
<b>Legal/Procurement:</b>	none
<b>Property:</b>	none
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The measures outlined in the report should reduce the risk to staff
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment:</b>	The policy is designed to protect vulnerable staff. .

# Executive Summary

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report outlines a Policy and set of Procedures that are designed to help ensure the protection of staff.

## **2. Proposals**

- 2.1 The report contains a proposed corporate policy on the protection of staff supported by a number of procedures, on dealing with violence and aggression, lone working, and clients of concern. These can then be amended to suit local service needs. In addition a policy drawn up by Adults Services for dealing with Violence and Aggression is included as an excellent example for other services to follow.
- 2.2 The report also contains a standard risk assessment template that officers and managers can use to manage and mitigate the risks posed by lone working and dealing with violence.

## **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 There are a number of good practices operating across the Council to protect staff. The Policy and Procedures outlined in this report will help services to ensure that their staff operate safely.

# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a Policy and set of Procedures to support staff in dealing with potentially high risk issues of lone working, violence and aggression and the process the Council has in place for identifying clients of concern.
- 1.2 There are procedures covering measures to protect staff in many of the Council's Services. This report provides an overall Policy for protecting staff and a set of templates / guidance notes that should allow Heads of Service to review their existing procedures, or develop them where they are not yet in place.
- 1.3 The report covers the following areas and sets out or refreshes policies for:
  - (1) An overall policy for protecting staff
  - (2) Violence at work procedure
  - (3) Lone Working procedure
  - (4) Clients of concern procedure
  - (5) Guidance on risk assessing Lone Working.
- 1.4 Each of these is designed as a high level Council wide policy that will need tailoring for the different services across the Council. The procedure prepared by Adults Services is included as an example of an effective service specific policy for handling Clients with "Challenging Behaviour".
- 1.5 The procedures are considered together as they are interrelated. The overall policy is set out in **appendix A**.

## 2. Violence at Work

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Executive define violence as "any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work." The Procedure for the Council is based on HSE guidance leaflet INDG69.
- 2.2 The Procedure is set out at **Appendix B**. One of the key proposals in the Code is to require the Council to consider taking legal action against people who abuse council staff. The Procedure is also designed to provide common sense advice on how to deal with situations where there is a possibility of violence.
- 2.3 As noted above the Procedure developed by Adults Services for their specific needs is attached at **Appendix C**, as an example.

## 3. Lone Working

- 3.1 Lone working covers a range of situations. One of the implications of lone working is that staff are more vulnerable when on their own, regardless of the function that they are performing, in particular lone working will make staff vulnerable to violence or aggression.

3.2 A Procedure has been developed for the Council based on HSE guidance note INDG73. The Procedure is designed as a template from which services can develop their own guidance for their own specific needs. The Procedure is attached at **Appendix D**, and contains basic common sense advice on dealing with the risks of lone working.

#### **4. Clients of Concern**

4.1 A key risk for the Council is that one service may be aware of a client who poses a threat to Council Officers and yet staff in another service may not be aware, visit that client and be harmed. Consequently the Council has developed a policy and procedure to ensure the sharing of information about clients who are felt to pose a threat to Council Officers.

4.2 The Procedure has been in place for some time now, but the development of sharing information was slow. However, the procedure is now in place and being rolled out to all services. A copy of the Procedure is at **Appendix E**

4.3 The details of clients of concern are now being recorded on a register held on the Intranet so that they are available for any member of staff who needs to visit a client in their home.

#### **5. Risk Assessment for dealing with Violence / Aggression / Lone working**

5.1 A key mechanism for minimising the risk to staff is ensuring that a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment has been carried out. Given the wide variety of services that the Council delivers and the range of situations that Council staff may find themselves in it is difficult to be prescriptive about measures to protect staff. The Risk Assessment process is designed to be tailored to specific situations.

5.2 A copy of a standard risk assessment template is attached at **Appendix F**. This aims to help staff and managers to tease out risks and identify ways of mitigating those risks.

#### **6. Recommendations**

6.1 All of the above fall under the requirements of the Council's H&S Policy and Strategy. The H&S Policy sets out the responsibilities of managers and in particular Heads of Service to take ownership of the management of H&S. It is critical that Directors work with their Heads of Service to ensure that the policies and procedures set out in this report are implemented.

6.2 Heads of Service need to apply the policies and procedures, in particular the clients of concern register needs to be used and updated and appropriate risk assessments carried out.

6.3 Heads of Service must review the needs of their staff and if required develop or amend existing procedures to ensure that they fit the overarching Council Policy. Heads of Service should ensure that their procedures are reviewed by the H&S team to ensure they meet H&S requirements.

6.4 The H&S Team need to continue to support Heads of Service implement these procedures and in due course will need to audit their implementation.

## **Appendices**

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Appendix A – Policy for the protection of staff and customers

Appendix B – Procedure for dealing with violence / aggression

Appendix C – Older Peoples Service Policy for dealing with violence and aggression

Appendix D - Procedure for Lone Working

Appendix E – Procedure for dealing with Clients of Concern

Appendix F – Risk Assessment Template for Violence / Aggression / Lone Working

## **Consultees**

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**Local Stakeholders:** Not consulted

**Officers Consulted:** Corporate Board

**Trade Union:** Unison