

**77659259 - Mike Cowley**

**Proposed Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-Restricted Sales etc.) (Scotland) Bill**

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?
an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)
Academic with expertise in a relevant subject

Please select the category which best describes your organisation
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Please choose one of the following:
I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.
Mike Cowley

Q1. Which of the following expresses your view of creating a new offence of assault against a worker in the retail sector?
Fully supportive
<b>Please explain the reasons for your response</b>
All workers and staff should feel safe and secure in their workplaces. But given how frequently public sector staff deal with the public, and in often trying circumstances for both parties, they perhaps require particular protections. However I would like to see any security extended to all staff and workers in the future.

Q2. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to assaults on workers upholding statutory age-
restrictions?
A new statutory offence
<b>Please explain the reasons for your response</b>
Statutory legislation would signal to the public how serious parliament is taking this issue.

Q3. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to abuse, harassment, threatening or obstruction of
workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?
A new statutory offence (for all these types of behaviour)
<b>Please explain the reasons for your response</b>
See previous.

Q4. Do you think that there are other steps which could be taken (either instead of, or in addition to, legislation) to achieve
the aims of the proposal?
Yes
<b>Please explain the reasons for your response.</b>
A shift in culture - or political economy. Work should not be something we associate with stress, anxiety, danger or insecurity.
A culture of solidarity and mutualism can only be fostered in an environment where work begins to mean something more than wages and profit.

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:
<b>Q5.1. (a) Government and the public sector</b> - Some increase in cost

**Q5.2. (b) Businesses** -

**Q5.3. (c) Individuals** -

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

Difficult to place a price on things, but in the medium and long term health costs and lost days at work would surely decrease,

leaving long term financial gains.

Q6. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

By contributing to a shift in culture, less incidents will take place and less court costs incurred.

Q7. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Positive

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

Racism is often the pretext for attacks on staff, as are other forms of bigotry.

Q8. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

For the Bill's provisions to be extended to all, regardless of background, and for the law to assert the legislation equitably, first and foremost on the ground.

Q9. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

See previous. The law should in fact have positive long term impacts on cost.

Q10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal, for example, other trigger points for violence and abuse, and other workers who should be covered?

*Fully support but would like principle extended beyond the public sector. Also, its provisions may only scratch the surface, longer term cultural shifts are required which infer a more systemic change in how we think of work, and how we relate to one another more generally.*

Q11. Which of the following describes your retail-sector experience (please tick all that apply)?

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Q12. Which of the following describes your experience of violence or verbal abuse in the retail sector (please tick all that apply)?

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Q13. Please give details of any personal experience that you would wish to share. (Please avoid naming any other person or giving information that would allow another person to be identified)

I have worked in a number of retail outlets - clothing, books, warehouses, off-licences, kitchens - and have seen verbal abuse of one degree or another fairly frequently.