



# PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

## PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. The following procedure will be adopted for dealing with complaints about the Parish Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Parish Council will be referred back to the Council, or relevant Committee, as appropriate, for consideration.
2. This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council.
3. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Parish Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk to the Parish Council, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
4. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing (letter/e-mail) to the Clerk to the Parish Council, or [clerk@pucklechurchparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@pucklechurchparishcouncil.gov.uk). The complaint will be dealt with within 21 days of receipt. Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not necessarily mean that the complaint cannot be investigated, but it is easier to deal with if it is in writing.
5. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Parish Council (because the matter relates to the Clerk, for example,) he or she should be advised to write to the Chair of the Parish Council.
6. (a) On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk to the Parish Council (except where the complainant is about his or her own actions) or Chair of the Parish Council (if the complaint relates to the Clerk), will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying any person complained about and giving him or her opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.  
  
(b) Where the Clerk to the Parish Council or a Councillor receives a written complaint about the Clerk's actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman of the Parish Council. The Clerk to the Parish Council will be formally advised of the matter and given an opportunity to comment.
7. The Clerk to the Parish Council (or Chair) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Parish Council.
8. The Clerk to the Parish Council (or Chair) will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Parish Council. The Clerk/Chair will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Parish Council orally.
9. Matters relating to Grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with the Parish Council's grievance and disciplinary procedures.



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10. The Parish Council may consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on the complaint will be announced at the Parish Council meeting in public.
11. The Parish Council may consider in the circumstances of any particular complaint whether to make any without liability payment or provide other reasonable benefit to any person who has suffered loss as a result of the Parish Council's maladministration. Any payment may only be authorised by the Parish Council after obtaining legal advice and advice from the Parish Council's auditor on the propriety of such a payment.
12. As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 days after the meeting) the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken.
13. The Parish Council may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made . See minutes for further details

## PUCKLECHRUCH PARISH COUNCIL'S TEMPLATE DISCIPLINARY POLICY

### Introduction

- 1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work.

[https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG\\_Guide\\_Feb\\_2019.pdf](https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf)

The policy is designed to help Council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.

- 2 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 3 This policy confirms:
  - informal coaching and supervision will be considered, where appropriate, to improve conduct and / or attendance
  - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
  - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see ACAS "Performance Management" at <https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6608>
  - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
  - employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing
  - employees may be accompanied or represented by a companion – a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official - at any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case

- the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions
- if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
- any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision. The appeal decision is final
- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure
- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include a written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- this procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it,
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the consent of affected parties

### **Examples of misconduct**

- 4 Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct: The list is not exhaustive.

- unauthorised absence
- poor timekeeping
- misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
- inappropriate behaviour
- refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- breach of health and safety rules.

#### **Examples of gross misconduct**

- 5 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct: The list is not exhaustive

- bullying, discrimination and harassment
- incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
- violent behaviour
- fraud or theft
- gross negligence
- gross insubordination
- serious breaches of council policies and procedures e.g. the Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy and any policies regarding the use of information technology
- serious and deliberate damage to property
- use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
- disclosure of confidential information.

#### **Suspension**

- 6 If allegations of gross misconduct or serious misconduct are made, the council may suspend the employee while further investigations are carried out. Suspension will be on full pay. Suspension does not imply any determination of guilt or innocence, as it is merely a measure to enable further investigation.
- 7 While on suspension, the employee is required to be available during normal hours of work in the event that the council needs to make contact. The employee must not contact or attempt to contact or influence anyone connected with the investigation in any way or to discuss this matter with any other employee or councillor.

- 8 The employee must not attend work. The council will make arrangements for the employee to access any information or documents required to respond to any allegations.

### **Examples of unsatisfactory work performance**

- 9 The following list contains some examples of unsatisfactory work performance: The list is not exhaustive.
- inadequate application of management instructions/office procedures
  - inadequate IT skills
  - unsatisfactory management of staff
  - unsatisfactory communication skills.

### **The Procedure**

- 10 Preliminary enquiries. The council may make preliminary enquiries to establish the basic facts of what has happened in order to understand whether there may be a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure.

If the employee's manager believes there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the council may initiate a more detailed investigation undertaken to establish the facts of a situation or to establish the perspective of others who may have witnessed misconduct.

- 11 Informal Procedures. Where minor concerns about conduct become apparent, it is the manager's responsibility to raise this with the employee and clarify the improvements required. A file note will be made and kept by the manager. The informal discussions are not part of the formal disciplinary procedure. If the conduct fails to improve, or if further matters of conduct become apparent, the manager may decide to formalise the discussions and invite the employee to a first stage disciplinary hearing.

