

# 78599395 - Michael Meighan

## 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".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

-

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Michael Meighan

Q1. Which of the following expresses your view of creating a new offence of assault against a worker in the retail sector?

Partially supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Of course, I am supportive of this measure:

1. In my experience, while aggression, abuse or violence is completely unacceptable, in many cases the abuse may arise because the staff member is unaware of how their behaviour, approach or attitude can provoke or inflame a situation. 2. I have experienced instances in which the abuse has come from the worker. This would have to be taken into account. 3. As violence in the workplace comes under Health and Safety legislation, and presently reserved to the UK, I am not sure how new legislation/powers would work?

Q2. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to assaults on workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Not entirely sure whether it would need a specific offence or be included in the main.

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?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

As before.

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

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

1. A great deal of abuse can be prevented by the proper training of staff in handling people. This was very effective in areas such as housing and benefits.
2. The proper use of risk assessments is vital as is the need for a recording policy and for staff to record all incidents and for these to be taken seriously - ie a record such as an Accident Book.
3. Licensing schemes for responsible staff (eg door staff) as long as they go with proper training.

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

**Q5.1. (a) Government and the public sector** - Some increase in cost

**Q5.2. (b) Businesses** - Some increase in cost

**Q5.3. (c) Individuals** - Broadly cost neutral

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

1. Many responsible government bodies already invest in good customer training so costs to them should not be significant.
2. The induction period is where good basic customer handling rules can be instilled.
3. The proper design of work areas/ counters etc to prevent too close contact could be a significant cost to some organisations but these are clearly effective in betting shops, post offices etc. Proper design can offset the hard look of such measures.

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

Unsure

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

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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?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

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

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

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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.**

I think that broadcasting good practice should all be to the good. One essential aspect is getting staff involved in the design of measured and systems.

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?

*Again, in my experience, particularly at busy times when experienced staff are dealing with difficult issues or those needing their expert knowledge, young and inexperienced people are left in areas such as reception, on the front line and dealing with difficult people. This is when they are at their most vulnerable.*

*Situations that might fade from memory if handled professionally become difficult or violent.*

*Any legislation should ensure that all staff are trained to deal appropriately with people.*

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

Working in premises selling alcohol for consumption on the premises (e.g. pub)	Yes
Working in premises selling alcohol for consumption off the premises (e.g. shop)	Yes
Working in premises selling other age-restricted products (e.g. tobacco, knives etc.)	No
Working in other retail premises	Yes
None of the above	No

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

I have been the victim of physical violence	No
I have been the victim of verbal abuse	Yes
I have witnessed colleagues being subjected to physical violence	Yes
I have witnessed colleagues being subjected to verbal abuse	Yes
None of the above	No

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)

A lot of my experiences have been encapsulated in the Violence Audit that I previously shared with you.





