

HR Employment Policy and Procedures

# Gender Based Violence Policy

Implementation Date: August 2023

The behaviours outlined in the ACHIEVE Framework should be reflected in the application of this Scheme.



## Document Management - Version Control

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| <b>Rationale for introduction/Driver for change</b>                           | The policy is being introduced as part of The Council's commitment to achieving the Equally Safe at Work accreditation and fundamentally to support employees who have experienced gender based violence. The policy will help to raise awareness on the subject throughout West Dunbartonshire Council. |                  |
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|                                                                               | CS Committee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                  |
| <b>Accompanying Documentation (incl. EIA)</b>                                 | EIA Gender Based Violence Policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                  |

|                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Linked Policies,<br/>Schemes and<br/>Procedures</b> | <a href="#">Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy</a><br><a href="#">Supporting Employee Wellbeing Policy</a><br><a href="#">Supporting Employee Performance Policy</a><br><a href="#">Special Leave Policy</a><br><a href="#">Flexible Working Policy</a><br><a href="#">Disciplinary Policy</a><br><a href="#">Code of Conduct</a> |
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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 West Dunbartonshire Council (the Council), recognises that gender based violence has no place in society and is committed to helping eradicate all forms of violence. The Council strongly promotes the view that gender based violence must not and will not be tolerated and will promote the right to live free from violence of any form and that the responsibility for violence lies with the perpetrator.
- 1.2 The Council is aware that women are affected by violence and abuse in far higher numbers, and the impact is more likely to cause severe harm, or result in death. One in three women globally experience some form of gender based violence in their lifetime. This is a violation of women's human rights and an enduring social problem that undermines workplaces and communities. This information has been sourced from [Equally Safe at Work](#). For the last decade West Dunbartonshire has consistently ranked in the top 3 for prevalence rates of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is a form of gender based violence.
- 1.3 The Council recognises that its' employees will be amongst those affected by gender based violence as defined in section 3. Whether gender based violence takes place within or outwith the workplace, the implications for employees who experience abuse are significant. It can have a detrimental impact on health and well-being, which may impact upon attendance, performance and productivity.
- 1.4 Furthermore, the Council recognises that prevention is intrinsically linked to addressing women's inequality in all areas of society including the workplace. This is because gender based violence/violence against women is a cause and consequence of gender inequality as the women's labour market, and economic inequality, reduces their financial independence and restricts their choices in employment which creates a conducive context for gender based violence.
- 1.5 This policy has been developed to assist and support employees who have experienced gender based violence and to raise awareness on the subject throughout West Dunbartonshire Council. Development of this policy has taken into account the recommendations of the Equally Safe at Work framework. Equally Safe at work is an innovative employer accreditation programme developed by 'Close the Gap', Scotland's national policy and advocacy body working on women's labour market equality, to address gender inequality and violence against women.

- 1.6 Therefore, the Council will strive to create a working environment that supports and helps those involved in, or experiencing gender based violence. Furthermore, the Council has an ethical and legal responsibility to:
- Take reasonable steps to promote equality and reduce the risk of gender based violence; and
  - Take action where incidents occur or allegations of gender based violence are raised.
- 1.7 The Council must, as far as is reasonably practicable, protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees at work by establishing an environment in which employees are safe to disclose their experience of gender based violence in order to access support and increase safety for themselves and others. However, the right of employees not to disclose must be respected and employees must never feel pressured into sharing this information if they do not wish to do so.
- 1.8 This policy compliments the Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy. Where there are clear cases of domestic violence or abuse, these should be addressed under the Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy.

## **2 Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to Local Government Employees, Teachers and those on SNCT terms and conditions, Chief Officers and Quasi-Craft workers.
- 2.2 The Council applies a gendered analysis acknowledging that gender based violence disproportionately affects more women than men. However, this policy covers all employees, irrespective of gender, who experience gender based violence.
- 2.3 The Council will, at all times, strive to ensure that an employee's human rights are respected and that approaches taken are in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, in terms of preventing discrimination and harassment, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different protected groups.

## **3 Definitions**

- 3.1 Gender based violence is an umbrella term that encompasses a spectrum of abuse, experienced mostly by women and perpetrated mainly by men, including: domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment, stalking, commercial sexual exploitation and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage and so-called "honour" based violence.
- 3.2 This behaviour includes physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and economic abuse. It can affect those from all backgrounds, irrespective of age, sexual orientation, race, education, culture and socioeconomic demographic.

