

Protecting Local Democracy

Councillor Dave Stewart
Leader of Isle of Wight Council

Assault - Definition

“Attempt threat or offer to inflict unlawful force upon another”

- Person apprehends *immediate* use of unlawful violence
- Penalty – maximum six months in prison
- Arrestable Offence – Section 24 Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984 – sentence fixed by law (murder) or over 5 years liable on first conviction
- Public Order Offences – Public Order Act powers of arrest apply

Councillors - Recent Experiences

Before the April 2019 local elections, councillors described how campaigns of abuse and intimidation have led them to fear for their safety.

In the past few months, councillors have been forced off the road, spat at and received death threats via the post, according to the Local Democracy Reporting Service.

Some have been issued with panic alarms or moved to safe houses.

Panel Rules – General Disturbance

- If member of public interrupts meeting chair shall warn them
- If they continue to interrupt chair shall order their removal from room
- In case of general disturbance in part of room chair shall order that part of room to be cleared
- If in opinion of chair misconduct or obstruction renders orderly dispatch of business impossible chair may suspend meeting for period not exceeding 30 minutes
- The PCP is a meeting in public not a public meeting