• Management of Violence, Aggression and Abuse Policy and Procedure

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**Protective Marking**

Not Protectively Marked

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1 Policy Section

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This policy, depending on the individual circumstances can apply to both the Chief Constable as the employer of Police Officers and Police Staff and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner as the employer of staff employed by them. Where the phrase “Dorset Police” is stipulated, this policy may apply to the Chief Constable or the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, or potentially both acknowledging that they are in their own right separate corporations sole and both have legal responsibilities under the Health and Safety At Work etc Act 1974.

1.1.2 Dorset Police attach great importance and is fully committed to safe guarding the health and safety of its staff. To enable it to help to provide a safe place of work, this procedure contains practical measures to reduce the risk to staff from the adverse exposure to acts of violence, aggression and abuse. Managers and staff have a responsibility to ensure that they apply these measures in their areas of work.

1.2 Statement of Intent – Aim and Rationale

The aim of this policy is to put into place reasonable practicable arrangements with a view to either prevent or reduce the adverse effect of violence, aggression and abuse to Dorset Police Personnel.

1.3 Our Visions and Values

Dorset Police is committed to the principles of “One Team, One Vision” – A Safer Dorset for You”

Our strategic priority is to achieve two clear objectives:

- To Make Dorset Safer
- To Make Dorset Feel Safer

In doing this we will act in accordance with Our Values of:

- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Fairness and
- Respect

National Decision Model

The National Decision Model (NDM) is the primary decision-making model used in Dorset Police. The NDM is inherently flexible and is applied to the development and review of all policy, procedure, strategy, project, plan or guidance. Understanding, using and measuring the NDM ensures that we are able to make ethical (see Code of Ethics), proportionate and defensible decisions in relation to policy, procedure, strategy, project, plan or guidance.
Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics underpins every day policy, procedures, decision and action in policing today. The Code of Ethics is an everyday business consideration. This document has been developed with the Code of Ethics at the heart ensuring consideration of the 9 Policing principles and the 10 standards of professional behaviour. Monitoring is carried out through the Equality Impact Assessment process which has been designed to specifically include the Code of Ethics.

1.4 People, Confidence and Equality

This document seeks to achieve the priority to make Dorset feel safer by securing trust and confidence. Research identifies that this is achieved through delivering services which:

1. Address individual needs and expectations
2. Improve perceptions of order and community cohesion
3. Focus on community priorities
4. Demonstrate professionalism
5. Express Force values
6. Instil confidence in staff

This document also recognises that some people will be part of many communities defined by different characteristics. It is probable that all people share common needs and expectations whilst at the same time everyone is different.

Comprehensive consultation and surveying has identified a common need and expectation for communities in Dorset to be:-

- Listened to
- Kept informed
- Protected, and
- Supported.

2 Standards

2.1 Legal Basis

2.1.1 The principle piece of legislation of concern is the, “Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974”. The general duties under section two of the Act require employers to provide a reasonable safe place of work and suitable training and equipment to reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

2.1.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to identify and assess significant risks which employers could be exposed to whilst at work through completion of the risk assessment process. Potential violence, aggression and abuse to staff are a potential significant risk and those role risk
assessments, which are affected, should clearly state this as a foreseeable hazard on the role risk assessment.

2.2 People, Confidence and Equality Impact Assessment

2.2.1 During the creation of this document, this business area is subject to an assessment process entitled “People, Confidence and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)”. Its aim is to establish the impact of the business area on all people and to also ensure that it complies with the requirements imposed by a range of legislation.

2.3 Monitoring / Feedback

2.3.1 This document will be monitored by: Robert Aiston, HR (specialist) Health and Safety.

2.3.2 What will be monitored: The effective implementation of this policy and the incidences of violence, aggression and abuse against Dorset Police staff.

2.3.3 This is the responsibility of The Health and Safety Unit in liaison with the Welfare Unit and the results are fed into and appraised by the Officers, Staff Safety Group (meets quarterly), the Health, Safety and Welfare Board (meets quarterly) and the People’s Board (meets quarterly).