### **Disciplinary investigation**

- 12 A formal disciplinary investigation may sometimes be required to establish the facts and whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- 13 If a formal disciplinary investigation is required, the Council's staffing committee will appoint an Investigator who will be responsible for undertaking a fact-finding exercise to collect all relevant information. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a councillor. If the staffing committee considers that there are no councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the Council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The staffing committee will inform the Investigator of the terms of reference of the investigation. The terms of reference should specify:

- the allegations or events that the investigation is required to examine
  - whether a recommendation is required
  - how the findings should be presented. For example, an investigator will often be required to present the findings in the form of a written report
  - who the findings should be reported to and who to contact for further direction if unexpected issues arise or advice is needed.
- 14 The Investigator will be asked to submit their findings within 20 working days of appointment where possible. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be necessary and the Council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage - the disciplinary meeting (see paragraph 22).
- 15 The staffing committee will notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and details of the person undertaking the investigation. The employee may be asked to meet an investigator as part of the disciplinary investigation. The employee will be given sufficient notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that he/she has reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when he/she meets with the Investigator, he/she will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.
- 16 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official at any investigatory meeting.
- 17 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 18 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. His/her role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the staffing committee whether or not disciplinary action should be considered under the policy.
- 19 The Investigator's report will contain his/her recommendations and the findings on which they were based. He/she will recommend either:
- the employee has no case to answer and there should be no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure
  - the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or
  - the employee has a case to answer and a formal hearing should be convened under the Council's disciplinary procedure.



- 20 The Investigator will submit the report to the staffing committee which will decide whether further action will be taken.
- 21 If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

### **The disciplinary meeting**

- 22 If the staffing committee decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a staffing sub-committee of three councillors, to formally hear the allegations. The staffing sub-committee will appoint a Chair from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee.
- 23 No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The sub-committee's letter will confirm the following:
  - the names of its Chair and other two members
  - details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
  - a copy of the information provided to the sub-committee which may include the investigation report, supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
  - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing so that he /she has sufficient time to prepare for it
    - that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least two working days before the meeting
    - that the employee may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official

The purpose of the disciplinary meeting hearing is for the allegations to be put to the employee and then for the employee to give their perspective. It will be conducted as follows:

- the Chair will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee and explain the arrangements for the hearing
- the Chair will set out the allegations and invite the Investigator to present the findings of the investigation report (if there has been a previous investigation)
- the Chair will invite the employee to present their account
- the employee (or the companion) will set out his/her case and present evidence (including any witnesses and/or witness statements)
- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness



- the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up
- 24 The Chair will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The Chair will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision.
- 25 The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be further investigated by the sub-committee.

### **Disciplinary action**

- 26 If the sub-committee decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

#### **First written warning**

If the employee's conduct has fallen beneath acceptable standards, a first written warning will be issued. A first written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

#### **Final written warning**

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve sufficiently during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:

- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

#### **Dismissal**

The Council may dismiss:

- for gross misconduct
- if there is no improvement within the specified time period, in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning
- if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.

27 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, he/she will receive a written statement of the reasons for his/her dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of his/her right of appeal. If the sub-committee decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action taken as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless it is modified as a result of an appeal.

### **The appeal**

28 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. His/her written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.

29 The grounds for appeal include;

- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
- the sub-committee's disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence
- the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
- new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.

30 Where possible, the appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three members of the Council who may include members of the staff committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from one of its members.

31 The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.

32 At the appeal meeting, the Chair will:

- introduce the panel members to the employee

- explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the disciplinary decision
  - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
- 33 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.
- 34 The Chair will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing.
- 35 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the disciplinary decision of the staffing committee, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 36 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 37 The appeal panel's decision is final.

This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made . See minutes for further details

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## PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL



Civility &  
Respect

### DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

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**Pucklechurch parish council believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expect all councillors, officers and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the council.**

#### **Purpose**

Pucklechurch parish council is committed to creating a working environment where all council employees, councillors, contractors and others who come into contact with us in the course of our work, are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. We aim to create a workplace where there is zero tolerance for harassment and bullying

In support of this objective, Pucklechurch parish council has signed up to the Civility Pledge, as a commitment to civility and respect in our work, and politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Further information about the Civility and Respect Pledge is available [NALC](#) & [SLCC](#)

We recognise that there is a continuum where unaddressed issues have the potential to escalate and become larger, more complex issues and this policy sets out how concerns will be managed however the emphasis of this policy is on resolution and mediation where appropriate, rather than an adversarial process.

This document:

- explains how we will respond to complaints of bullying or harassment;
- ensures that we respond sensitively and promptly; and,
- supports our employees in ensuring their behaviour does not amount to bullying and/or harassment by giving examples.

