

ESSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
DIGNITY AT WORK, BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

This policy reflects the spirit in which Essington Parish Council (the Council) intends to undertake all of its business. The Council recognises its legal duties to protect its employees and Councillors from bullying and harassment and to ensure that its employees do not bully or harass others. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Grievance Policy and Disciplinary Policy.

1. SCOPE

This policy covers, but is not limited to, harassment on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, belief, disability or age.

This policy covers, but is not limited to, physical and verbal bullying and cyberbullying (referred to together in this policy as "bullying").

This policy outlines the expected behaviour of all employees and Councillors and the Council's approach to the management of concerns raised under this policy.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES

The Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment of its employees or its Councillors.

The Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment of its employees or Councillors by other employees or Councillors. The Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment of its employees by visitors to the Council or members of the public.

The Council will follow the ACAS guidance on the definition of bullying and harassment which are behaviours unwanted by the recipient.

3. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Bullying is characterised as a pattern of offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviour. It is an abuse of use of power or authority which tends to undermine an individual or group of individuals, gradually eroding their confidence and capability, which may cause them to suffer stress.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Cyberbullying is the use of information and communication technologies, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately or repeatedly threaten, harass, humiliate, defame or impersonate (to assume the character or appearance of another person fraudulently).

4. PROCEDURE

Any employee experiencing bullying or harassment should report this to the Chairman or alternatively raise a formal grievance under the Council's Grievance Policy.

Any complaint made against an employee will be investigated under the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

The complaint will be investigated either formally or informally and the complainant will be notified of the result of the investigation in writing.

5. DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

The Council considers bullying and harassment to be examples of serious misconduct.

Any allegation which, following investigation, is upheld, will result in disciplinary procedures for employees and may result in charges of gross misconduct and summary dismissal.

Allegations of bullying and harassment of employees or the public by Councillors may result in referrals to the Standards Process as a contravention of the Members Code of Conduct.

6. LEGAL ACTION

Employees and Councillors may be the subject of legal action by a recipient of bullying or harassment as a result of such bullying or harassment.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information, please contact the Clerk or the Chairman of Essington Parish Council.

Approved: 01 March 2021

Reviewed 23rd March 2026