

MESSINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's policy and procedures to prevent, manage and respond to work-related violence. The Council will not tolerate any instances of work-related violence, including verbal abuse to our staff. No member of staff will be blamed for an instance of work-related violence caused by a member of the public. All staff have the right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect.

This policy applies to all Staff including Councillors, Volunteers and Contractors.

Definition of work-related violence

The Council will define work related violence as; any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of his/her employment. This is based on the Health and Safety Executives definition.

Responsibilities

These relate to all members of staff and other personnel who work on these premises, or have responsibilities relating to them.

The Council

The Council has a responsibility to implement this policy and to make sure their staff are aware of it and understand it. The Council should also:

- Treat any reports of work-related violence, threats or abuse seriously and respond to them promptly.
- Record details of the incident and give all employees involved in the incident full support during the whole process. The Council will also respond and consider seriously any suggestions made by staff about how to improve violence prevention and management, and give feedback to staff about their suggestions, including whether it will be taken forward and if not, why not.
- Set a positive example by reporting all incidents of violence and abuse and not tolerating abusive behaviour from customers and members of the public.
- Respond to and, where possible, resolve incidents, ideally before they escalate.
- Monitor incidences of violence and abuse and initiate appropriate action if more measures are needed. Review and amend this policy and the risk assessment as necessary.
- Where possible, direct staff to appropriate support and advice after an incident has occurred. Encourage other staff members to support their colleagues, including those that might have witnessed the incident. If victims are particularly traumatised by the event, provide support where possible, such as time off work or changes to their tasks.
- If an investigation is needed, work with the police and offer any assistance needed to help in their enquiries.

The Parish Council has a responsibility to act in a way that does not incite or increase the likelihood of violence. They also have a responsibility to respond to any reports of violence.

Staff

All staff have personal responsibility for their own behaviour and for ensuring that they comply with this policy.

There are a number of things that staff can do to help prevent work-related violence:

- Be aware of the Council's policy and comply with it.
- Offer good customer service and be aware of customer needs.
- Do not act in a confrontational manner.
- Avoid risk and remove yourself from the area as soon as possible.
- Recognise the potential for work-related violence and take action to resolve it early on.

- Don't accept instances of work-related violence directed towards you or others. Staff should report any instances of violence, threats or abuse, including any details about when it happened, who was involved and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident. All incidents must be reported in the incident book in the Clerk's office as they occur.
- Be supportive of colleagues who are victims or have witnessed work-related violence.
- Suggest additional measures to managers which might help to prevent and manage work-related violence.

Staff have a responsibility to act in a way that does not incite or increase the likelihood of violence. Any staff member found to be encouraging or inciting violence may be subject to disciplinary action.

Risk assessments

The risk assessments for work-related violence are kept in the Clerk's office. The risk assessments will be reviewed annually in line with the Councils risk assessment policy, unless an increase in the number of incidents suggests the assessment should be reviewed more frequently. The risks will be assessed by talking to staff, reviewing the incident book and considering the work environment and job design. If members of staff believe a risk factor has not been covered by the assessment or have ideas on further prevention measures, they should discuss these with the Clerk. The contents of the risk assessment will be communicated to all staff and appropriate training will be given.

Prevention and management measures

The Council will implement suitable and sufficient prevention and management measures as highlighted in the risk assessment and violent confrontation guidelines.

Specific and relevant policies

All staff should be aware of the Councils specific risk assessment relevant to the appropriate position, Violent confrontation policy and Zero Tolerance policy.

Actions following an incident

If a staff member is being abused, threatened or attacked, they should approach the Council for help. The Council should respond to the situation by talking to the perpetrator, explaining that their behaviour is not acceptable and try to resolve the problem.

Medical assistance should be provided immediately where required.

The police should be informed of a serious incident involving physical attack or serious cases of threatening or verbal abuse. Police should also be informed of persistent cases of violence, threats and abuse

All incidents should be recorded in the incident book / completion of violent incident report form as soon as possible after the incident.

The Chairman of the Parish Council and the Chairman of the Personnel committee should be informed.

The Council should provide support to victims of violence, threats or abuse through appropriate training and where needed, allowing time off work for individuals to recover.

Review dates

This policy should be reviewed yearly when all other policies are reviewed, or if regular or serious incidents arise that suggest it needs to be revisited.

Reporting and recording systems

Staff have a responsibility to report incidences of work-related violence, including threats and verbal abuse, to the Council. All incidents, including physical attacks, serious or persistent threats and verbal abuse, will be recorded in the incident book in the Clerk's office. This asks for details of when the incident occurred, who was involved, descriptions of the perpetrator and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident.

If the Council notices an increase in reports, several reports within a short period or reports about the same perpetrator, the Council should ask staff for more information and take action. The action may include contacting the police about a persistent offender, reviewing the risk assessment and considering further prevention measures, or increased vigilance by the Council or staff to prevent a more serious incident occurring.

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| Date Policy Adopted | 21 June 2021 | Minute reference | 1591 37b) |
| Date of Last Review | 12 May 2025 | Minute reference | 1874 11p) |
| Date of Next Review | May 2026 | | |

Violent Incident & Challenging Behaviour Report Form

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Date and time of report | |
| Date and time of incident | |
| Person report and position | |

Details of Incident

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|---|
| Details of person(s) involved: (include age, sex, position) |
| Activity/task at time of incident: |
| Type of incident: (physical injury, verbal abuse, sexual/racial abuse, threatening behaviour, damage to personal/other property) |
| Location of incident: (attach a sketch if possible) |
| Outcome: (assailant apprehended, police called / Crime No., medical assistance required, first aid treatment required, lost time, emotional shock or distress, legal action initiated) |
| Relevant events which preceded the incident and possible contributing factors: |
| Details of witnesses: (name and address, attach a signed statement if possible) |
| Other relevant information: (include possible preventative/remedial actions) |

Details of the offender

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Sex | Male / Female |
| Race | |
| Age | |
| Height | |
| Weight | |
| Build | |
| Glasses | Yes/No |
| Facial hair | |
| Eyes | |
| Hair | |
| Tattoos | Yes/No Any description: |
| Scars / Marks | |
| Clothing | |
| What was said | |
| Accent / distinguishing features of voice | |

Vehicle description

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Colour | |
| Registration number | |
| Make | |
| Model | |
| External features | |
| Interior features | |