Feedback relating to this policy can be made in writing or by e-mail to

Robert Aiston, HR (Specialist) Health and Safety Officer
Address: Dorset Police Headquarters, Winfrith, Dorchester, Dorset. DT2 8DZ
E-mail: bob.aiston@dorset.pnn.police.uk
Tel No: 01305 223724
3 Procedure Section

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Dorset Police is part of a profession, which is frequently faced with acts of non-consensual violence, aggression and abuse made against its staff on a frequently occurring basis. The Service undertakes work activities, which involve regular contact with members of the public. Whilst it is not always possible to avoid confrontational situations, there are reasonable practicable measures which can be employed which can reduce the unfortunate consequences of violence, aggression and abuse taking place. Such events could result in physical, physiological injury or both. Control measures such as adequate training and equipment or consideration made towards the design or layout of the workplace can help in reducing the risk.

3.1.2 Non-consensual violence is as the terms suggests, an act of violence made towards another person who has not consented to the act. This could be in the form of; actual physical contact causing physical harm, or verbal assault/abuse, which could lead to mental ill health issues.

3.1.3 Certain work activities like policing have long been associated with acts of violence, aggression and abuse made against police officers etc in the execution of their lawful duties. Police officers and others have been subject to personal safety training for some considerable time to try and mitigate risk of injury. Well-considered and established national control and restraint training guidelines provide for a consistent national approach.

3.1.4 Physical control measures, break away training and verbal skills training (defusing a situation) are all possible methods of preventing or mitigating the effects of violence, aggression and abuse. Training is provided in proportion to the level of foreseeable risk for each role.

3.1.5 Verbal assault whether it is direct (face-to-face) or non-direct (over the phone) can have a detrimental effect on a member of staff. Episodes can lead to anxiety, stress or being fearful of the role (lone worker situation). These can all have an adverse effect on the wellbeing of an individual.

3.1.6 Lone or remote working can expose staff to increased risks from violence, aggression or abuse.

3.1.7 One control measure of attempting to reduce the risk significantly for staff prior to undertaking visits is to check all available data records which may be held on Force wide systems. The purpose is to proactively identify whether there is any known previous history of recorded events of violence, aggression or abuse of individuals or at a property having previously taken place.

(a) Factors which can contribute to violent/aggressive behaviour

The factors that can cause a person to become violent and aggressive can be varied, but can be due to:
♦ extreme (negative) emotions
♦ frustration
♦ threatening behaviour made towards them
♦ substance use/misuse
♦ mental illness
♦ known location of stored or handling of money, valuables, controlled drugs etc
♦ over bearing environment
♦ the way in which they are treated

(b) Identifying potential violent and aggressive behaviour

There are several indicators that can signal that a violent and aggressive act is about to occur. Staff assessed at risk of violent or aggressive behaviour must be informed and instructed how to recognise these indicators with a view to possibly avoiding a violent/aggressive event. Generally, there is a loss of behavioural control which can be evident by:

♦ increased excitability
♦ reduced concentration/increased distraction
♦ fiddling with objects
♦ spontaneous emotions crying/laughing
♦ rocking, pacing, repetitive movements
♦ increased body tension
♦ wringing hands
♦ shouting/screaming
♦ slamming doors
♦ banging objects
♦ annoying other people
♦ breaking things
♦ throwing things at inanimate objects (walls/doors etc)
♦ ripping and tearing things
♦ overturning furniture
♦ thrashing around
♦ unnatural body language

(c) The consequences of violence and aggressive behavior can be:

♦ lack of self confidence
♦ insomnia and nightmares
♦ anger
♦ anxiety
♦ depression
♦ guilt
♦ difficulties performing tasks
♦ absenteeism and fear
♦ feelings of incompetence
♦ increased use of alcohol, caffeine and medication
♦ post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
3.2 Managers’ Duties (Duty Holders)

3.2.1 Managers are to ensure that where they have work activities, which could foreseeably, expose their staff to violence, aggression or abuse in their areas of responsibility, that they ensure that this significant risk is recorded using the A48 risk assessment form.

3.2.2 Managers are to ensure that all potentially affected staff are made aware of the assessment when first taking up appointment in the role, when a change to the work activity has taken place which increases the risk of violence, aggression and abuse and at the annual ‘PPP’ process. The assessment must be reviewed when a member of staff has been subject to an act of violence aggression and abuse.