#### **Scope**

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by clerks and all employees engaged to work at Pucklechurch parish council. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with Pucklechurch parish council, this should be raised to their nominated contact, manager, or the Chair of the Council, in the first instance. Should the complaint be about the chair of the council the complaint should be raised to the deputy chair.

Agency staff, or contractors are equally expected to treat council colleagues, and other representatives and stakeholders with dignity and respect, and the council may terminate the contract, without notice, where there are suspicions of harassment or bullying.

Complaints about other employment matters will be managed under the council's grievance policy.

It is noted that the management of a situation may differ depending on who the allegations relate to (e.g. employees, contractor, councillor), however, the council will take appropriate action if any of its employees are bullied or harassed by employees, councillors, members of the public, suppliers or contractors.

#### **The position on bullying and harassment**

All staff and council representatives are entitled to dignity, respect and courtesy within the workplace and to not experience any form of discrimination. Pucklechurch parish council will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace. *This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*



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workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether harm is intended or not. Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. You should also be aware that, if you have bullied or harassed someone (e.g. physical violence, harassment), in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

We expect all representatives of the council to treat each other with respect and uphold the values of the code of conduct, civility and respect pledge, equality opportunities policy, and all other policies and procedures set by the Council.

We expect you to demonstrate respect by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. See the grievance policy for further details regarding the process. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. While we will assume that all complaints of bullying and harassment are made in good faith, in the event that allegations are found to be malicious or vexatious the person raising the complaint may be subject to action under the council's disciplinary procedure.

### Harassment

- Where a person is subject to uninvited conduct that violates their dignity, in connection with a protected characteristic
- Behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic

### Bullying

- Behaviour that leaves the victim feeling threatened, intimidated, humiliated, vulnerable or otherwise upset. It does not need to be connected to a protected characteristic.

### What Type of Treatment amounts to Bullying or Harassment?

'Bullying' or 'harassment' are phrases that apply to treatment from one person (or a group of people) to another that is unwanted and that has the effect of violating that person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person.

Examples of bullying and harassment include:

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- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances e.g. promotion, access to training
- Threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Verbal abuse or offensive comments, including jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Lewd or suggestive comments or gestures
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations, work activities or social activities.
- Withholding information, a person needs in order to do their job
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or inappropriate birthday rituals
- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing or jostling
- Rifling through, hiding or damaging personal property
- Display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, whether directly and / or in front of others
- The use of obscene gestures
- Abusing a position of power

Bullying and harassment can occur through verbal and face to face interactions, but can also take place through sharing inappropriate or offensive content in writing or via email and other electronic communications and social media.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable and behaviour could be harassment when the person had no intention to offend. We all have the right to determine what offends us. Some behaviour will be clear to any reasonable person that it is likely to offend – for example sexual touching. Other examples may be less clear; however, you should be aware that harassment will occur if behaviour continues after the recipient has advised you that the behaviour is unacceptable to them.

Harassment can also occur where the unwanted behaviour relates to a perceived characteristic (such as offensive jokes or comments based on the assumption someone is gay, even if they are not) or due to their association with someone else (such as harassment related to their partner having a disability for example). See the council's equality and diversity policy.

All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity and should feel able to challenge behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

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It is important to recognise that bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues/Councillors is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management routines, and should not be interpreted as anything different.

### **Victimisation**

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e. you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the council will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

### **Reporting Concerns**

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#### **What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a member of the public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague)**

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact at work, please raise this with your nominated manager in the first instance or, with the clerk/or a councillor. Any such report will be taken seriously, and we will decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

#### **What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a councillor:**

If you are being bullied or harassed by a councillor, please raise this with the clerk/chief officer or the chair of the council in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you. There are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. The Informal Resolution is described below. Formal concerns regarding potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct must be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

The council will consider reasonable measures to protect your health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties or change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

**What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to be harassment or bullying:** If you witness such behaviour you should report the incident in confidence to the clerk/chief officer or a councillor. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

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### **What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed by another member of staff:**

If you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. These are described below.

#### Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the council's policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the clerk/chief officer, your nominated manager or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if you are being bullied by your own nominated manager, you should raise the issue with the chair of the council. (If your concern relates to the chair, you should raise it with the chair of the personnel/staffing committee). The chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by telling the alleged perpetrator, without prejudicing the matter, that:

- there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of the council staff
- such behaviour is contrary to our policy
- for employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence

It may be possible for this conversation to take place with the alleged perpetrator without revealing your name, if this is what you want. The person dealing with it will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances we may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not usually be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as extremely serious allegation or in cases where a problem has happened before) we may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. We will consult with you before taking this step.

