# Policy 56: Best Office Practice

Last updated by: SH, RS, JH

Links to policies: 30, 33

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Policy Date</th>
<th>Next Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sep 2013</td>
<td>Sep 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sep 19</td>
<td>Sep 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Scope

i) This Policy covers aspects of best practice in Age UK York's offices;

ii) Some aspects of office best practice are covered in other policies:

   a) Health and safety is in Policy 30
   b) Information technology and VDU is in Policy 33

iii) This Office Best Practice Policy replaces:

   a) Policy 41 Mobile phone policy
   b) Policy 56 on Smoking
   c) Policy 59 Dealing with suspicious packages
   d) Policy 75 Evacuation procedure

iv) Age UK York's office arrangements and locations change from time to time. All workers are encouraged to make comments and suggest alterations to this Policy to their line manager or supervisor whenever they find that this Policy does not accord with actual conditions in the work premises.

2. Responsibilities

i) The Trustees of Age UK York (AUKY) have overall responsibility for the working conditions of all AUKY workers;

ii) The Trustees have placed day to day responsibility with the Chief Officer (CO);

iii) All AUKY workers have a responsibility to work within AUKY’s policies and procedures in accordance with training and information provided by their line manager, trainer or other supervisor;

iv) At all times, the Trustees and all AUKY workers working within legislative requirements and regulations. If at any time an AUKY policy or practice differs from the relevant government statute or regulation, that statute or regulation is to be followed.

3. Evacuation procedure

i) This Policy explains the procedure for evacuation of the AUKY Walmgate premises including the shop;

ii) Workers in other premises including other shops and at York CVS must follow the procedure set out in those premises. In case of doubt, their line manager or supervisor will provide written instructions for them;

iii) The procedure in case of fire is at paragraph 10 of the Health and Safety Policy, Policy 30. New workers will receive information on this during their first induction. Training will take place for all workers on a regular basis;
iv) In case of fire, the fire bell will ring automatically and sound continuously;

v) In case of other need to evacuate the building, the fire bell will be activated manually by an appropriate worker;

vi) There is a designated Duty Officer on duty each day. His/her presence is indicated on the white board in Reception. His/her duties are to:

   a) Match the number of people present in the Walmgate premises as indicated on the white board in reception (for staff) and the signing in book on the reception desk with the number of people assembled in Melrose Yard;
   b) Inform the Fire Brigade officer of any absences;
   c) Prevent any workers from re-entering the premises until permitted to do so;
   d) Establish the cause of the fire bell being rung manually i.e. when there was no fire;
   e) Take appropriate action in consultation with the CO, Deputy CO or other senior AUKY officer.

vii) On hearing the fire bell:

   a) Do not stop to collect bags or clothing;
   b) Do ensure that everyone in your work area is able to evacuate the building;
   c) Do offer assistance to anyone who appears to be in difficulties;
   d) Wherever possible, follow the evacuation route indicated on the Blue Fire Action Posters in each office;
   e) Assemble in the entrance to Melrose Yard taking care of local traffic;
   f) Do not re-enter the building unless it is safe to do so as confirmed by the Fire Brigade or other appropriate person.

4. Suspicious package and/or bomb alert procedure

i) Any worker who becomes aware of a suspicious package must immediately:

   a) Not touch or attempt to open the package;
   b) Worn other people in the room about the package;
   c) Manually press the fire bell;
   d) Follow the evacuation procedure;
   e) Explain the situation to the designated Duty Officer.

ii) Any worker who receives a verbal including by phone, in writing or via a mobile phone a threat or warning about a bomb or other threat of violence must immediately:

   a) Seek more information if the threat is made verbally;
   b) Inform the designated Duty Officer;
   c) Carry out his/her instructions.

iii) It is unfortunately the case that the use of mobile phones to send threatening and abusive messages, currently called 'trolling', is on the increase. On the first occasion that any worker receives any such trolling message they must immediately inform their
5. Smoking

i) Legislation passed in 2007 makes it illegal to smoke in work premises;

ii) For AUKY workers, 'work premises' includes all offices and shops, AUKY vehicles including vehicles being used on AUKY business and the home of any service user while an AUKY worker is present;

iii) AUKY workers may refuse to enter the home of any service user when that service user or any family members present, is smoking;

iv) Smoking includes the use of cigarettes and e-cigarettes, cigars and pipes;

v) The purpose of the legislation is to safeguard the health of individuals. In consequence, any AUKY worker who wishes to give up smoking will receive encouragement to attend 'giving up' sessions with their GP;

vi) Workers who wish to smoke may not:

a) Take breaks to do so to the detriment of their work, routines or the work of colleagues;
b) Smoke just outside or close to AUKY premises. This is so that smoke does not drift into an AUKY premises and inconvenience other workers.

6. Mobile phone use

i) Mobile phones which are issued by AUKY:

- Are issued in order to improve effectiveness in service provision;
- Are to be used for carrying out service provision work and not for personal use except in emergency;
- Must be kept safely and any loss must be reported immediately to the relevant line manager/supervisor;
- If an AUKY mobile phone is used for personal reasons other than emergency the worker will be expected to pay AUKY for its use;

ii) If a worker uses their own phone for service provision use they may request reimbursement on production of an invoice or permission slip from their line manager/supervisor. Workers finding they need to make regular or frequent use of their own phone for work use should discuss this with their line manager/supervisor to establish if AUKY should issue a phone to that worker;

iii) Safety considerations;
- The use of mobile phones while driving is subject to legislation and workers who break the law in this way will also be subject to AUKY's disciplinary processes;
- Line managers and supervisors will not speak to workers by phone while they are driving and workers will turn off their phones, diverting to messaging.
services for later retrieval;

iv) Personal phone use at work:

- Workers are expected to be considerate of their colleagues and either switch their phones to silent or divert calls for later retrieval;
- Workers who are expecting emergency or urgent calls via their phones must use the vibrate facility in order not to distract their colleagues.