3.2.3 Police officers, Police Community Support Officers and other roles are potentially or are frequently exposed to acts of violence, aggression and abuse. It would therefore be impracticable to review the role assessment on every occasion. Therefore, there is no requirement to review the assessment automatically when the act of aggression or violence has taken place to a police officer or a Police Community Officer unless, the individual’s supervisor/manager feels that there are lessons to be learnt from the event.

3.2.4 In the event that they do decide to review the event, they are to bring the matter to the attention of the ‘Officer, Staff Safety Group’ for its consideration for a corporate view. The individual’s manager/supervisor must review the role risk assessment and ensure that the appropriate ‘use of force’ and/or ‘e’ A25 form is completed and is submitted if necessary.

3.2.5 Managers are to ensure that any staff who they are responsible for and whose role has been assessed at being at foreseeable risk of violence, aggression or abuse are provided with suitable information, instruction and training by reading this policy. This policy identifies those categories of staff that have been assessed as being at significant risk from violent and aggressive acts and the level of information, instruction and training they must receive.

3.2.6 Where occasions arise where managers believe that they have staff which they are responsible for and are not listed in this policy, they are to ensure that they take the appropriate action as contained within this document.

3.2.7 Managers must ensure that they have in place brief suitable and appropriate management arrangements where they have assessed staff at being at risk from violence, aggression and abuse in addition to this policy. Any arrangements must be brought to the attention of those staff who could be foreseeable affected and that they are frequently reviewed to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

3.3 Risk Assessments

3.3.1 Role risk assessments (A48 form) are to clearly record if the hazard of violence, aggression or abuse has been identified as a significant risk of the role. It must also clearly briefly state any measures put in place for either avoiding or mitigating any risk
3.3.2 Risk assessments are to be reviewed annually (according to the Force risk assessment policy located on SharePoint), when; a change to the role work activity has taken place which increases the risk of violence, aggression and abuse, when a member of staff has been subject to an act of violence, aggression or abuse or when any other substantial change has taken place.

3.4 Abusive Telephone Call Behaviour

3.4.1 Staff that are required to deal with telephone calls made by members of the public may experience occasional verbal abuse. Verbal abuse can have a serious impact on a member of staff’s mental wellbeing and can lead to distress and anxiety and longer term stress related ill health. The caller (perpetrator) may be at a heightened emotional state because of some past event or they may feel that their call has not been dealt with in a pleasant, prompt and helpful way. They may feel that they have been kept unnecessarily waiting, repeatedly passed on or the member of staff and may not have the necessary knowledge of the organisation to be immediately helpful. The caller may feel that they have been wrongly penalized - for example, traffic fines and penalties etc.

3.4.2 Staff in such situations must endeavour to take the following action:

(i) Immediately alert their supervisor;
(ii) try to defuse the abusive caller by remaining calm and try to be politely assertive in such situations;
(iii) do not raise your voice;
(iv) listen;
(v) do not come across in an authoritative manner;
(vi) speak slowly, calmly and confidently;
(vii) always remain polite and helpful;
(viii) advise the caller that you may have to withdraw from the conversation if their unreasonable and abusive telephone manner continues;
(ix) advise the caller if the conversation continues to be unreasonable, that you may refer them on to your supervisor to deal with their concern;
(x) seek management support.

3.4.3 The following post action considerations might be appropriate in cases where a member of staff has received an abusive and upsetting etc phone call:

(i) provide immediate supervisory/management support;
(ii) Considerations towards staff taking a break away from the work area if needed;
(iii) offer sensitive debriefing as soon as practicable after the incident;
(iv) consider initiating the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which provides support for both work related issues and personal issues;
(v) consider work reassignment;
(vi) consider arrangements for taking the affected member of staff home if assessed by management that the person is seriously affected;
(vii) seek support from colleagues;
(viii) consider the need to complete a near miss/accident ‘e’ A25 form (not all events may need reporting. The need to report should be based on; the seriousness of the event, the effect that it has had on the individual, could there be lessons to be learnt and the individual’s discretion).