#### Raising a formal complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about bullying and harassment through the council's grievance procedure. You should raise your complaint to the clerk/chief officer or the chair of the council. A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

The clerk/chief officer or the chair of the council will appoint someone to investigate your complaint in line with the grievance policy. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided):

- The name of the alleged perpetrator(s),
- The nature of the harassment or bullying,
- The dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred,

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- The names of any witnesses and
- Any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally.

The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be told your name and the details of your grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible. Where you and the alleged perpetrator(s) work in proximity to each other, we will consider whether it is appropriate to make temporary adjustments to working arrangements whilst the matter is being investigated.

Where your complaint relates to potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct, these will need to be investigated by the Monitoring Officer. The council will consider any adjustments to support you in your work and to manage the relationship with the councillor the allegations relate to, while the investigation proceeds.

Investigations will be carried out promptly (without unreasonable delay), sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. When carrying out any investigations, we will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with the data protection policy.

The council will consider how to protect your health and wellbeing whilst the investigation is taking place and discuss this with you. Depending on the nature of the allegations, the Investigator may want to meet with you to understand better your complaint (see the grievance policy for further information, and details of your right to be accompanied).

After the investigation, a panel will meet with you to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation in accordance with the grievance procedure. At the meeting you may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a trade union official.

Following the conclusion of the hearing the panel will write to you to inform you of the decision and to notify you of your right to appeal if you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You should put your appeal in writing explaining the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the decision. Your appeal will be heard under the appeal process that is described in the grievance procedure.

### **The use of the Disciplinary Procedure**

If at any stage from the point at which a complaint is raised, we believe there is a case to answer and a disciplinary offence might have been committed, we will instigate our disciplinary procedure. We will keep you informed of the outcome.

*This is a non-contractual policy and procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.*

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*



## PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

### GUIDANCE FOR USING THE DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

*This is an example of an employment policy designed for a council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.*

*This guidance is provided to support understanding of the policy, and its application, as well as where local adaptations may be required. The guidance is not part of the policy and should be removed from the policy adopted and shared with council employees.*

The Dignity at Work Policy will replace a previous 'Bullying and Harassment' Policy, to create a policy that is focussed on encompassing behaviours beyond simply bullying and harassment, and zero tolerance with the aim of dealing with concerns before they escalate. It is important that any commitment made in the policy is applied in practice.

Wording has been suggested to demonstrate a council's commitment to promoting dignity and respect where they have signed up to the NALC, SLCC and OVV Civility and Respect Pledge. Councils that have not signed up to this are requested to consider making this pledge which is based on basic behaviours and expectations of all council representatives to create workplaces that allow people to maintain their dignity at all times. If your council has not agreed to the pledge this wording should be removed.

The policy is drafted with consideration of employment language and terminology that is reflective of a modern working environment, setting a tone that is engaging, collaborative and inclusive. A council may want to update references where relevant to reflect local terminology and structure, however should be considerate of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The examples of bullying and harassment are just that – examples. This should not be considered an exhaustive list.

#### Notes:

##### Protected Characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Employees can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related to someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

Examples of harassment related to a protected characteristic could include;

- Making assumptions about someone's ability due to their **age**, or denying development opportunities to someone based on their age. This could also include assumptions about their lifestyle or making inappropriate jokes related to age.
- Making fun or mimicking impairments related to a health condition, or using inappropriate language about disabilities. Constantly selecting social activities that make it impossible for a colleague with a **disability** to participate in.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*



## PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender, or disclosing information about their gender identity could be harassment on the grounds of **gender reassignment**.
- **Pregnancy/Maternity** harassment could include refusing opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity leave, or inappropriate touching and invasion of personal space such as unwanted touching of a pregnant person's stomach.
- Harassment based on **race** could include derogatory nicknames, or stereotyping based on ethnicity. It could include racist comments or jokes, or assumptions about someone's lifestyle based on their ethnicity.
- **Gender** harassment could include not considering people for a job based on gender stereotyping roles, or implementing practices that disadvantage one gender over another. Rude, explicit jokes, even if not directed at an individual, or comments on individuals' dress or appearance.
- Regularly arranging team meals over periods of fasting or religious occasions or failing to adjust a dress code to accommodate religious dress could be examples of harassment based on **religion/belief**.
- Excluding same sex partners from social events could be both **sexual orientation** and **marriage/civil partnership** discrimination, as could not offering the same work-related benefits.

A person does not need to be employed or have 2 years qualifying service to make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

- Job applicants who believe they have not been appointed because of a 'protected characteristic' can make a claim.
- New or established employees who are dismissed, or treated unreasonably because of a health condition can make a discrimination claim.
- An employee subjected to harassment can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.
- An employee asked to retire can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

### Legal risks

Successful unfair dismissal claims are limited to a compensation cap, whereas those for unlawful discrimination have no cap.