Some examples of gender based violence that can be more visible in the workplace are:

- Domestic abuse
- Sexual harassment
- Stalking and harassment
- So called honour based violence

3.3 **Domestic abuse** – is a pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and/or violent behaviour, including sexual violence, by a partner or ex-partner. It affects women from all economic, educational, cultural, age, racial and religious demographics. One in four women in Scotland will experience domestic abuse in her lifetime, and three quarters of women experiencing domestic abuse are targeted at work.

3.4 Perpetrators of domestic abuse often use a number of tactics to disrupt women's employment including:

- Using workplace resources such as phone and email to threaten, harass or abuse them;
- Isolating them from their colleagues by not allowing them to attend social events;
- Destroying personal documents which may prevent them from applying for jobs;
- Preventing them from going to work by locking them in, or by hiding their keys or other belongings;
- Interfering with and/or preventing them from working from home;
- Preventing them from accessing equipment they may need to work from home, such as a laptop or phone;
- Offering to provide childcare and not turning up;
- Following them to and from work;
- Following them into their workplace or waiting outside for them;
- Verbal harassment or assault when victim survivors leave to go to work or at the workplace;
- Assault or threats of assault;
- Sending abusive and threatening phone calls, text messages or emails to their personal phone while at work;
- Controlling their finances to prevent them from paying for transport costs;
- Sabotaging their work clothes;
- Threatening to take their children if they go to work; and
- Contacting their employers and making false allegations.

3.5 **Coercive control** is a pattern of behaviour that seeks to take away the victim-survivor's freedom, and strip away their sense of self. It includes behaviours like, isolation, degradation, and the micromanagement of everyday life. This may include monitoring movements, phone calls, dress, social activity and other relationships. The perpetrator creates a world in which the victim-survivor is constantly monitored, criticised and intimidated. Compliance is further ensured with the threat of physical or sexual violence

- 3.6 **Sexual harassment** –is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which is intended to, or has the effect of, violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Examples of sexual harassment include unwelcome physical contact, sexual comments, inappropriate and sexist jokes, and displaying sexually graphic pictures.
- 3.7 **Stalking** - is a persistent and unwanted pattern of behaviour which causes, or has the intention to cause, fear and alarm. It's a form of highly personalised, targeted surveillance underpinned by the communication of that surveillance to the victim-survivor.
- 3.8 Stalking has a strong link to homicide and is covered by specific legislation due to the severe nature of the threat of this tactic. It is a common tactic used by perpetrators of domestic abuse, but can also be perpetrated by colleagues, neighbours, friends, acquaintances and strangers. The emotional and psychological impact of stalking can result in increased fear, stress and anxiety, and loss of safety or trust. Victim-survivors of stalking worry that it will impact their job because of unexplained or frequent absences to avoid their stalker.
- 3.9 Stalking can have a significant impact on the workplace because stalkers are able to pinpoint the location of their victim when they're at work. Tactics used by stalkers to disrupt women's employment can include:
- Preventing them from attending work by tampering with their car;
  - Using workplace resources such as phones and email to threaten, harass and abuse employees;
  - Watching or spying on them, or forcing contact with them through any means, including social media;
  - Following victim-survivors to and from work;
  - Sending unwanted gifts or flowers to their work;
  - Targeting their colleagues; and
  - Technology abuse is on the increase and this can apply to work assets.
- 3.10 **So called honour based violence** – is a form of violence and abuse that is committed to protect family and community honour. It's the belief that family and community honour is rooted in women's behaviour, appearance, and sexuality, and is to be guarded by men. It includes restricting women from doing certain things that are perceived as going against culture, family, community and religion, and can involve physically and sexually harming a woman, forcing marriage and isolating them from friends and family. It can also involve controlling finances, preventing women from learning the language of their new country, restricting movement and using their immigration status to threaten to send them away. In many cases of so called 'honour-based' violence, victim-survivors have multiple perpetrators which can include partners and family members. Women can be subject to so called



'honour-based' violence for having a relationship or socialising with someone that the family and community disapprove of, becoming too 'western', refusing a forced marriage or wearing make-up or certain clothing. Victim-survivors of so called 'honour-based' violence are also policed by members of their wider community, particularly around socialising with people from different cultures.

