



# Penrith Town Council

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## UNTOWARD INCIDENT POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to formalise roles for dealing with serious or untoward incidents to ensure that such events are managed effectively.

### 2. DEFINITION

It is not possible to place a specific definition on the meaning of an untoward incident in the context of Town Council duties and responsibilities, however an untoward incident may be:

*'an incident which is likely to produce a significant legal, media or other interest, or give rise to public concern and which, if not managed effectively may result in loss of the Town Council's trust and or assets.'*

### 3. TYPES OF INCIDENTS

Untoward incidents are difficult to predict but may in the case of the Town Council include:

- Fire, flood
- Incident involving members of the public
- Fraud
- Damage to an asset creating public danger
- Staff exodus

## 4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The Council's Management Team has delegated authority to respond to an emergency under the Council's Scheme of Delegation. In the event of an untoward incident occurring the team will consist of:

- The Town Clerk
- The Services and Contracts Manager
- The Deputy Town Clerk
- The Mayor and or Deputy Mayor

The Town Clerk would effectively take the lead on the management of the incident. In her absence the Services and Contracts Manager will act as lead officer.

## 5. PROCEDURE / ACTIONS

- 5.1 The following procedure will be enacted to manage an untoward incident. It must be noted that the procedure may change in real time, dependent upon the circumstances, thus a dynamic approach will be implemented.
- 5.2 Officers made aware of the incident to report to a senior colleague, make all steps to prevent the incident reoccurring or take measures to ensure safety of colleagues and one's self. If there is a danger to people or property contact the emergency services by calling 999.
- 5.3 Officers to make a written record of the incident where time allows and it is safe to do so.
- 5.4 Senior Officers to call a meeting of the Council's Management Team to discuss and manage the incident. The **Business Continuity Risk Plan** may be a source of reference and guidance.
- 5.5 Dependent upon the nature of the incident the Management Team may need to call in external contract providers to assist with the management of the incident.
- 5.6 The lead officer shall liaise regularly with the Council's Management Team, wider elected Members and staff to ensure that all relevant persons are reported as safe and aware of their roles, responsibilities and required actions.

## 6. RECORD KEEPING

During the management of an untoward incident it is important to maintain records as accurately and as timely as possible. This may include:

- Record of incident, time, date, type, who reported
- Management team notes, actions and delegated tasks
- Orders, budget and instructions to third parties

## 7. COMMUNICATION

At the meeting of Management Team, a communication/media strategy will be agreed. This will include:

- I. Lead responsibility and spokesperson
- II. Process for agreeing information
- III. Who shall be notified
- IV. The range of media to use, web, press, social media
- V. External partners and stakeholders to involve.

## 8. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 **Staff:** The Town Clerk will lead on keeping staff informed or in their absence the Deputy Town Clerk.
- 8.2 **External:** All external communication will be dealt with by the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk and/or the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
- 8.3 **Members:** The Town Clerk will lead on keeping elected members informed or in their absence the Deputy Town Clerk.
- 8.4 **Contractors:** The Services and Contracts Manager will liaise with all service contractors including Information Technology and Insurance.
- 8.5 The Town Clerk will publish essential public information advising the public of any business interruptions. This may be in the form of poster, letter, social media, website and media.

## 9. REVIEW

Following the incident, the Council's Management Team, with Elected Members and any other relevant stakeholders will undertake a review of the incident, the systems for managing the incident and identify any areas for learning, improvement for the future

## **10. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES**

The following policies and documents may need to be referred to in the management of the untoward event:

- Corporate Governance Policies
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment
- Business Continuity Plan

**ADOPTED:** 26 NOVEMBER 2018

**REVIEW:** 2028