



## CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### MANAGEMENT AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AT WORK

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#### INTRODUCTION

Chesham Town Council employees routinely work with the public, which can be a rewarding and enjoyable aspect of their work. However, there is a risk that this type of work can expose employees to violence. This policy aims to prevent and manage violence at work.

#### DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE AT WORK

This policy is using the Health and Safety Executive's definition of violence at work as "any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work". This includes threats and verbal abuse. Work-related violence is not limited to the work place and can take place in the community, to and from work, in isolated areas or at the home of the worker.

Violence between colleagues is not covered by this policy, but by the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

#### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Chesham Town Council is committed to managing and preventing all forms of work-related violence. All such attacks on staff are unacceptable and not part of the job; it is not the fault of an individual if they experience violence at work. At no time are members of staff expected to put themselves at risk to protect Council money or property. In the event that violence occurs, the Town Council will provide its employees with the support that they need.

#### PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF VIOLENCE AT WORK

##### 1. Assessing the Risk

The risk of work-related violence will be assessed as part of the Council's risk assessment programme. The assessment process will identify the hazards and also which groups of employees are likely to be most at risk of work-related violence. Where risks are identified, these will be removed. If it not possible to eliminate the risks, comprehensive strategies will be put in place to control them.

The risk of work-related violence is often foreseeable, e.g. where previous incidents



have occurred. Therefore, the Town Council has a system of reporting incidents in place and encourages all employees to report any incident of work-related violence to their line manager. The incident will be recorded using the Council's "Report of a Dangerous Incident/Occurrence" form, which will be stored securely by the line manager and a copy will be supplied to the Town Clerk.

The following information will be gathered as a minimum:

- An account of what happened
- The circumstances in which the incident took place, including details of the victim, the assailant and any witnesses, plus details of the location of the incident
- The outcome, including working time lost to the individual affected and the organisation as a whole

The Town Clerk will review the completed "Report of a Dangerous Incident/Occurrence" forms annually to identify any patterns of concern and work with the relevant line managers to reduce the risk of violence.

## **2. Training and Procedures**

Training is not a substitute for safe systems of work, but it can help to reduce work-related violence. Training must be appropriate for the risk and particular circumstance, making it ineffective to provide the same training to all staff. The training needs of each employee will be assessed as part of the annual appraisal process, in line with the Council's Training Policy. However, suggestions for training are welcome at any time and employees should approach their line manager with training requests.

All employees will be made aware of the specific arrangements for the protection of staff and the prevention of violence in their department, which are based upon their local risk assessments. All employees will be made aware of the procedures to follow if an incident occurs, as specified in the Emergency Action Procedures for their department.

Line managers may withdraw their department's services from a violent service user following an assessment of the level of risk.

### **WHEN A VIOLENT INCIDENT HAS OCCURRED**

After a violent incident has occurred, the affected individual must immediately report the incident to their line manager. Should the individual concerned feel unable to report the incident to their line manager, they can alternatively make a report to the Town Clerk or the Policy and Projects Officer. First Aid equipment is available in all council buildings and vehicles should it be required. The individual will be encouraged to seek medical advice in the event of an injury.



Any violent incident involving physical assault and/or injury must be reported to the Police immediately.

The incident should be recorded as soon as possible using the “Report of a Dangerous Incident/Occurrence” form and a copy supplied to the Town Clerk. An Accident Reporting form should also be completed in the event of an injury. Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) the Town Council must report all incidents involving physical violence on employees that result in death, major injury or absence from work for more than seven days.

The individual’s line manager is responsible for ensuring that they are provided with the appropriate level of support. This may include the provision of independent counselling, regular meetings with their line manager to discuss any problems, or offering alternative duties for a set period.

### **REVISIONS**

The policy will be reviewed every four years. In the event that an incidence of violence at work is reported, Chesham Town Council will take the opportunity to examine its policy, procedures and working methods to see if they can be improved.

Version 1 Adopted: 15 February 2016

Policy Due for Review: February 2020

