

# VIOLENCE AT WORK POLICY

## Introduction

The Council recognises that its employees are its most valuable resource in delivering high quality services to the community. The Council will take all practical steps to protect the health, safety and well-being of Council employees, contractors and members of the public who visit or access Council premises or services.

## Policy Statement:

This policy sets out the arrangements and responsibilities for managing the risk of violent and aggressive behaviour towards members of council staff in the course of their employment.

## Scope:

This policy applies to all employees with the exception of those employees working in maintained schools under the direct control of a School Governing Body. It does not cover incidents of violence or aggression between two employees in the course of their work but does cover employees if they are acting as a member of the public at the time of the incident (see definitions)

### School Based Employees:

Newport City Council commends this policy to individual Governing Bodies for adoption. If adopted by a Governing Body, the policy will apply to all employees under the direct control of that Governing Body

## Legislation and Guidance:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Employee Protection Register Procedure
- HSE Guidance Document INDG69 'Violence at work: A guide for employers' and other associated guidance

## PRINCIPLES:

All employees of Newport City Council should be able to carry out their work without being subject to violent or aggressive behaviour from members of the public. However, it is recognised that there are inherent risks in some work activities that put employees at greater risk of suffering from work related violence and, from time to time, situations may arise which put staff at risk of verbal abuse, physical assault or being made to feel threatened or uneasy when they are working with members of the public. It is important that these risks are managed appropriately and suitable control measures implemented to minimise this risk to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

## DEFINITIONS

**Violence:** 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work'.  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg69.pdf>

**Employee:** Any person employed directly by Newport City Council or working on their behalf (e.g. agency staff)

**Member of the Public:** Any person not employed by the Council, including school pupils (and their parents) and service users.

**Employee acting as a Member of the Public:** Any person who is employed by NCC but who is not actively working at the time of an incident where they are the aggressor/perpetrator.

### **Violence/Aggression/Violent**

**Incident/Aggressive Incident:** Terms which are used to denote incidents where an employee suffers from verbal or physical abuse or aggression, actual physical violence, threats to harm individuals or property (with or without weapons), non-specific threats (e.g. of 'repercussions') or any other circumstance in which the employee fears for their personal safety (e.g. knowledge that weapons are kept on the premises). This list is not exhaustive.

**Visit:** Can be a visit to the home of a member of the public, or a meeting with a member of the public in a council building or other public place

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All employees have a legal responsibility to comply with health and safety law and the provisions of this policy. Failure to do so could result in personal and/or corporate liability.

### **The Chief Executive will:**

- Be ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy within the Council.

### **Directors will:**

- Be responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this Corporate Policy and Arrangements within their service areas.
- Ensure that appropriate resources are made available for the effective operation of the policy and management arrangements.

### **Managers (including supervisors, team leaders etc.) with responsibility for staff will:**

- Ensure that this policy and relevant supporting documentation is communicated to their employees.
- Identify all posts which carry the risk of violence or aggression against the post holder(s).
- Ensure that a risk assessment is carried out for all identified posts, in consultation with the affected employees, and that appropriate control measures are implemented.
- Communicate the findings of the risk assessment and the control measures to affected employees and others affected by the assessment.
- Ensure that employees are aware of the Employee Protection Register and that appropriate local arrangements are in place to allow access to the information held therein.
- Ensure employees are aware of the reporting procedures for violent or aggressive incidents and require/facilitate the completion of Violent Incident Forms following any incident.
- Investigate any violent or aggressive incident as appropriate and ensure the risk assessment/control measures are reviewed to minimise the risk of repetition.
- Ensure that the notification exemption and management investigation sections of the Violent Incident Forms are completed following any incident.
- Ensure that employees are aware of the support mechanisms in place, should they be subject to a violent or aggressive incident, including Care First.
- At the request of the Health and Safety Team, form part of a review panel to decide whether a person should be entered, retained on, or removed from the register, including panels for employees acting as members of the public.
- Ensure that their employees comply with this policy and associated supporting documentation.

### **Premises Managers will:**

- Ensure that, where appropriate, the violence at work poster is displayed in a suitable position in their premises.

## **Each employee of the Council will:**

- Comply with this policy, guidance and any other risk assessment, working procedure or precautionary measure introduced to minimise the risk of violence or aggression towards them or their colleagues.
- As necessary access the information held on the Employee Protection Register and implement appropriate control measures before carrying out a visit.
- Inform their line manager promptly of any violent or aggressive incident and complete the Violent Incident Form
- At the request of the Health and Safety Team, form part of a review panel to decide whether a person should be entered, retained on, or removed from the register.

## **The Health and Safety Team will:**

- Communicate this policy and associated guidance documents to managers and monitor its implementation.
- Ensure that the Violence at Work policy is reviewed at least every two years to ensure it is in line with current legislation.
- Act as the system administrator for the Employee Protection Register.
- Coordinate meetings of the review panel as required.
- Provide advice and information on legislation or guidance relating to violence at work.
- Provide advice and support to managers regarding managing the risks of violence at work including risk assessment, appropriate control measures and investigation of incidents.
- Ensure that any violent incident that is reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) is reported to the relevant enforcement authority within the specified timescales.

## **ARRANGEMENTS**

Managers are responsible for the health, safety and well-being of their teams whilst in work. This will involve being able to identify any hazards to which they are exposed to and help to eliminate or control their consequences through effective management. Information on conducting risk assessments can be found in the Risk Assessment Policy and Risk Assessment Guidance.

The Employee Protection Register Procedure sets out the arrangements for the management of the EPR, how it is updated and accessed, and how information regarding potentially violent individuals/premises can be shared and utilised.

Newport City Council will identify and provide relevant training and guidance to assist Managers and employees regarding the management of health, safety and well-being. Access to training will be available through the Corporate Training Directory on the intranet. If there are no courses available, employees should use the enquiry facility which is available.

All guidance and associated documentation can be found on the intranet <https://intranet.corporate.newport/sites/live/my-wellbeing/policies-and-procedures> or from the Health and Safety Team.