3.5 Ways of reducing the risk from violence and aggressive acts

3.5.1 There are many means of reducing the risk from violence, aggression and abuse.

3.5.2 The following measures must be considered:

(i) careful design of the layout of a premise/room/enquiry office;
(ii) the provision of affray alarms;
(iii) good internal/external lighting;
(iv) installation of protective screens;
(v) installation of CCTV systems;
(vi) provision of personal alarms;
(vii) provision of restricted/secure areas;
(viii) securing down of loose furniture;
(ix) provision of control and restraint training;
(x) provision of breakaway training;
(xi) provision of defusing skills training;
(xii) procedures in place if an event does occur;
(xiii) procedures in place for dealing with aggressive etc events;
(xiv) provide training on how to recognise the early signs of aggression;
(xv) use experienced staff to deal with potential or known aggressive persons;
(xvi) consider conducting visits in pairs;
(xvii) undertake visits in daylight and in a place of your choosing;
(xviii) a system of visit notification;
(xix) alter the method and route of travel;
(xx) do not carry out the visit if the risk is too great.

3.6 Lone Working

3.6.1 Lone working is defined as being a worker who undertakes work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Lone working must not occur if the risks are too great. Lone workers have a responsibility to ensure their own safety.

3.6.2 However, the employer still has a general duty so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health and safety of the employee. The employee has a legal duty to ensure that the employer’s reasonable instructions are followed and any defects in equipment or procedures are immediately reported.

3.6.3 Dorset Police employ a considerable number of staff that have been assessed as lone workers. They are at a foreseeable significant risk of either a violent, aggressive or abusive act being made towards them. Managers must ensure that where they have staff at risk from violence, aggression and abuse, that they have in place, in addition to this policy, brief documented suitable and appropriate local arrangements and those arrangements are made known to all affected staff and that they are frequently reviewed.

3.6.4 The following arrangements are to be considered:
(i) Avoid carrying out a visit if the risk is too great
(ii) Consider accompanied visits
(iii) Undertake visits in daylight hours only
(iv) Provide airwave radios or telephones (the situation may prevent telephone use or there may be a lack of coverage)
(v) Provision of covert pendant alarms
(vi) Advise office/base/control room on going to and from visits
(vii) Advise office/base/control room on completion of all visits
(viii) Check Records Management System for any known previous history
(ix) Check for any previously known incidents.

3.7 Alarm Systems (Affray Alarms)

3.7.1 There are numerous locations around the Force where the risk of violence, aggression and abuse have been assessed and could reasonably occur sufficient to justify the provision of affray alarms. The principal reason for their provision is to advise others that an act of violence or aggression is about to or has taken place and that assistance is required.

3.7.2 Affray alarms are fitted at all enquiry offices, headquarters main reception and at all custody facilities (24 hour and non 24 hour). When activated they sound a local building alarm and an alarm in the control room at headquarters. On activation of an alarm, a one-minute delay in the alarm sounding in the headquarters control room can be anticipated.

3.7.3 Instances have occurred in the past where affray alarms have failed to operate when activated by staff. Therefore, alarms are to be checked weekly to ensure that they operate correctly when activated. Managers, where alarms are provided, are to ensure that they have a suitable recording method in place for recording the checking of alarms. The monthly health and safety walkthrough form should be used for this purpose. Weekly checks can be recorded using the same form. Only one alarm trigger mechanism (alarm bar) need be checked where there are more than one alarm trigger mechanisms (alarm bars) fitted contained within a system. A different alarm trigger mechanism (alarm bar) is to be activated each week so as to ensure that all trigger mechanisms (alarm bars) are fully functional.

3.7.4 Where there is more than one trigger mechanism (alarm bar) located as part of an individual alarm system, each individual trigger mechanism (alarm bar) contained within that system is to be individually numbered and a separate one checked each week. Defects are to be immediately notified to the Building Services Unit and Headquarters.

3.8 Police Officers and Special Constabulary

3.8.1 Police Officers (both Regular and Special Constabulary) are at particular risk of violence, aggression and abuse as they are the first responders to incidents frequently involving aggression type behaviour which requires police intervention.
3.8.2 The role of Police Officers etc will foreseeably require them to restrain and arrest persons who will generally not consent to the loss of their liberty.

