



36/26

Aggressive, Violent and Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how the Council will manage aggressive, abusive, threatening or otherwise unacceptable behaviour from members of the public. It aims to protect staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors while ensuring fair access to services.

Somercotes Parish Council believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expect all councillors, officers and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the council.

This policy should be read alongside the Council's Grievance Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, and Councillor Code of Conduct.

Somercotes Parish Council is committed to creating a working environment where all council employees, councillors, contractors and others who come into contact with us in the course of our work, are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. We aim to create a workplace where there is zero tolerance for harassment and bullying.

In support of this objective, the Council has signed up to the Civility & Respect Pledge, as a commitment to civility and respect in our work, and politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Further information about the Civility and Respect Pledge is available from [NALC](#) & [SLCC](#).

We recognise that there is a continuum where unaddressed issues have the potential to escalate and become larger, more complex issues and this policy sets out how concerns will be managed however the emphasis of this policy is on resolution and mediation where appropriate, rather than an adversarial process.

This document:

- explains how we will respond to complaints of bullying or harassment;
- ensures that we respond sensitively and promptly; and,
- supports our employees in ensuring their behaviour does not amount to bullying and/or harassment by giving examples.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all interactions with the public, including but not limited to:

- Face-to-face contact
- Telephone calls
- Emails and letters
- Social media and online communication
- Council buildings, events, meetings and site visits

3. Definitions

3.1 Aggressive or Abusive Behaviour

Behaviour that causes staff to feel threatened, intimidated or abused, including:

- Shouting, swearing or verbal abuse

- Threats of violence
- Physical aggression
- Discriminatory or derogatory remarks
- Intimidating body language or gestures

3.2 Unreasonable Behaviour

- Excessive or repetitive contact
- Unreasonable demands
- Inflammatory or defamatory statements

3.3 Hate Incidents

Abuse based on protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Staff

- Use de-escalation techniques
- Follow safety procedures
- Report all incidents

4.2 Managers

- Ensure staff training
- Maintain incident logs
- Apply sanctions consistently

4.3 Council Leadership

- Promote a zero-tolerance culture
 - Provide resources for staff safety
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5. Managing Incidents

Wherever feasible, and provided that staff and members feel confident and supported, the following steps should be diligently followed. However, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, these steps may be adapted and do not necessarily have to be followed in the specified order.

5.1 Verbal Warning

Staff may issue a clear warning such as:

"I want to help you, but I cannot continue this conversation while you are being abusive."

5.2 Ending the Interaction

If behaviour continues, staff may end the interaction and withdraw.

5.3 Written Warning

A formal letter outlining unacceptable behaviour and expectations.

5.4 Restrictions or Bans

The Council may impose immediately without following previous steps:

- Contact restrictions (email only)
- Time-limited bans from premises
- Permanent bans for severe incidents

5.5 Police Involvement

Police will be contacted if violence, threats or criminal behaviour occurs.

6. Recording and Reporting

All incidents must be recorded with:

- Date, time and location
- Behaviour observed
- Exact words used (if abusive)
- Staff involved

- Witnesses
 - CCTV reference (if applicable)
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7. Equality Considerations

The Council will consider whether behaviour may be linked to disability or vulnerability, while prioritising staff safety.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every four years or after serious incidents.

DRAFT LETTER TEMPLATE

Notice of Restriction / Ban From Somercotes Parish Council Premises and Services

I am writing to inform you that Somercotes Parish Council has reviewed the incident that occurred on [date] at [location], during which your behaviour was recorded as [brief factual description of behaviour].

This behaviour was assessed as unacceptable under the Council's Reasonable Behaviour Policy, as it involved:
[Verbal abuse / threats / intimidation / physical aggression / discriminatory remarks / unreasonable persistence]

The Council has a legal duty to protect its staff, councillors, volunteers and members of the public. After reviewing the incident, the Council has determined that restrictions are necessary to ensure safety and prevent further disruption.

Restriction / Ban Being Imposed

Effective immediately, the following restriction applies:

- ☐ Full ban from all Somercotes Parish Council premises
- ☐ Ban from [specific building/event] only
- ☐ Time-limited ban until [date]
- ☐ Contact restrictions (email only / written correspondence only)
- ☐ Other restriction: [specify]

You must not enter [premises] or attempt to contact staff or councillors in any way other than the method specified above.

If you breach this restriction, the Council may take further action, including contacting the police.

Reason for the Decision

This decision has been made because:

- The behaviour posed a risk to staff or councillor safety
- The behaviour caused significant disruption to Council business
- The behaviour breached the Council's zero-tolerance policy

A factual record of the incident has been retained.

Alternative Ways to Contact the Council

You may continue to contact the Council using the following method:

[Email address / postal address]

All communication must remain respectful and appropriate. This restriction will be reviewed on [review date]. You may submit a written request for review if you believe the restriction is no longer necessary.

Risk Assessment – Lone Working

Revision: 01

Date Assessed: June 26

Assessor: Tina Crookes

Task: Lone Working / Site Visit / Public-Facing Task

Description of Task Being Performed

Lone working undertaken by council staff, councillors, volunteers or contractors, including opening/closing buildings, site inspections, public-facing duties, event setup, and travel within the parish.

Who is at Risk?

Employees

Members

Key: Likelihood (L): 1 Unlikely 2 Possible 3 Likely 4 Probable 5 Certain Severity (S): 1 Minor 2 Moderate 3 Major 4 Serious 5 Catastrophic Risk Rating (R = L x S): 1-4 Low 5-12 Medium 15-25 High		Before control				After control		
Hazard	Resultant effect(s)	L	S	R R	State control measures to be put in place and by whom	L	S	R R
Violence, Aggression or Threatening Behaviour	Lone worker encountering aggressive or unpredictable individuals Physical harm, intimidation, inability to escape	2	2	4	Staff briefed in de-escalation Lone worker may withdraw immediately No lone working in known high-risk areas Aggressive, Violent and Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy Door access system in place	2	2	4
Medical Emergency While Alone	Lone worker becomes ill or injured Delayed treatment, worsening condition	1	2	2	Lone worker app/device active First aid kit available General whereabouts known by other staff	1	2	2
Slips, Trips, Falls	Uneven ground, poor lighting, weather Injury, inability to summon help	2	2	4	Adequate lighting Maintain clear access/egress	2	2	4
Public Interface Risks	Working in public areas Confrontation, collision, obstruction	1	1	1	High-visibility clothing Barriers/cones where needed Maintain situational awareness Withdraw if unsafe	1	1	1
Vehicle Breakdown / Road Traffic Incident	Travelling alone Stranding, exposure, injury	2	2	4	Weather checks First aid kit in vehicle Tools locked away	2	2	4

					Vehicles maintained Phone access			
Working at Height (If Unavoidable)	Ladders, platforms Falls, injury, inability to summon help	2	3	6	Request additional support from other staff Ladders visually checked Weather assessed Area cordoned off Only trained staff use equipment	2	1	2
Environmental Hazards	Poor lighting, isolated areas, weather Injury, entrapment, exposure	2	2	4	Avoid after-dark lone working Ensure safe access/egress Clerk notified of location General whereabouts known by other staff	2	1	2

Residual Risk Rating

Low– risks reduced through controls but cannot be fully eliminated.