3.11 So called 'honour-based' violence has similar impacts as domestic abuse on women's experiences of the workplace. In addition to the impacts of domestic abuse listed above, so called 'honour-based' violence can also affect women's experiences of work by:

- Being coerced into specific occupations;
- Being coerced into not going for a promotion because it's seen as inappropriate for a woman, or because they will be expected to interact with men;
- Shaming and judging a woman for wanting a job;
- Threatening to have a woman deported or send her away unless she stops going to work;
- Preventing women from applying for a job by restricting access to a language course; and
- Spiritual abuse.

## **4 Key Principles**

4.1 This policy aims to:

- Ensure confidential and empathetic handling of situations for employees arising from gender based violence.
- Assist and support employees requesting help in addressing problems arising from gender based violence.
- Send a positive message to employees with experience of gender based violence that they will be listened to and supported;
- Provide a framework for addressing the behaviour of employees who may be perpetrators of gender based violence and who may pose a risk to others within the context of their work.
- Project a clear signal that the actions of employees who perpetrate gender based violence within or outside the workplace is unacceptable;
- Raise awareness of gender based violence as a serious health and social issue, highlighting its hidden nature and the impact on those affected by it.;
- Reinforce that West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to the principle that gender based violence and abuse is wrong and that everyone has a right to live free from fear and abuse;
- Clarify the scope for managers to interpret and apply the provisions within existing policies when responding to gender based violence;
- Create a potential cost benefit for West Dunbartonshire Council, by contributing to the reduction of absence related costs and increased productivity; and

- Improve the organisation's reputation by formally recognising and responding to gender based violence as a serious workplace issue.

## **5.0 Background and Drivers**

- 5.1 The Council is the biggest employer in West Dunbartonshire with a workforce of over 6000 employees, 74% of whom are women. According to Engender (2017) Gender Matters Roadmap: Towards Gender Equality in Scotland, 1 in 4 women in Scotland experiences some form of domestic abuse in the course of their lifetime. This therefore means there is the potential that more than 1000 of our employees have experience of some form of abuse, past or current. The Equality and Human Rights Commission reported in 2013: Managing and Supporting Employees Experiencing Domestic Abuse, that 75% of victim survivors are targeted at work.
- 5.2 The Equally Safe at Work survey of employees in early adopter councils found that three quarters (75%) of respondents had either experienced or witnessed sexual harassment in the last 12 months. Of those, the vast majority (70%) did not report it to their employer. Experiences included unwelcome jokes of a sexual nature; feeling uncomfortable when alone with a male colleague; comments of a sexual nature about a woman's body or clothes; displays of pornographic photographs or drawings in the workplace; unwelcome verbal and physical advances; and unwanted touching. Sexual harassment can be under-reported because of fear of being blamed or not being believed, feeling embarrassed, and a lack of confidence in the complaints procedure
- 5.3 Statistics show that gender based violence can have an impact on attendance, productivity and performance. Whether it takes place within or outside of the workplace, the employment implications for employees who experience abuse are significant. It can have a detrimental impact on health and well-being, which may affect attendance, performance and productivity.
- 5.4 The Council has a duty of care towards its employees meaning that we need to deal with issues surrounding workplace stress. We should also exercise this duty even where the cause of stress is in someone's private life.
- 5.5 Given the size of our workforce it is further recognised that a number of our employees will be perpetrators of gender based violence and this requires to be addressed appropriately through the application of this policy.
- 5.6 Gender based violence not only impacts on employees' ability to provide and care for themselves and their families, but it also affects the financial strength and success of the organisations they work for.
- 5.7 In the 2009 "The cost of Domestic Violence: Up-date, S Walby, estimated the cost of domestic abuse to the UK to be £16 billion, which included an estimated £1.9 billion lost due to decreased productivity, administrative difficulties from unplanned time off, lost wages and sick pay. It therefore

makes sound business sense for the Council, and all employers, to support victim-survivors of gender based violence at work.