A positive employment culture, and swift action if conduct falls beneath acceptable standards will help mitigate the risks. An unhealthy culture will make it difficult to defend claims.

The time to defend and the cost of defending tribunal claims can be significant, irrespective of the outcome.

### Culture and behaviour

We work in eclectic communities and working environments, and a positive culture within the council enables employees with different backgrounds and beliefs to share ideas and shape how the council achieves its objectives for their community.

It is important to recognise that different individuals may find different behaviours bullying or harassing so while there is not always intent to offend or cause harm, that does not mean that the effect of the behaviour has not caused harm or offence.

It can take people a period of time to decide to raise their concerns, as they worry about consequences (perhaps from peers by complaining about a colleague who is popular, or they fear victimisation from the perpetrator or others). The council should consider whether there are opportunities (such as 121s to offer opportunity to reflect on relationships/morale) to identify issues earlier and address negative behaviours. Individuals can often mention

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*



## **PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

concerns they are experiencing but not want to take it further. The council should remind the complainant that it has a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment and remind them of the policy in place to address concerns. If the allegations mentioned are significant, the council may want to suggest that it will need to investigate further, even if a 'grievance' is not raised, so as to ensure that any concerns and risks are managed, and the council is meeting its responsibilities and duty of care as an employer.

Whilst both staff and councillors jointly determine the working culture, councillors are key in demonstrating what is and isn't acceptable behaviour. This is apparent from how councillors behave with each other in council meetings and also in how standards of behaviour are applied through the use of informal discussion and formal policies.

### **Scope**

All council representatives are expected to uphold the values of the Dignity at Work Policy, however this policy sets out how allegations from employees will be managed. As indicated in the policy, concerns from a contractor, agency worker etc. should be raised to the identified person, and an appropriate approach will be considered based on the situation and relationship of the complainant with the council.

Likewise, concerns raised about the behaviour of a contractor or agency worker would not generally be managed via the full process (such as the disciplinary process) but appropriate action would be considered based on the situation. To treat people (such as contractors, or a casual worker) engaged by the council the same as an employee could blur the status of the employment relationship, so consider seeking professional advice if needed.

### **Managers**

Recognising that councils are of varying sizes, where the term manager/nominated manager is used it is recognised this could be the clerk/chief officer, another employee of the council, or a councillor depending on the situation. It is good practice to have a clearly identified person who is the responsible 'line manager' or equivalent contact for an employee so that there is clarity on how the employee should report concerns to, who they notify if they are sick or to request leave etc. More often for council employees this may be the clerk/chief officer, and for the clerk/chief officer this could be the chair/deputy Chair, or possibly chair of a staffing/personnel committee.

### **Bullying and harassment & performance management**

The policy sets out that bullying and harassment does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. It is not uncommon for an employee, when receiving critical feedback, to claim that this is bullying and/or harassing. It is the role of the nominated manager to provide effective and constructive feedback to encourage performance at the required standard.

Even when the feedback is not positive it should be fair, communicated in a professional and reasonable manner and shared with the objective of aiding understanding and achieving an improvement to overcome the shortfalls. There is no absolute definition of when the feedback may not be appropriate. Often it will be for the person/panel hearing the dignity at work complaint/grievance to determine whether the performance management has upheld the standards expected in terms of respect and civility and any feedback has been shared in a fair and professional way.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*



## **PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Responsibilities**

All staff and representatives of the council are responsible for their own behaviour in the workplace and for taking steps to revise unacceptable behaviour and appropriately challenge that of others.

Leaders – councillors, clerks, chief officers, managers - are responsible for ensuring that these standards of treating people with civility, respect and courtesy are upheld, both through their own example, and by communicating and promoting these expectations to all employees. They are also responsible for ensuring that concerns raised are treated seriously and addressed in line with this policy in a timely manner.

### **During the investigation**

Employers have a duty of care to provide a safe place of work. If a complaint is made, discuss how to manage working relationships whilst the allegation is being investigated and until the outcome is disclosed. This is as much for the protection of the alleged perpetrator as for the aggrieved.

Consider whether a neutral person should be offered as a 'listening ear' for both parties in the investigation. This could be a councillor or nominated manager who is not involved in the investigation or allegations and can be a point of check in as raising, or being subject to allegations can be stressful.

Offer other support that may be appropriate to the situation such as signposting to support groups, time off for counselling etc. If you have suspended a staff member, your duty of care continues and it is important to consider their wellbeing and mental health.

Ensure that you communicate regularly with both parties.