3.8.3 The risk to Police Officers engaged in general patrol duties facing assault through violent confrontation is assessed as low to medium. The risk to police Community Support Officers is assessed as low. Frequently, officers have to deal with people who are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs or could be emotionally or mentally distressed. They may also unknowingly have to deal with persons who are suffering from an infectious disease, parasitic condition or an ailment.

3.8.4 Police Officers and Police Staff are occasionally spat at. The risk of contracting an infectious disease through spitting is assessed as low. Satisfactory defence against such an event is very difficult and the event itself is very unpleasant and can seriously affect staff morale. The “Infection and parasitic Disease Policy” (located on SharePoint) gives guidance on the appropriate action to take in the event of such an occurrence.

3.8.5 Officers in plain-clothes roles; ICOB, MCIT, Special Branch, CID and other associated roles face specific risks. Officers in these roles are not as readily identifiable as police officers and are less likely to regularly wear body armour. The nature of their role means that they are at greater risk of coming into contact with subjects who have committed serious crimes, who face the prospect of substantial prison sentences and officers may therefore be at increased risk from serious assault.

3.8.6 Subject profiled behaviour likely to be encountered by Police Officers of potentially violent etc persons can be categorised in the following manner:

(i) Compliance – The subject offers no resistance and complies with requests.
(ii) Verbal Resistance and gestures – The subject refuses to verbally comply, or comply by their body language, non-verbally.
(iii) Passive Resistance – The subject stands/sits/lies still and refuse to move.
(iv) Active Resistance – The subject pulls away or pushes the Officer but makes no attempt to strike them.
(v) Aggressive Resistance – The subject physically attacks the Officer.
(vi) Serious Resistance – The subject commits an assault, which presents the possibility of serious injury or death.

3.8.7 Police Officers etc are taught during their initial training (IPDLP) personal safety techniques to reduce the risk to themselves of violent acts etc.

3.8.8 Police Officers (including Special Constables), to remain competent, shall attend an annual personal safety re-qualification session. These sessions will include re-qualifying staff in the application of tactics, unarmed skills and the use of Personal Safety Work Equipment (PSWE).

3.8.9 During Personal Safety Training, all officers are trained in the use of a Conflict Management Model to inform their decision making process.

3.8.10 Officers are trained to use the following Reasonable Officer Response Options:

(i) Presence – Including manner, appearance, professionalism
(ii) Communication skills – Verbal and non-verbal
(iii) Primary control skills – Empty Hand Skills, arrest techniques, immobilisation, use of Pressure Points
(iv) Secondary control skills – PAVA Incapacitant Spray
(v) Defensive and offensive skills – Blocks, unarmed strikes, takedowns, baton skills
(vi) Deadly force – Any action likely to cause serious injury or death

3.8.11 Police Officers etc. are issued with Personal Safety Work Equipment to protect themselves, their colleagues and the public.

3.8.12 Police Officers and Police Staff will only be issued with items of PSWE that are appropriate to their role and only then will they be authorised to carry and use their personal PSWE when they have completed an initial training course, undergo annual refresher training and have been assessed as competent to use the equipment. Transferees will undergo a process of familiarisation before being authorised to carry and use PSWE.

3.8.13 Police Officers will be personally issued with the following items:

(i) PAVA Incapacitant spray
(ii) An extendable friction lock baton (21” ASP) or fixed straight baton (Arnold)
(iii) Rigid Handcuffs
(iv) Limb Restraint System (LRS)
(v) A TAC vest for carriage of the above items and
(vi) Duty belt with holsters / pouches for issued equipment

3.8.14 In addition to the above, certain specified, trained and competent Police Officers (Non Firearms authorised) will have access to, be able to carry and use Conducted Energy Devices (TASER).

