



REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE 3 SEPTEMBER 2019

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the results of the recent Challenging Behaviour survey undertaken in schools.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (27 (c)) and (30) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the policy and practices of the Council for all employees, including teachers, in relation to the health, safety and welfare policies and practices of the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Committee is asked to:-

- (i) **consider the Challenging Behaviour Survey results from the survey of employees in schools; and**
- (ii) **note the next steps as outlined in the body of the report**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974 is the primary legislation covering occupational health and safety and sets out the Council's responsibilities as an employer with regard to ensuring the health and safety of its workforce. The Council's Health and Safety Policy Statement sets out the Council's approach to the health and safety of its workforce and this is supplemented by a comprehensive Health and Safety Management System designed to ensure the Council conducts its operations safely for service users, employees and the public.
- 3.2 As part of the Health and Safety Management System there is an infrastructure of safety committees within departments. The Central Health and Safety Committee is a joint group with representation from senior managers and Trades Unions Health and Safety Officers and representatives, chaired by the Chief Executive. The group are responsible for the strategic oversight of health, safety and welfare matters within the Council. The purpose of the group is to promote co-operation between the Council and its

employees in defining health and safety priorities, then developing and instigating measures to ensure the health and safety of staff and the minimisation of loss.

- 3.3 One of the standing items on the Central Health & Safety Committee agenda is Violence and Aggression. This topic has more recently been dominated by an increase in the statistics of violent and aggressive incidents reported within schools as noted in the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Annual Reports over the last two years. These show that following an 18% reduction in 2017, the number of incidents within schools has risen by 48% within the last 12 month period.
- 3.4 Following a violent incident within a school, employees complete an Incident Report Form and these are used to formulate the statistics which are reported corporately on a quarterly and annual basis. In addition to the management review within schools where local action is taken as appropriate, the incident forms are sent to the central Education management team where each form is scrutinised and an assessment is made of any additional central support and follow up action that may be required which is then activated as necessary.
- 3.5 Each term the statistics are considered in depth by officers from the Violence and Aggression working group to ensure that appropriate supports and actions are in place both for the pupils concerned and the staff.
- 3.6 In order to investigate any underlying reasons for the increase in incidents the Central Health and Safety Committee conducted a survey of school employees (teaching and support staff) (**Appendix A**) into challenging behaviour within schools to start to quantify the scale and scope of the incidents. A joint sub group of officers and Trade Union representatives created the survey which was sent to all school staff that came into contact with pupils including Teachers, Support staff, schools catering and janitorial staff.
- 3.6 The results with initial analysis are attached as **Appendix B**. This information will now be considered by the Central Health and Safety Committee and the Violence and Aggression working group to identify appropriate areas for improved outcomes, the actions required to achieve these, resources and timescales.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

This work supports the delivery of the priorities in the Corporate Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan in relation to providing a sustainable education service aiming for excellence and improved employee engagement and building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.

(b) Policy and Legal

The work on violence and aggression supports the council's legal responsibilities as an employer

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

The risks are as outlined in the staffing section of the report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are risks to the mental and physical wellbeing of staff from the short and long term impact of having to deal with increasing volumes of violence and aggression from pupils. As referred to in section 3.1, as an employer the Council has a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of its workforce and this includes responding to the health and safety implications of trends highlighted within management information such as that contained within the violence and aggression statistics. To leave the situation unmanaged would mean the Council was not taking all reasonable steps to ensure the continued safety of staff coming into contact with pupils as a regular part of their day to day activities.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The results of the survey indicate that a significant proportion of the violent and aggressive incidents that are reported arise from situations involving pupils with additional support needs either in schools with enhanced bases or within a mainstream setting.

(h) Consultations

The Central Health and Safety Committee, Violence and Aggression working group and Committee Services Officer have been consulted and comments incorporated within this report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Following recent increases in the number of violent and aggressive incidents against staff reported in schools, a survey of challenging behaviour has been conducted. Initial analysis has been undertaken and improvement actions are now being considered.

Author of Report: Frances Garrow, Joint Acting Head of HR & ICT / OD Manager
Background Papers: Appendix A: Challenging Behaviour Survey
Appendix B: Initial Analysis of Survey
Ref: Annual Health & Safety Report and Appendix 1, and Appendices A and B (P & R 4 June 2019)