- 5.8 The effects of gender based violence are associated with many direct and indirect costs including: arriving late for work;
- leaving work early;
  - taking time off work;
  - once a person leaves an abusive partner they are especially vulnerable at work, as it may be the only place they can be located or harmed;
  - many domestic abuse victims are targeted at work - from harassing phone calls and abusive partners arriving at the office unannounced, to physical assaults.
- 5.9 Gender based violence also affects other employees that may:
- have to fill in for absent or non-productive colleagues;
  - feel resentful of victims needing time off or receiving extra attention;
  - try to “protect” victims from unwanted phone calls and visits;
  - be completely unaware of how to intervene, often feeling helpless and distracted from their work;
  - fear for their own safety;
  - hear and/or take part in gossip and rumours.
- 5.10 Employers who fail to protect their employees from violence (e.g. stalking and harassment via text, telephone, email and in person visits) at work may be liable as we have a duty of care towards our employees. Post separation abuse and stalking are common features of an abusive relationship.
- 5.11 Employees who are abusers may use employers' resources such as telephone, email and company vehicles to make threats and stalk their victim. This is known as tech abuse.
- 5.12 The Equality Act 2010 and its associated public sector duties compel public bodies to be proactive when carrying out their functions to the promotion of equality. One of these duties is the requirement to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 5.13 Given the disproportionate impact on women and girls, gender based violence is one of the most sensitive indicators of gender equality. As such, implementation of this policy will assist West Dunbartonshire Council to meet its legislative obligations to promote equality under the Equality Act 2010.
- 5.14 As well as being rooted in gender inequality, gender based violence cuts across boundaries of ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief. This guidance will therefore also contribute to West Dunbartonshire Council's legal requirements in relation to these other aspects of the Equality Act 2010.

## **6 Confidentiality and Record keeping**

- 6.1 All disclosures of gender based violence, advice, information and support provided to an employee will remain confidential. No information will be disclosed without the express consent of the employee.
- 6.2 However, where issues regarding the protection of children or adults in need of support arise, the child or adult protection services may need to be involved. In these circumstances, local child/adult protection procedures must be followed. In circumstances where you have to breach confidentiality you should seek specialist advice before doing so from colleagues in Legal Services and the appropriate Social Work teams. If it is decided to proceed in breaching confidentiality after having taken advice, you should discuss this with the employee and seek the employee's agreement where possible
- 6.3 Where domestic abuse in a same sex relationship is disclosed, due regard should be paid to the double disclosure of confidential information particularly where the individual recipient of abuse may not have disclosed their sexual preference at work.
- 6.4 Any records will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with the Council's information handling policy and procedures. All data recorded under this policy will be held in compliance with UK General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018. It should be made clear that the recording of information on gender based violence will have no adverse impact on the employee's work record.
- 6.5 Any local records of absences related to gender based violence should be secured in a highly restricted area and password protected and there should be no adverse impact on the employment records of victims of gender based violence .

## **7 Roles and Responsibilities**

- 7.1 The Council is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment, which encourages people to report gender based violence. Alongside this policy the contact details of services who can provide support can be found in Appendix A.
- 7.2 Manager's Responsibilities
- Be aware of the possibility that employees could be affected by past or current abuse;
  - Engage in relevant learning and development opportunities related to gender based violence
  - Take a victim focused approach when abuse is disclosed;
  - Recognise potential signs of abuse;
  - Initiatite discussion if they have concerns about abuse;

- Respond sensitively to disclosure;
- Help employees to assess their level of risk and plan with them for their safety;
- Consider what workplace supports could be provided within the scope of current policy provision e.g. Special Leave and Domestic Abuse Policies;
- Provide information about other sources of help;
- Keep good records, documenting discussion and action taken, ensuring that information is stored confidentially;
- Ensure disclosures are dealt with quickly avoiding unnecessary delays; with efforts made to address any internal matters/supports required within 4-6 weeks. However, it is expected some cases will take longer because of their nature or complexity.

7.3 Where an employee feels more comfortable discussing the situation out-with their own Service, the line manager should encourage the employee to contact Strategic HR.

#### 7.4 HR Responsibilities

- Provide guidance to managers or individuals on the application of this policy and other related and relevant policies; and
- Signpost employees and managers to specialist information and support.

#### 7.5 Trade Unions

- Provide guidance to individuals on the application of this policy and other relevant policies;
- Signpost employees to specialist information and support; and
- Support employees who are perpetrators through any Council processes as appropriate.

### 8 Approaches to Disclosures

8.1 Whilst it is for the individual themselves to recognise they are a victim of gender based violence, there are signs which may indicate an employee may be a victim.

These may include:

- The employee confiding in their colleagues/manager;
- Employees may inform their manager that a colleague is suffering from domestic abuse or gender based violence;
- There may be obvious effects of physical abuse (though it is important not to make assumptions);
- It may come to light as a result of enquiries into a drop in performance or a significant change in behaviour;
- It may reveal itself as the background to poor attendance or presenteeism – where victims prefer to be at work rather than at home.