3.8.15 All officers issued with PSWE will, in addition, carry an Airwave radio, the purpose of which is to maintain radio contact when deployed. They will ensure that they have the authorised appropriate equipment with them at all times whilst engaged in operational duties. The only exception to this will be in the following circumstances:

(i) Prison Liaison Officers who are not permitted to carry PAVA inside the prison environment. However, they must have access to their PSWE when travelling to and from these venues.
(ii) Officers directly engaged in Level 1 surveillance where the carriage of PSWE would render the safe and effective nature of their operational deployment untenable.
(iii) Armed officers when engaged in certain plain-clothes duties where the carriage of full PSWE is not conducive with the role that they are undertaking at that specific time.
(iv) Officers engaged in specialist duties in secure premises that as a result of security requirements are not permitted by the controller of those premises to carry PSWE.

3.8.16 Depending upon their role, some officers may also be trained in the use of and be issued with disposable ‘Tri-Fold’ handcuffs. Any officer issued with ‘Tri-Fold’ Handcuffs must have in his/her possession, at the same time, an approved cutting tool for removing the handcuffs.
3.8.17 These roles include:

(i) Tactical Firearms Unit (TFU)
(ii) Tactical Entrance Team (TET)
(iii) Intelligence and Covert Bureau (ICOB)
(iv) Marine Section
(v) Air Support Unit (ASU)

3.8.18 At the discretion of the officer in command of an incident or event, PSU officers may have access to additional PSWE or specialist tools/equipment depending on the specific nature of the role they are engaged in.

3.8.19 All Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers are issued with personal issue Body Armour. The use, carry and wearing of body armour is laid down in ‘SOP Body Armour – Issue, Wear and Care Guidance’ which can be located on SharePoint.

3.8.20 Additionally, PSU officers are issued with further Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This includes:

(i) Approved boots with steel toe caps and mid soles
(ii) Protective pads designed to fit on various limbs
(iii) NATO style helmet
(iv) Flame retardant coveralls

3.8.21 Short/round and intermediate sized polycarbonate shields are also available for use by PSU trained officers in line with current risk assessments and policy for deployment at the time.

3.8.22 The following reference documents can be referred to on the subject of personal safety training etc.:

(i) ACPO Personal Safety Training Manual
(ii) ACPO Public Order Standard Practices and Training
(iii) Limb restraint guidance – located on SharePoint
(iv) NPIA Personal Safety Training 2007 – located on SharePoint
(v) Personal Manual of Guidance Safety Use of Force Conflict Management Model, Medical Implications – located on SharePoint

3.8.23 Further information can also be gained by contacting the Public Order Unit at Dorset Police HQ.

3.9 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO)

3.9.1 The role of a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) is not intended to be confrontational. Their role requires them to be one of the main interfaces with members of the public. However, it is foreseeable they could find themselves unintentionally involved in a confrontational situation through either being physically or physiologically threatened whilst carrying out their lawful duties, through coming to the assistance of a police officer carrying out his/her lawful duties or any citizen carrying out a citizens arrest using reasonable force.
3.9.2 A PCSO may find themselves in a situation where they may be of the opinion that they may need to exercise their common law right as a citizen, of having to carry out a citizens’ arrest using only reasonable force in the circumstances.

3.9.3 PCSOs will undertake appropriate training according to the current risk assessment for the role. They are to undertake annual re-qualification training. This training will include; conflict management skills firearms and edged weapons awareness and breakaway techniques. They will be advised by their duties officer when they are to attend annual control and restraint training. It is the responsibility of an individual PCSO to ensure that they make every reasonable effort to ensure that they remain in date by attending programmed training.

3.9.4 PCSOs are provided with personal body armour. They shall wear it when they believe; there is a foreseeable risk to them of being assaulted, subject to the outcomes of a dynamic risk assessment having been carried out, an operational order mandates the wearing of body armour for a particular operations/event or when instructed to by a supervisor. At all other times, if they choose not to wear body armour, they must have it readily available at their base or venue in the event of a change of circumstances that alters the threat level.

3.9.5 PCSOs are to carry an airwave radio set at all times when deployed. They must return to a station if the radio becomes unserviceable unless they are accompanied by a person at all times who has a serviceable airwave radio set.

