

## **The Security of Members of the Council and officers when meeting with members of the public**

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### **REASON FOR ITEM**

To enable the Committee to gather evidence as part of their mini review into the security of Members of the Council and officers when meeting with members of the public.

The Council's Facilities Manager will provide a paper on the details of the existing security measures which are carried out in the Civic Centre and information relating to Ward surgeries.

### **OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE**

1. Question the Council's Facilities Manager and exchange views and experiences which Members have encountered.
2. Highlight issues for further clarification and investigation
3. To make a note of possible recommendations for the review

### **INFORMATION**

1. At this Committee's last meeting held on 9 February 2011, Members agreed to undertake a short review to look at the measures which could be introduced to ensure the safety of individuals when meeting with members of the public at the Civic Centre.
2. There have been recent occurrences where both Members of the Council and officers have been threatened by members of the public. The safety and well being of Members of this Council and officers should be of paramount importance and procedures need to be put in place to ensure their safety is not compromised.
3. Attached is a draft scoping report (**Appendix A**) for Members which highlights some of the issues. Members are asked to comment on the scoping report and this can be updated at the meeting during discussions.
4. The Council's Facilities Manager, Steve Smith will attend the meeting and provide details of the existing security which is in place at the Civic Centre and the guidance and advice that both Members of the Council

and officers receive when meeting on their own with members of the public. A briefing paper will be sent out to Members on the existing security at the Civic Centre.

5. Another facet to the review could be looking at Ward Surgeries which all Members of the Council hold with their constituents, outside the Civic Centre. Details on the security arrangements and personal safety procedures which are put in place by the Political Groups on the Council will be reported at the meeting.
6. This review will require input from Members on their personal experiences of any security issues which have arisen whilst they have been meeting with members of the public, and their suggestions on areas which could be improved.

## **PAPERS WITH THE REPORT**

Draft Scoping Report (Appendix A).

**CORPORATE SERVICES & PARTNERSHIPS  
POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

**2010/11**

**REVIEW SCOPING REPORT**

**Review title:**

**The Security of Members of the Council and officers when meeting with  
members of the public**

**Aim of the review**

To review the security measures which are in place to ensure the safety of Members of the Council and officers when meeting members of the public at the Council Offices at the Civic Centre, and in the case of Members of the Council, at political party surgery venues.

**Proposed outcome**

A report summarising the Committee's findings would be completed and presented to the Council's Cabinet. The report will examine the present procedures and arrangements which are in place to ensure the safety and well being of Members of the Council and officers, when meeting members of the public and will make recommendations on improvements that can be made simply and hopefully without cost.

**Terms of reference**

1. To look at the existing security measures and procedures which are in place both within the Civic Centre and at Members surgeries to ensure the safety of both Members and officers.
2. To examine the role of security staff within the Civic Centre, particularly in relation to providing security in meeting rooms away from the main reception of the Civic Centre.
3. To look at the procedures which are in place by the London Borough of Hillingdon to effectively manage and respond to violence and aggression within the Civic Centre.
4. To examine the advice and training that Members and officers receive in relation to dealing with members of the public on their own.
5. To examine what systems are in place to provide information to both Members and staff of the London Borough of Hillingdon on those people

who have been identified by the Council, as posing a risk to the safety of individuals.

6. To look at the Risk Assessment procedures which are in place in order to assess the potential likelihood of complaints or situation compromise arising.
7. To examine the security procedures which are in place at Ward Surgeries and to assess if there are any gaps in procedures which could put individuals at risk.
7. To make recommendations to Cabinet if necessary, on what the Council can do in relation to improving security measures and advice given to Members and officers.
8. To promote good practice, the do's, the don't and what to do if an event arises.

### **Reasons for the review**

The personal safety of local politicians and officers is important to ensure that members of the public are given access to meeting Members or Officers within the Civic Centre.

The safety of local politicians has recently been brought to light with the recent events in Arizona, United States where a Congresswoman, Gabrielle Giffords was shot when meeting with her constituents.

Stephen Timms, Member of Parliament for East Ham, was stabbed in May 2010, at a Constituency surgery by one of his constituents.

The recent issue of a Member of this Council being stalked.

The internal security measures which the London Borough of Hillingdon has in place to safeguard the personal safety of Members and officers need to be assessed to ensure that people are not put at risk when carrying out their duties.

### **Security Services**

The main objective of the Security services of the Council is to ensure the security and safety of the civic centre, the staff who work here and the visitors to the building, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

It is primarily a front of house service based in the main reception area. Other areas within the civic centre that are staffed during office hours by the security team are housing needs reception, social services mezzanine reception, the

members and multi storey civic centre car parks and the asylum team based at Weir House.

Other services which security staff carry out are:

- First aid cover in the absence of the occupational health nurse i.e. out of hours.
- Security supervision for problematic interviews.
- Keyholding and alarm response service for schools and other LBH premises.
- Security services including mobile patrols, personal security officers, security teams for short or long term contracts and dog patrols can also be arranged for events outside the civic centre.

### **Key issues**

1. What are the arrangements which are currently in place for Members of the Council or officers when they meet with members of the public within the Civic Centre?
2. Are Security staff within the Civic Centre made aware of all meetings (in all parts of the Civic Centre) which Members of the Council and officers have with members of the public?
3. What training and guidance are Members of the Council and officers given on their personal safety when holding meetings in private with members of the public?
4. Are all meeting rooms within the Civic Centre safe and secure environments for meetings to be held with members of the public?
5. What are the levels and numbers of security staff within the Civic Centre and have they easy and quick access to all meeting rooms?
6. How is the information on the Restricted Persons Register communicated to ensure that Members of the Council are aware of members of the public who have previously become verbally or physically abusive to Council staff?
7. What to do in the event of a problem.
8. What are the arrangements for security at Ward Surgeries?

### **Methodology**

The review will consider evidence from the Council's Facilities Manager and from the personal experiences Members of this Committee have had.

## Stakeholders and consultation plan

The review could consult with all Members of the Council to look at potential gaps in security which exist which could leave individuals vulnerable.

## Proposed timeframe & milestones

Meeting	Action	Comments
16 March 2011	Consideration of scoping report and review	<b>Steve Smith – Facilities Manager as witness and experiences and views of Members</b>
20 April	Final Report	