

## **County Council - 17 December 2019**

### **Item 12(d) - Notice of Motion by Mr Edwards**

#### **Abuse of Members and Staff – Briefing Note**

The County Council has measures in place to ensure the safety of its staff. It issues corporate guidance on the management of risk from violence and aggression while at work. Training is given to staff who are most likely to come into contact with members of the public who may be aggressive or abusive. It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that staff receive adequate training and support, through undertaking risk assessments for a wide variety of scenarios. A lone-working guide is also made available to staff.

The County Council has an online accident/incident reporting system for staff and any instances of physical aggression, verbal abuse or threats (however received) by staff members connected with their work must be recorded. The County Council does not keep a separate register of people who have been aggressive or abusive to staff.

On induction, members of the County Council receive general guidance on social media good practice and receive links to the Local Government Association's guidance on member safety. Historically, members of the County Council have not experienced or reported many incidences of abuse or malicious communication. In recent years, there has been more national coverage of abuse against politicians. Members of Parliament now receive Police advice on personal safety.

The County Council has a policy of removing or limiting the points of contact available to members of the public who persistently misuse lines of communication – including those who do so maliciously. More serious instances will be reported to the Police.

Members' personal contact details are published on the County Council's website and within the Register of Interests. In any case where a member believes that they are at risk because of the publication of their address, the Director of Law and Assurance can be asked to withdraw their personal contact details from the public domain.

**Tony Kershaw**

Director of Law and Assurance