3.10 Police Enquiry Centre (PEC) and Force Control Room

3.10.1 Staff who work at the above locations are not in direct contact with members of the public but can be exposed to the significant foreseeable risk of verbal abuse or occasional loud unwanted noise i.e. whistle noise etc., across the network. Managers/supervisors are to ensure that all staff who could be exposed to verbal abuse or occasional loud unwanted sounds have read this policy in particular paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4. Staff experiencing disturbing loud unwanted sounds across the phone are to undergo an audiometric check (hearing test) as soon as possible but within 12 hours of exposure. Arrangements should be made to the relevant HR business support team.

3.10.2 Staff are to receive training in dealing with abusive phone calls made by members of the public. Reference should be made to this policy on the subjects to be included.

3.10.3 Noise limiting devices have been installed in the telephone consoles contained in the Public Enquiry Centre. These operate at 95dB to 118 dB. All headsets used in the PEC and control room contain noise limiting devices which operate and prevent unwanted noise reaching the operators’ ears at and above 118 dB.

3.10.4 Some positions are fitted with noise limiting devices separate from the operator’s headset to provide additional noise exposure protection to operators. Managers/supervisors are to investigate all events where an operator has experienced a loud unwanted noise into their headset. Managers/supervisors are to ensure that where a noise limiting device has been fitted other than incorporated into the headset that it correctly functions. Where protection had been provided in the headset only, the headset concerned is to be withdrawn from use immediately after
the incident and returned to the IT Section for analysis to ensure that the noise limiting device functioned correctly.

3.11 Enquiry Office Staff

3.11.1 Enquiry office staff are at significant risk due to them being the main immediate point of contact for members of the public visiting a police station. The implementation of the ‘Force Enquiry Network’ has meant that enquiry office staff now deal with a higher volume of telephone calls. This means they could be exposed to the significant foreseeable risk of verbal abuse or occasional loud unwanted noise i.e. whistles noise etc., across the network. Managers/supervisors are to ensure that all staff who could be exposed to verbal abuse or occasional loud unwanted sounds have read this policy in particular paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4. Enquiry office staff frequently have to deal with people who may be aggrieved at having just received a parking fine, visiting to declare vehicle documents, meet their bail conditions etc. In addition they may have to deal with persons who may be suffering from an infectious disease or a parasitic infection.

3.11.2 Staff experiencing disturbing loud unwanted sounds across the phone are to inform their supervisor immediately and undergo an audiometric check (hearing test) as soon as possible but within 12 hours of exposure. Arrangements should be made to the relevant HR Business Support Team.

3.11.3 Enquiry office staff can be faced with the significant foreseeable risk of violence (assault), aggression, verbal abuse or spitting.

3.11.4 The risk of contracting an infectious disease through spitting is assessed as low. Satisfactory defence against such an event is very difficult and the event itself is very unpleasant and can seriously affect staff morale. The use of screens and the placing of distance between individuals can reduce the risk. The “Infectious Disease and Parasitic Policy” (located on the Force Document Library) gives guidance on the appropriate action to take in the event of such an occurrence.

3.11.5 Protective screens are presently fitted to all enquiry office counters. Staff are to remain behind the screen at all times. They should not be encouraged or enticed to leave the safety of the protected enquiry office envelope. Previous acts of violence have taken place to staff, (in one case an elderly person physically assaulted a member of the enquiry office staff who had been enticed to the public side of the enquiry office).

3.11.6 Staff are to ensure that they remain at arms length at all times when receiving any item through the parcel hatch. They must not be enticed to learn forward through the parcel hatch to supposedly hear someone.

3.11.7 Managers/supervisors of enquiry office staff are to ensure that the contents of this policy in particular paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 are implemented in their area of responsibility. They are to ensure that all staff who deal either directly or indirectly with members of the public has read this policy. They are to ensure that the guidance at appendix A is displayed prominently at each enquiry office counter. Copies of the guidance can be obtained from the Health and Safety Unit.
3.12 **Police Staff (General)**

3.12.1 Where there are roles where violence, aggression and abuse are identified within the role risk assessment as a foreseeable significant hazard, eg firearms enquire officers, warrants officers, central ticket office staff, driver awareness scheme staff, camera teams, camera enforcement team, enquiry staff, police staff investigators etc. Managers must ensure that where they have staff at significant risk from violence, aggression and abuse that they have in place in addition to this policy, brief documented suitable and appropriate local arrangements and those arrangements are made known to all affected staff and they are frequently reviewed.