The investigation and any subsequent hearing should be completed in accordance with the grievance policy which sets out a process for dealing with concerns. You should ensure that the grievance policy adopted adheres to any local policies and procedures, with consideration of any timescales and escalation routes in your locally adopted policy.

### **Confidentiality**

It may be possible for concerns to be raised with the perpetrator without disclosing the name of the complainant however in a small council it is likely that it will be clear that the accused will know where the accusation has come from. The council representative (clerk/chief officer/councillor) speaking to the alleged perpetrator must be clear that the discussion is confidential and the individual would be at risk of formal disciplinary action if there is any sort of victimisation or retaliation for the individual raising their concern.

During any formal investigation it may be necessary to disclose the nature of the allegations and where they came from to ensure a fair and balanced investigation and process. This should be discussed with the person raising the concerns to understand any issues and how they may be mitigated. In some situations, it may be appropriate to provide anonymised witness statements however this would be a last resort, and could compromise the fairness of the process. Where there is a genuine fear of consequences and this may need to be considered, it is recommended that professional advice is sought. For the same reason it can be difficult for a council to consider an anonymous complaint, however if the concerns are significant and compromise the council in their duty of care to employees, then consideration of how the deal with the matter may be required.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*





## **PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

### ***Victimisation***

All employees have the right to raise genuine concerns without the fear of reprisals. If the aggrieved (or a witness) is treated differently / less favourably because they have raised a complaint, then this is victimisation. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint, cancelling a planned training event, or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload. Victimisation can lead to a claim to an employment tribunal.

### **False allegations**

If an employee makes an allegation that they know to be untrue, or gives evidence that they know to be untrue, the council should consider the matter under the disciplinary procedure. Such an allegation would be potentially be gross misconduct.

### **Complaints against Councillors**

Following the Ledbury case, the law is clear that any formal complaint about a councillor regarding a breach of the code of conduct must be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation (either by the complainant, or the Council with agreement of the complainant). During the investigation, it is critical to ensure that where an employee of the council has made the complaint, that the council agrees reasonable measures with the employee to protect their health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties, change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

Careful consideration is required where a grievance is raised against the council as a whole due to lack of support related to councillor behaviours. The specific allegations will need to be considered to determine whether the allegations can be addressed by the council, or require exploration of the councillors' behaviour in order to respond, in which case the Monitoring Officer may be required to investigate the alleged behaviours of a/any councillors where this may relate to the code of conduct. It is a matter of fact whether the complaint is against the council and can therefore be dealt with by the council's grievance procedure or against a councillor and can only be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer.





# PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

## Pucklechurch Parish Council Environment Policy

### Purpose

To promote and ensure appropriate consideration is given to the environment whilst Pucklechurch Parish Council (PPC) and its employees or contractors are conducting its business and activities. In order to do this, PPC needs to take responsibility for its actions and need to have a sense of duty and care for the world in which we live.

### Scope

All employees, contractors, those receiving grant funding from PPC and users of PPC owned resources (land and buildings). This document also has a bearing on those with delegated authority to purchase materials and or goods from suppliers and to instruct/employ contractors to undertake various types of work with or on behalf of Council; as these third party activities can have a direct impact on the environment.

### Policy Statement

PPC is committed to protecting and maintaining the quality of the environment by managing its land and properties and carrying out its services in an environmentally sensitive way where this is practicable. PPC recognises the growing importance of environmental considerations and will, wherever practicable, promote the concepts of sustainable development. Sustainable development is about 'meeting the needs of today's society without compromising future generation's ability to meet their own needs'.

PPC believes it has a responsibility to care for and protect the environment in which it operates. PPC is fully committed to improving environmental performance across all of its activities, and will encourage our delivery partners and members of the wider community to join us in this effort.

PPC recognises its key impacts to be in the areas of:

- energy use
- raw material use
- waste generation
- emissions to air/water
- water use
- transport
- procurement

It will strive to:

- Adopt the highest environmental standards in all areas of operation, meeting and exceeding all relevant legislative requirements.
- Assess its activities and identify areas where it can minimise impacts.
- Minimise waste through careful and efficient use of all materials and energy.
- Purchase sustainable products wherever feasible [e.g. recycled, FSC or low environmental impact products and energy from renewable sources].
- Publicise its environmental position.
- Ensure contractors use good environmental practice and encourage involvement in environmental action.
- Reduce risks from environmental, health or safety hazards for parishioners.
- Adopt an environmentally sound transport strategy.
- Aim to include environmental and ethical considerations in purchasing decisions where appropriate.
- Assist in developing solutions to environmental problems.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*



## PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

- Continually assess the environmental impact of all our operations.