It is essential to understand that any of the above may arise from a range of circumstances of which gender based violence may be one.

- 8.2 Line managers who are supporting employee/s in such matters should address the issue sympathetically ensuring that the employee is aware that support and assistance can be provided.
- 8.3 The Council respects employees' right to privacy. Whilst we strongly encourage victims to disclose for the safety of themselves and all those in the workplace, it does not force them to share this information if they do not want to.
- 8.4 Employees experiencing gender based violence may choose to disclose, report to or seek support from a union representative, a line manager, or colleague. Line managers, colleagues and union representatives will not counsel victims, but offer information, workplace support, and signpost to other organisations. A list of support agencies can be found in Appendix A. Individuals should respond sympathetically, confidentially and effectively to any employee who discloses that they are suffering from gender based violence.
- 8.5 The Council's in house specialist services, Challenging and Responding to Abuse, (CARA), Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery, (CEDAR) and Women's Safety and Support Service (WSSS) and Strategic HR will provide an additional confidential contact for employees.
- 8.6 The Council recognises that developing a life free from gender based violence is a process not an event and employees who disclose should have access to ongoing support. Where gender based violence has been reported line managers should treat unplanned absences and temporary poor timekeeping sympathetically, in line with the appropriate policies, applying discretion and seeking advice from a HR Adviser. Line managers may offer employees experiencing gender based violence a broad range of support. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - Special paid leave for relevant appointments, including with support agencies, solicitors, to rearrange housing or childcare, and for court appointments.
  - Temporary or permanent changes to working times and patterns;
  - Changes to specific duties, for example to avoid potential contact with an abuser in a customer facing role;
  - Redeployment or relocation;
  - Measures to ensure a safe working environment, for example changing a telephone number to avoid harassing phone calls;
  - Using other existing policies, including flexible working;
  - Access to counselling/support services in work time;
  - Access to local services;

- Other existing provisions (including occupational health, independent counselling service) should also be signposted to employees as a means of help;
- Consider and approve requests for an advance of pay, supporting the employee to consider how they can manage the resulting pay deductions going forward;
- Agree that an employee can use an assumed name at work;
- Review the security of information held such as temporary or new addresses, bank or healthcare details;
- With the employees consent, advise colleagues of the situation on a need to know basis and agree the response should the perpetrator/alleged perpetrator contact the workplace or present themselves at the workplace;
- At times when the employee needs to be absent from work, mutually agree a safe, confidential method of communication and consider safety implications that may arise when working from home;
- Implement particular security arrangements that may have to be put in place to ensure the safety of the employee and colleagues.

- 8.7 Line managers should respect the right of employees to make their own decision on the course of action at every stage and should avoid being judgemental. It must be recognised that the employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try many different options during this process.
- 8.8 Managers should prioritise the safety of employees if they make it known that they are experiencing gender based violence. When an employee discloses they are experiencing gender based violence managers should encourage the employee to contact a specialist support agency and make appropriate referrals where necessary.
- 8.9 Managers can work with the employee and a specialist agency (with the employee's consent) to identify what actions can be taken to increase their personal safety as well as address any risks there may be to colleagues, taking into account the duty of care for all employees

## **9 Guidance for Employees**

- 9.1 The Council is committed to ensuring all line managers and employees are aware of gender based violence and its implications in the workplace. Information is available through completion of the Together for Gender Equality and Understanding Domestic Violence training courses on iLearn will ensure that all managers are able to:
- Identify if an employee is experiencing difficulties because of gender based violence;
  - Respond to disclosure in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner;
  - Provide initial support – be clear about available workplace support including in-house specialist employees where applicable;
  - Discuss how the organisation can contribute to safety planning; Signpost to other organisations and sources of support;

