

## **Safety protocol for Councillors**

The Council takes any attack on one of its Councillors, whilst they are conducting their duties as an elected official, very seriously and have therefore put in place a series of steps to guide you through this process. We understand that any experience of this nature can be very distressing, and the Governance and Councillor Liaison Team are in place to provide help and support as soon as any incidents are raised with them.

The steps are listed below but no decisions will be taken on behalf of a Councillor without the Councillor's agreement; this is a joint process.

The steps set out the how the team and the Councillor will work together, if a threatening email or a phone call is received and you have concerns over the contents or you are threatened in person.

We would encourage Councillors to ensure they retain any documents or emails relevant to the incident in case of any legal action that might follow.

1. Janis Best (Committee and Councillor Support Manager, [jbest@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:jbest@westminster.gov.uk)) in the Governance and Councillor Liaison (GCL) Team is here to support any Councillor and will act as case manager and single point of contact for the Councillor throughout the process. She should be contacted in the first instance if a Councillor has experienced a threat.
2. With the permission of the Councillor, Janis will notify the Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison, who in turn will inform the Leader and Whip of the relevant political group, as well as the Chief Executive and Director of People Services (HR).
3. The GCL Team will provide advice to the Councillor on what they should do (e.g. reporting this to the Police and/or communications blocking as appropriate) and what the team will do, as below.
4. The GCL Team will also provide advice and signposting on any additional support the Councillor might wish to access from the Council's Employee Assistance Services.
5. With the permission of the Councillor, the GCL team will contact the Public Protection and Licensing team for any Police liaison, plus any other appropriate support services e.g. Mental Health team, Children's Services, Housing to seek information on whether the emailer/caller is already in receipt of Council services. Where appropriate and necessary the Council's Legal team will be engaged to support any civil or criminal action undertaken.
6. Janis will keep the Councillor regularly updated on the case and keep the Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison informed on case progress, who will in turn keep senior leaders updated.