3.13 **Detention Officers**

3.13.1 The role of the Detention Officer will bring them into frequent contact with detainees who will display and offer aggression/violence.

3.13.2 Detention Officers will undertake personal safety training, which includes restraint techniques, alongside their Custody Sergeant Colleagues. They are to undertake annual requalification training. It is the responsibility of the individual Detention Officer to ensure that they remain in date.

3.14 **Reporting of events of violence, aggression and abuse**

3.14.1 All acts of violence, aggression or verbal abuse which occur to Dorset Police Staff whilst at work are to be recorded and investigated by the affected person’s manager. Events are to be recorded using the ‘e’ A25 accident report form.

3.14.2 There is no general requirement to report using the e A25 accident report form events of violence, aggression or abuse taking place to police officers or PCSOs as this is a very common occurring event unless the individual suffers actual injury when the event must be reported using the ‘e’ A25 accident report form or the individual’s supervisor/manager feels that the event should be reported and recorded as the individual’s supervisor/manager feels that there are lessons to be learnt from the event. In the event that the manager/supervisor does decide to report and review the event, they are to bring the matter to the attention of the ‘Officer, Staff Safety Group for its consideration for a corporate view. The individual’s manager/supervisor must review the role risk assessment. Events taking place to all other staff are to be reported and recorded.

4 **Consultation and Authorisation**

4.1 **Consultation**
## 4.2 Authorisation of this version

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<tr>
<td>Prepared:</td>
<td>Robert Aiston</td>
<td>R Aiston</td>
<td>9/1/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality assured:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authorised:</td>
<td>Pete Channon</td>
<td>Pete Channon</td>
<td>16.1.15</td>
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## 5 Version Control

### 5.1 Review

| Date of next scheduled review | Date: 19 January 2017 |
### 5.2 Version History

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<td>1.0</td>
<td>July 2010</td>
<td>Initial Document</td>
<td>Mr. R. Aiston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Feb 2012</td>
<td>Review and minor grammatical changes. Paragraph 14.4 reworded</td>
<td>Mr. R. Aiston</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
<td>Paragraph 13.2.2. reworded to include the requirement to report events resulting in actual injuries and reformatted</td>
<td>Mr. R. Aiston</td>
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<td>1.3</td>
<td>Jan 2013</td>
<td>Reviewed to take into account second stage transfer arrangements, re-organisation of the Health and Safety Unit and minor alterations to paragraph 2.4.3</td>
<td>Mr. R. Aiston</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>27/11/14</td>
<td>The policy has been reviewed in preparation for NICHE implementation (April 2015), no changes necessary</td>
<td>Policy Co-ordinator (6362)</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
<td>9/1/2015</td>
<td>Minor rewording at Paragraphs 3.2.3 to include other roles. Paragraph 3.2.5 included referring to this policy. Paragraph 3.12.1 to include role of Police Staff Investigators. Paragraph 3.14.2 minor rewording.</td>
<td>Mr. R. Aiston</td>
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### 5.3 Related Forms

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### 5.4 Document History

Present Portfolio Holder
Present Document Owner
Present Owning Department

Details only required for version 1.0 and any major amendment ie 2.0 or 3.0:

Name of Board:
Date Approved:
Chief Officer Approving:

(HR) version January 2013
Appendix A: Guidance on dealing with aggressive/abusive members of the public at enquiry counters

1. Remain behind the screen.
2. Always remain polite, understanding and helpful.
3. Listen.
4. Avoid coming across in an authoritative manner.
5. Speak slowly, calmly and confidently.
6. Be mindful of their body language.
7. Maintain your distance at least at arms length.
8. Anticipate if spitting could be a problem.
9. Remain outside of the other person’s reach when receiving items through the side panel.
10. Advise the person that you may have to withdraw from the conversation if their unreasonable and abusive behaviour continues.
11. Do not jeopardise your safety.
12. Summon assistance/activate affray alarm.