- Understand that they are not counsellors.
- 9.2 All employees of the Council have a responsibility to ensure their workplaces are safe and strive to prevent all forms of gender based violence. Employees are encouraged to respond appropriately if they suspect that a colleague is experiencing or perpetrating gender based violence. Employees may not want to discuss their experiences but concerns should be raised in confidence with a manager and where possible with the permission of the individual.
  - 9.3 Some victims of gender based violence seek help only when they feel it is safe to do so. This can be difficult for others to understand. Colleagues should offer support, where possible, but not force an individual to disclose or to follow a course of action they are uncomfortable with.
  - 9.4 Where employees have concerns that a colleague may be experiencing gender based violence either as a victim or a perpetrator they can tell their line manager in confidence. In dealing with a disclosure from a colleague, managers should ensure that the person raising the concern is made aware of the existence of this policy and supporting information
  - 9.5 Personal information about colleagues should never be divulged to others, including other colleagues, without their permission. If an employee is found to be colluding with an abuser in perpetrating gender based violence, for example, by giving them information or where the perpetrator is also an employee by giving them access to facilities such as telephones, emails etc. this will be viewed as a conduct issue and the disciplinary policy invoked.
  - 9.6 If it becomes evident that an employee has made a malicious allegation that another employee is perpetrating gender based violence then this should be considered in the context of the Disciplinary Policy.
  - 9.7 Witnessing a colleague experience gender based violence can be traumatic and employees may feel powerless or unable to help. Support can be sought from managers or from the support agencies detailed at Appendix A

## **10 Employees who are Perpetrators**

- 10.1 Where the Council has received information sufficient to believe that an employee may have perpetrated gender based violence, an appropriate manager will promptly risk assess such behaviour considering the role they are employed to do and take the necessary steps to mitigate any risk.
- 10.2 In such circumstances, the Council will investigate the facts to determine whether the disciplinary procedure will be invoked. In some cases the possibility of redeployment into an alternative role must be considered, while any process is ongoing. Where appropriate, the matter will also be reported to the police.
- 10.3 There areas listed below are some of the factors that should be considered by managers on receipt of an allegation:



- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
  - Safety of the victim;
  - Identifying areas of potential risk in the workplace and safety measures
- 10.4 If a colleague is found to be assisting an abuser in perpetrating gender based violence, their actions should also be considered within the context of the Disciplinary Policy.
- 10.5 It is a condition of employment in the Council that if an employee is arrested, charged, convicted of a criminal offence, bound over or cautioned, pending appointment to, or whilst employed in the Council's service, that they report details of the matter to a Manager or a more Senior Manager, who may decide to investigate the matter taking account of the Council's Code of Conduct. Where information on un-notified criminal charges comes to the Council's attention, this will be discussed with the employee and appropriate action taken.
- 10.6 This applies to conduct outside work (whether or not it leads to a criminal conviction) including posts or contents on social media, or while at work where an employee has used workplace resources such as work time, telephones, email or information to undertake or facilitate gender based violence against another person.
- 10.7 Perpetrators may intentionally misuse their job-related authority to negatively impact on victim survivors of gender based violence. By spreading rumours or manipulative behaviour they may influence others to assist them in locating their victims, in perpetrating acts of gender based violence or to protect themselves. It is important that the public has high levels of trust in our employees and managers should be concerned about perpetrators bringing the Council into disrepute by misusing workplace information and resources, and their authority.
- 10.8 Allegations of gender based violence made against employees could have potential implication for their employment role and could breach Council and professional codes of conduct. Depending on the circumstances of the allegations and the nature of the employee's job, this may result in disciplinary sanctions up to and including dismissal.
- 10.9 Employees may be subject to investigation under the Disciplinary Policy in the following circumstances:
- If they have committed a criminal offence, or there is evidence of assault, harassment or coercive control;
  - If they are involved in gender based violence related incidents that occur in the workplace or during work time, including making threatening telephone calls or misuse of the computer network;

- If an employee's activities outside work have an impact on their ability to perform the role for which they are employed, or are likely to bring the Council into disrepute. This is particularly relevant for those who work with the public, with children or vulnerable adults.

The above list is not exhaustive. Further information can be sought from HR.

- 10.10 Employees should not suffer victimisation as a result of the application of any aspect of this Policy. Where there is evidence that an employee has been victimised this will be investigated and addressed through the Disciplinary Policy.
- 10.11 In cases where both the victim and the perpetrator of gender based violence work in the Council Services, you should take appropriate action. In addition to considering disciplinary action against the employee who is the perpetrator, action may need to be taken to ensure that the victim and perpetrator do not come into contact in the workplace. A safety plan and/or risk assessment may be required to achieve this. Action may also need to be taken to minimise the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim. This may include a change of duties for one or both employees or withdrawing the perpetrators access to certain computer programmes or offices.
- 10.12 Perpetrators rarely self refer to support agencies. However the Council recognises that it has a role in encouraging and supporting employees to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds. Should a manager become aware that an employee has or may have perpetrated violent or abusive behaviour, they should encourage them to seek help from a specialist agency. Details of support agencies for perpetrators can be found at Appendix A.