### **Energy**

PPC will reduce the amount of energy and water it uses by careful housekeeping and where possible use energy from sustainable sources.

### **Paper**

PPC will reduce the amount of paper it uses by:

- Writing and printing on both sides of the paper whenever possible
- Filing photocopies for use at a later date if appropriate
- Sending information electronically where appropriate
- Buying paper that is environmentally friendly

Any paper that cannot be re-used will be recycled

### **Purchasing & Contracts**

Where possible and practicable PPC will purchase its goods and services from local suppliers who share the Council's environmental viewpoint:

- Purchase and use products, which have been manufactured from recycled materials and can be disposed of in an environmentally sustainable way.
- Use contractors (as and when required) who share the Council's environmental objectives or when working for the Council, adopt equivalent environmental standards.

### **Waste Disposal**

Council (and contractors) will aim to reduce the amount of waste produced and where practicable recycle/re-use so reducing the amount of waste that goes into landfill.

PPC fully supports South Gloucestershire Council's recycling door step/kerbside collection scheme and will support and promote recycling facilities within the Parish.

All other forms of green waste collected (where practicable) will be recycled through Composters and turned into a garden mulch/soil for use in Council maintained areas.

### **Management and Maintenance**

Council (or council contractors) will:

- Assess chemicals used, ensuring there is appropriate safe disposal
- Minimise the use of harmful pesticides and herbicides.
- Compost and shred green waste and not use burning
- Routinely service and maintain equipment to ensure efficient operation.

### **Transport**

Council will liaise with the County Council and other relevant bodies in embracing all initiatives aimed at encouraging the use of, and improvements to, the public transport infrastructure. This will include schemes aimed at increasing the number of people who walk or cycle to work/school and the use of public footpaths for pedestrians and the less able-bodied people to use and enjoy.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*



## **PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Litter & Dog Fouling**

The Council will actively seek to discourage all forms of littering in particular Dog Fouling. Any incidents brought to the Council's attention will be investigated and reported to the relevant authorities including the Police and Dog Warden.

### **Natural & Historic Environment**

PPC will work to protect, enhance and preserve the natural environment within the Parish for today's and future generation's enjoyment.

### **Building & Development**

PPC will support South Gloucestershire Council's approach to managing the impact of development on the local natural and historic environment as well as its features and resources as referenced in the policies contained within its Local Plan Core Strategy 2006 – 2027.

### **Adherence to Policy**

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to notify and provide copies of this policy to contractors and councillors.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.



## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

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Dignity at work	4
People not employed by the council	4
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Grievances	5
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*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*

## **Our commitment**

The council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

This policy is intended to assist the council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

## **The law**

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

The council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

## **Types of unlawful discrimination**

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

### **Equal opportunities in employment**

The council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

#### **Recruitment**

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

#### **Working practices**

The council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The council will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

#### **Equal opportunities monitoring**

The council may monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

#### **Dignity at work**

The council has a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

#### **People not employed by the council**

The council will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by the council.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*

You should report any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others to the council who will take appropriate action.

### **Training**

The council will raise awareness of equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise. The council will raise awareness of all staff engaged to work at the council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.

### **Your responsibilities**

Every employee is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

### **Grievances**

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the council's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy. The council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be monitored periodically by the council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

*This policy is reviewed annually by the council at the annual council meeting when any relevant changes will be made. See minutes for further details*





Pucklechurch Parish Council  
25 Parkfield Rank  
Parkfield Road  
Pucklechurch  
South Gloucestershire  
BS16 9NR

Please ask for: Customer Service Centre  
Tel: 01454 868004  
Our ref: P24/01347/LB  
(Please quote at all times)  
Your ref:  
Date: 6th June 2024

## PLANNING APPLICATION

Dear Ms Dunning

**LOCATION:** Moat House Kings Lane Pucklechurch South Gloucestershire  
BS16 9PP  
**DESCRIPTION:** The repair and refurbishment of 19no. windows, including the  
replacement of existing single glazing with Fineo vacuum  
glazing units, and the replacement of existing single glazing  
within 1no. door with Fineo Vacuum glazing units.  
**REFERENCE NO:** P24/01347/LB

We have received details of an application submitted in respect of the above proposal.

The application documents should be viewed via your consultee in tray at  
<https://developments.southglos.gov.uk/online-applications/>. **All planning comments should be  
submitted through the consultee access facility, where you may also attach a separate document  
detailing your response.**

The Planning Authority has only a limited period of time within which to determine applications, and I should be grateful therefore, to receive any comments, which your Council may have on this proposal within 21 days of the date of this letter. Alternatively, any comments your Council may wish to make can be made online. In order to assist the Council in considering your response, I would be grateful if you could clearly state whether your response is either a formal objection to the proposal, no objection is raised, or you wish to make comments to be taken into account in determining the application. If no reply is received at this office within this period, the application will be considered by the Planning Authority on the assumption that your Council does not wish to make any comments.

