

Members Briefing – Members Safety / Security



Provided by the Council Business Unit, Community Safety Partnership and South Wales Police

2.11.21



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Role of a Member

- Important aspect of an Elected Member role is to keep in touch with their residents and communities.
- Communications can take a variety of different forms.
- It is important that Members feel safe when undertaking this aspect of their role.
- This is even more important following the recent sad events of the death of Sir David Amess MP.
- Important that we as a Council consider and re-evaluate the support and security provisions available to Elected Members.



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UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

- Likely to have to deal with unpleasant or challenging interaction on occasion with residents in your community.
- With the rise of usage in social media platforms written and online abuse is another avenue of abuse that Elected Members are potentially subjected to.
- It is important that if a Member does feel threatened or that they are subject to unacceptable behaviour that they know how to report this behaviour as potentially criminal behaviour.
- If you feel that any of the behaviours you have endured have had an effect on your wellbeing then please seek support through the Council's Occupational Health arrangements.



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SUPPORT PROVISIONS

- Lone working Policy
- Personal alarm devices
- Security provision at residential addresses / Council Buildings
- Publication of official addresses
- Use of Council email address
- Social Media training and resources / infographics



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South Wales Police



Support provisions available through SWP / Community Safety Partnership


- Call 101
- Report online via the South Wales Police Website 'Report' tool at <https://www.south-wales.police.uk/ro/report/>
- Email SWP101@south-wales.police.uk
- Private message via Facebook [South Wales Police - Home | Facebook](#)
- Private message via Twitter [South Wales Police @SWP101](#)



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Identifying Vulnerability

It is important you learn to recognise situations where you are vulnerable




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At Hustings or public meetings

When at hustings or public meetings, be aware of your surroundings and if something or someone causes you to be concerned for your safety, report it to the police using **999** if the threat or danger is immediate and **101** to report suspicious activity that has already occurred


- Consider your safety when canvassing and visiting voters at the door. While political debate is a key part of our democracy, if you feel unsafe then disengage.
- Carry out visits accompanied, as a minimum tell someone where you are canvassing, and ensure you are making safe decisions on the doorstep.
- Keep records of any intimidating behaviour (what, where, when) – the more details the better.
- Do not engage with individuals who are stalking/harassing you (offline and online).



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Choosing a location

- Opt for a venue or area you know well.
- Make sure it has good external lighting on the approach to the building.
- Try to select somewhere where there are a lot of people even if you are holding your surgery out of hours, e.g. a community centre or shopping centre as these locations may often have existing security measures.
- Make sure there is more than one entrance/exit.
- Choose somewhere with a lobby area where the individual can be met and supporting staff can gauge the behaviour of the visitor.



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Arriving and departing

- Park safely – think about your return to your vehicle and take a pocket torch.
- Have your keys ready before arriving at your door/car.
- Remain vigilant and don't walk using your phone or have headphones on, which can distract you from your surroundings.
- Have a quick dial emergency number on your phone.
- Vary your route to and from the venue as much as possible.
- Remember to carry and use your lone worker device, if you have one



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Preparing for a safe surgery

- Discuss a plan for what you would do in an emergency.
- Consider an appointment system or whether you need to have a face-to-face meeting at all.
- Maintain an incident log to record any incidents. Keep details of date, time and type of unacceptable behaviour.
- Identify a safe area with an escape route which can be used in an emergency.
- Agree a key phrase to someone in the event of an emergency.
- Do not arrange to meet an unknown constituent without another persons knowing where you are, how long you expect to be and how to contact you.
- Use a lone worker device to inform the lone worker device centre where you are and that you are going into a surgery. This is a discreet device which can be carried on you.



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Meeting people when out and about

- Don't post your movements in advance on social media or share personal information about you or your family.
- Be aware of your surroundings and who is around you.
- If you feel uneasy about an individual or situation, trust your instincts. Leave the area and head towards a safe public place such as a shop.
- Pre-book a licensed cab if required. Never get into an unlicensed mini cab off the street.
- Don't publicly advertise who you are unless you are there in an official capacity, e.g. don't wear a name badge unless you must.
- Always have a charged mobile phone with you.



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When meeting a constituent

- Have someone with you so that they can call for help if necessary.
- Keep a mobile phone with you.
- Always keep your lone worker device with you.
- Leave the door ajar, make sure you are positioned closest to the exit and never lock yourself in a room with a stranger.
- Position a desk or table between yourself and the constituent.



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If you think you are being followed

- Try to remain calm.
- Keep to well populated areas.
- Cross and re-cross the road to see if they follow you.
- Keep moving and head to the nearest safe place.
- Call the police when you can.



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Security at Your Home

- House and Grounds –Boundaries, Gates, Garages
- Doors, Windows and Locks – Pas 24 doors, 5 lever lock
- Key care – keep control of your keys
- Alarms – monitored, audible, speech
- CCTV – Obtaining the right images dialler (panic button)
- Visitors – Positively ID Visitors

Secured by Design: www.SecuredByDesign.com
• Crime Prevention Survey



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Dealing with aggression

- For information on dealing with aggressive people, visit skillsyouneed.com/ps/dealing-with-aggression.html
- Further advice is also available from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust: www.suzylamplugh.org



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Social Media

- Your Digital Footprint
- A digital footprint is the data that's left behind whenever a person uses a digital service, or someone posts information about that person online.



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Digital Footprints – What Should I Do?

- Know what your digital footprint looks like
- What information about you is available online?
- Who else is posting information about you?
- The following websites can help:
 - 192.com
 - Google.com
 - Pipl.com
 - Tinyeye.com
- Review your passwords and privacy settings on devices, apps, and social media accounts.
- Can you delete or edit any sensitive information about yourself that is already online?
- Think carefully about what you share – you don't always know who's looking at it, how it will be protected, or who might see it.



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How to remove metadata from your photos

- It's simple to remove metadata from pictures, (especially ones taken with phones) before you post them on line.
- Picture metadata commonly stored in Exchangeable Image File (EXIF) data can store information about the location and details of the device you took the photo with.
- **The easiest way of removing EXIF data prior to posting is to simply re-size the photo and save it before you post it on line.**



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How many of these questions could be answered by someone looking at your social media profiles?

- Where do you live?
- Where do you work?
- Where are you going on holiday? When?
- What time do you leave the house every day?
- What car do you drive?
- Where do you socialise?
- Where are you right now...?

Criminals, violent protest groups, foreign intelligence services, and terrorist groups can all benefit from gaining access to information about us, our work, and who we associate with.



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Actions to take if targeted :

- Do not reply
- Try to capture the information before it is deleted (Screen shot)
- Inform the Police of the incident / threat immediately


Report intimidation to your Internet Service Provider / mobile phone provider

- Use 'Report Abuse' tools on Social Media platforms or facebook on a post by post basis if necessary
- Block/report trolls. You can disable comments on Instagram
- Conduct an online Health check - review online information and minimise availability of personal information.



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Thank you and Questions



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