## **11 Feedback Process**

- 11.1 Should an employee feel dissatisfied after raising a disclosure they should provide feedback by email directly to Strategic HR through the Employee Relations inbox here: [employeerelations@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:employeerelations@west-dunbarton.gov.uk).

## **12 Review**

- 12.1 This Policy will be reviewed in line with any related new or amendments to legislation or best practice as required.

## **Appendix A – Useful Telephone Numbers/Contacts**

### **Local Services**

|                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>West Dunbartonshire Council Homelessness Service</b>                                                                                                                                 | 0800 1971004<br>(Out of Hours Services)                                                                                        |
| <b>West Dunbartonshire Council HSCP (Social Work Services)</b>                                                                                                                          | 0800 811505<br>(Out of Hours Services)                                                                                         |
| <b>ASSIST</b>                                                                                                                                                                           | 0141 276 7710                                                                                                                  |
| <b>CARA Project (Challenging And Responding to Abuse)</b><br>Free and independent service that provides short to medium term support for women living with or escaping domestic abuse . | 01389 738680<br>(This number for CARA is for West Dunbartonshire Residents only)                                               |
| <b>CARA Service</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | 0141 562 8800                                                                                                                  |
| <b>CEDAR</b>                                                                                                                                                                            | 0141 562 8870                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Clydebank Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                            | 0141 952 8118                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Dumbarton District Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                   | 01389 751036                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Inverclyde Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                           | 01475 781689                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Glasgow Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                              | 0141 553 2022                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Police Scotland</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | Call 101 to report an incident or report an incident online on the Police Scotland website.<br>In an emergency please call 999 |
| <b>PAM Assist – Employee Counselling Service</b>                                                                                                                                        | Employee Helpline<br>0800 9703980                                                                                              |
| <b>Rape Crisis Glasgow</b>                                                                                                                                                              | 0141 552 3200                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Womens Safety and Support Service</b>                                                                                                                                                | 01389 738484                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Dumbarton District Women's Aid For Emergency Accommodation Out of Hours</b>                                                                                                          | 01389 751036<br>0800 1971004                                                                                                   |
| <b>Inverclyde Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                           | 01475 888505                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Glasgow Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                              | 0141 553 2022                                                                                                                  |
| <b>East Dumbarton Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                       | 0141 776 0864                                                                                                                  |
| <b>South Larnarkshire and East Renfrewshire Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                             | 01355 249897 and 0141 404 0015                                                                                                 |
| <b>Renfrewshire Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                         | 0141 561 7030                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Argyll &amp; Bute Women's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                                    | 01369 706636                                                                                                                   |

### **National Services**

|                                                                    |                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Women's Aid Federations around the UK (office numbers only)</b> | 0131 2266606<br>(Scotland) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Scottish Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline</b><br>A service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf. It is run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge. Callers may first of all hear an answer phone message before speaking to a person.                                                                                          | 0800 027 1234<br><br><a href="http://www.sdafmh.org.uk">www.sdafmh.org.uk</a><br><br>email: <a href="mailto:helpline@sdafmh.org.uk">helpline@sdafmh.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Moira Anderson Foundation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 01236 602890                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Women's Aid National Domestic Violence Helpline</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 0808 2000247                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>The Samaritans</b><br>The Samaritans is a nationwide charity which provides 24 hour confidential emotional support to anyone in crisis. The Samaritans has introduced a single national telephone number to link up all branches with one easy to remember, low-cost number although callers will still be able to use their local branch number if they wish. This number can be found in your local telephone directory. | 116 123                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Freecall message home</b><br>This is confidential, non-traceable service for those who have left home but want to pass on a message to family and friends without communicating directly. People escaping domestic violence can use this service without having to give details of where they are. This is a free service.                                                                                                 | 116 000                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>The National Child Protection Helpline (NSPCC)</b><br>This is a free, confidential service for anyone concerned about children at risk, including children themselves. The service offers counselling, information and advice.                                                                                                                                                                                             | 0800 800500                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Childline</b><br>A national, confidential counselling line for children, young people and adults on any issue including family, marital and relationship problems, child abuse rape and sexual assault, depression and anxiety.                                                                                                                                                                                            | 0800 1111                                                                                                                                                      |

