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# Personal Safety of Staff Policy

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*This Policy is not for publication externally*

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## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The Council, as an employer, has a duty of care to its employees, including the provision of a safe working environment in which risks to their health and welfare are removed or minimised. All employees have a duty to ensure that they work in a safe way and do not act in a way that would compromise the safety of others.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees of the Council are protected, as far as possible, from risks to their health, safety and welfare arising in the course of their work from customers, clients and members of the public.
- 1.3. Whilst all employees are entitled to a safe working environment, there is an underlying principle that people who behave in ways that are challenging are entitled to receive the same standard and quality of service as anyone else.
- 1.4. The Personnel Committee have approved the Protection of Staff Policy.

## **2. Applicability**

- 2.1. This Policy applies to:

- 2.1.1. All non-school based employees working for the Council, including those working from home or at non-Council locations.

- 2.1.2. Other persons including Elected Members, consultants, agency staff and contractors working for the Council, and external organisations working with the Council, whilst engaged on Council business .

- 2.2. It is the responsibility of each employee and other person mentioned in Section 2.1.2 to familiarise themselves with and adhere to this Policy.
- 2.3. This Policy has been the subject of consultation with Heads of Service and Trade Unions and has been ratified by the Council's Corporate Board.

## **3. Policy**

It is the Policy of the Council to ensure that;

- 3.1. All employees are provided with a safe working environment in which they are entitled to work free from actual or threatened violence or aggression.
- 3.2. Risk assessments are completed where employees are potentially exposed to violence and/or aggressive behaviour in the course of, or as a result of, their work
- 3.3. All reasonably practicable steps are taken identify and minimise or reduce the risks that are inherent in certain duties required of staff.
- 3.4. Appropriate training is provided and that, for staff identified as being at risk of violence in circumstances related to their employment, training will be mandatory.
- 3.5. Adjustments are made to the physical workplace or to working practices to remove or minimise the risk of injury in the event of violence or aggression occurring.

- 3.6. A register of Council clients or members of the public who are considered to pose a health and safety risk to employees ('Clients of Concern') is maintained and accessible to all staff who may be put at risk by contact with them.
- 3.7. All incidents of violence, aggression or threats involving staff are treated seriously. Violent incidents are reported to the Police.
- 3.8. Support is provided to any member of staff who is assaulted whilst carrying out his/her official duties, or where the assault takes place outside his/her official duties but where the assault arises from a connection to the Council.
- 3.9. Assaults on a member of staff away from the normal 'work' premises are the concern of the Council if it arises in the direct course of that person's employment.
- 3.10. All Heads of Service develop and maintain service-specific risk assessments and procedural guidance for handling violence and aggression and for lone working (where relevant) and review them regularly to ensure they are fit for purpose and comply with the requirements of this Policy and the associated guidance notes.
- 3.11. All incidents of actual or threatened violence or aggression against staff are recorded on the Council's Webrisk system.

#### **4. Implementation**

- 4.1. This Policy will be supported and implemented by the development and publication of corporate procedures and guidance on preventing and handling actual or threatened violence and aggression, lone working, and the clients of concern register.
- 4.2. Local procedures and guidance which address service-specific risks and working practices will be developed and maintained by Heads of Service.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.1. The overall responsibility for Protection of Staff policy within WBC rests with the Health and Safety team in conjunction with Human Resources. They are also responsible for maintaining this Policy, for reviewing all related policies and procedures and for providing advice and guidance on their implementation.
- 5.2. The responsibility for day-to-day management of protection of staff throughout West Berkshire Council rests with every Head of Service and his/her managers.
- 5.3. All managers are directly responsible for implementing this Policy and any sub policies and procedures within their service areas, and for the adherence of their staff and others (2.1.2).
- 5.4. All personnel detailed at 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 have an individual responsibility to adhere to this Policy and any relevant procedures.

#### **6. Failure to comply with WBC Protection of Staff Policy**

- 6.1. This document provides staff and others with essential information regarding protection of staff and sets out conditions to be followed. It is the responsibility of all

to whom this Policy document applies to adhere to these conditions. Failure to do so may result in avoidable harm to employees.

## **7. Review**

- 7.1. This policy will be reviewed to respond to any changes and at least every three years or after any serious incident of violent attack being reported.
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