



# BRIEFING PAPER

WSCC Library  
Service

UNISON West Sussex briefing paper for all Library Service members

Feb 2020

## Staff Safety in Libraries

UNISON West Sussex is advising members who are Library staff and all Library colleagues to report and ensure their line managers record all incidences of anti-social behaviour of **any kind** (e.g. the recent issue of someone seeking shelter in a library from drug dealers) on the official reporting system as outlined in WSCC's own guidance document:

### [Corporate Guidance on the Management of Risk from Occupational Violence and Aggression](#)

This document (available on The Point) states clearly in the introduction on page 1 what staff can report as a 'Violence at Work' incident:

***Violence at work is any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. It need not involve physical force or harm; it also includes rude gestures, innuendo, sexual and racial harassment, and written threats. This applies in all work circumstances whether the staff member is working in a council workplace or out in the community.***

One of the reasons that Library Management Team (LMT) have given for not retaining security guards in larger libraries like Worthing is that they do not believe enough incidents had taken place to warrant it. This is despite a serious incident at Worthing following the withdrawal of evening security at that branch in October 2019.

If members and library staff report all incidents UNISON can establish the evidence to hold

management to account for enhanced security where it is needed for frontline staff across the West Sussex Library Service.



Worthing Library

**Please contact Tim Stanton, WSCC Libraries UNISON rep, for more information.**

**Could you be a UNISON rep in the WSCC Library Service? Please contact Tim or the UNISON office for more information.**