### **Specialist Services**

|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Hemat Gryffe, Womens Aid</b> | 0141 3530859 |
|---------------------------------|--------------|

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Asian, Black and Minority Ethnic Women's Aid Group in Scotland which provides a safe refuge accommodation, information and support.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Jewish Women's Aid</b><br>The only specialist organisation in the UK supporting Jewish women affected by domestic violence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 0808 8010500                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>GALOP</b><br>National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Domestic Violence Helpline provides confidential support to all members of the LGBT communities, their families, friends and agencies supporting them. Ran by trained LGBT people.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 0800 9995428                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Saheliya Support Services</b><br><br><b>1-1 Support Workers</b> at Saheliya can help you with a wide range of problems which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Legal issues</li> <li>▪ Safety issues</li> <li>▪ Housing issues</li> <li>▪ Health issues</li> <li>▪ Financial advice, including benefit rights</li> <li>▪ Language support</li> <li>▪ Practical and emotional support</li> <li>▪ Supporting you in meetings with solicitors, GP, other services etc</li> </ul> <p>Have direct experience of different cultures and can deliver casework and advocacy in 14 different languages between Glasgow and Edinburgh.</p> | <a href="#">Support Work - Saheliya</a><br><br>St. Rollox House<br>130 Springburn Road<br>Glasgow<br>G21 1YL<br>Tel: 0141 552 6540<br>Email: <a href="mailto:admin.glasgow@saheliya.co.uk">admin.glasgow@saheliya.co.uk</a><br><br>125 McDonald Road<br>Edinburgh<br>EH7 4NW<br>For phone calls please call our Glasgow office: 0141 552 6540<br>Email: <a href="mailto:info@saheliya.co.uk">info@saheliya.co.uk</a> |

### **Mens Services**

|                                                                                                                                                        |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Abused Men in Scotland (AMIS)</b><br>A national organisation dedicated to supporting men who are experiencing, or have experienced, domestic abuse. | 03300 949 395 |
| <b>Men's Aid</b>                                                                                                                                       | 0333 5670556  |

|                                                                                                         |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Providing support to men on a number of issues, including domestic abuse.                               |              |
| <b>Men's Advice Line</b><br>Advice and support for men experiencing domestic violence and abuse.        | 0808 8010327 |
| <b>Victim Support Male Helpline</b><br>Helpline for victims of domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault. | 0345 6039213 |

## **Appendix B – Support Services for Perpetrators**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Respect Phoneline</b><br>Confidential and anonymous helpline offering advice, information and support to anyone concerned about their violence and/or abuse towards a partner or ex-partner.                                                                                                                                        | Phone: 0808 8024040 (Phoneline open Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm)<br>Email: <a href="mailto:info@respectphoneline.org.uk">info@respectphoneline.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Everyman Project</b><br>Counselling, support and advice to men who are violent or concerned about their violence and any one affected by that violence.                                                                                                                                                                             | Phone: 0207 2638884                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>AVP Britain (Alternatives to Violence Project)</b><br>Run workshops through the country for anyone who has niggle little resentments that become grudges, anyone who gets upset at being ignored, anyone who has difficulty with anger, anyone who is a bully, or is bullied, in fact, anyone who wants an alternative to violence. | Phone: 0207 3244755                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Brian Nelson's Abuse Pages</b><br>Website created and maintained by an ex-abuser. Descriptive pages on the cycle of abuse.                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Website: <a href="http://blainn.com/abuse/">http://blainn.com/abuse/</a>                                                                                     |

## **Appendix C - Community Languages**

**This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format on request.**

### **Arabic**

هذه الوثيقة متاحة أيضا بلغات أخرى والأحرف الطباعية الكبيرة وبطريقة سمعية عند الطلب.

### **Hindi**

अनुरोध पर यह दस्तावेज़ अन्य भाषाओं में, बड़े अक्षरों की छपाई और सुनने वाले माध्यम पर भी उपलब्ध है

### **Punjabi**

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਰਿਕਾਰਡ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

### **Urdu**

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔

### **Chinese (Cantonese)**

本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

### **Polish**

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku lub w formie audio.



**British Sign Language**

BSL users can contact us via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://www.scotland.gov.uk/contact-scotland-bsl), the on-line British Sign Language interpreting service.

**☎ 01389 737527**

**✉ West Dunbartonshire Council, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton, G82 1QL**



 **communications@west-dunbarton.gov.uk**