Any comments received will be made available to members of the public and the applicant, including via the Council's website. If the application is referred to the Planning Committee, your comments will be summarised in the officer's report.

If this is a major application, you will find enclosed a Site Notice. In such a case I would be grateful if you could display the Notice on your Parish Notice Board.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please initially contact the Customer Services Centre on the above number. For your information, the Case Officer for this application is Ian Gething

Yours faithfully

**Technical Support Team Leader**





Pucklechurch Parish Council  
25 Parkfield Rank  
Parkfield Road  
Pucklechurch  
South Gloucestershire  
BS16 9NR

Please ask for: Customer Service Centre  
Tel: 01454 868004  
Our ref: P24/01402/HH  
(Please quote at all times)  
Your ref:  
Date: 13th June 2024

## PLANNING APPLICATION

Dear Ms Dunning

**LOCATION:** 5 - 6 The Vale Pucklechurch South Gloucestershire BS16 9NW  
**DESCRIPTION:** Demolition of outbuilding and erection of detached 1no. studio building.  
**REFERENCE NO:** P24/01402/HH

We have received details of an application submitted in respect of the above proposal.

The application documents should be viewed via your consultee in tray at <https://developments.southglos.gov.uk/online-applications/>. **All planning comments should be submitted through the consultee access facility, where you may also attach a separate document detailing your response.**

The Planning Authority has only a limited period of time within which to determine applications, and I should be grateful therefore, to receive any comments, which your Council may have on this proposal within 21 days of the date of this letter. Alternatively, any comments your Council may wish to make can be made online. In order to assist the Council in considering your response, I would be grateful if you could clearly state whether your response is either a formal objection to the proposal, no objection is raised, or you wish to make comments to be taken into account in determining the application. If no reply is received at this office within this period, the application will be considered by the Planning Authority on the assumption that your Council does not wish to make any comments.

Any comments received will be made available to members of the public and the applicant, including via the Council's website. If the application is referred to the Planning Committee, your comments will be summarised in the officer's report.

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If you have any questions regarding this letter, please initially contact the Customer Services Centre on the above number. For your information, the Case Officer for this application is Simon Ford

Yours faithfully

**Technical Support Team Leader**



Balance per bank statements as at 01/05/24	£
NatWest reserve account	£30,687.25
Unity Bank	£96,092.51
NatWest current account	£62,398.13
<b>Current A/C activity for May 2024</b>	
<b>NatWest current account</b>	
Less: payments for May 2024	£56.35
Plus: income for May 2024	£0.00
Balance per Natwest current A/C bank statements as at 31/05/24	£62,341.78
<b>Unity Bank</b>	
Less: payments for May 2024	£11,372.97
Plus:Unity income for May 2024	£7,124.33
Balance as at 31/05/24	£91,843.87
<b>NatWest Reserve account</b>	
Plus annual interest	£0.00
Balance per Natwest reserve A/C bank statements as at 31/01/24	£30,687.25
<b>Total bank accounts as at 31/05/24</b>	<b>£184,872.90</b>
Less: any un-presented cheques as at 31/05/24	£0.00
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/05/24	£0.00
<b>Net NatWest Current A/C balance as at 31/05/24</b>	<b>£62,341.78</b>
<b>Net Unity balance as at 31/05/24</b>	<b>£91,843.87</b>
<b>Net NatWest reserve A/C balance as at 31/05/24</b>	<b>£30,687.25</b>
<b>Total balances all bank accounts as at 31/05/24</b>	<b>£184,872.90</b>

Printscreen of May 2024 accounts						
62,398.13	30,687.25	103,216.84		56.35	0.00	11,372.97
56.35	0.00	11,372.97		307.95	0.00	18,056.84
62,341.78	30,687.25	91,843.87				
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>				
<b>D</b>	<b>184,872.90</b>		Bank rec at 31 5 24			
			NW Current A/c	62,341.78	Enter bank statement balance	
			NW Bus Reserve A/c	30687.25	Enter bank statement balance	
	134,805.36		Unity	91,843.87		
	68,432.33			184,872.90		
	18,364.79		Less: uncleared chqs			
<b>E</b>	<b>184,872.90</b>		<b>F should equal D &amp; E</b>	<b>184,872.90</b>	<b>Diff</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Print screen May 24 balance Natwest bank account

Date	Description	Paid In(£)	Withdrawn(£)	Balance(£)
04 MAY 2024	BROUGHT FORWARD			62,356.13
08 MAY	Direct Debit O2 05412111/001		14.35	62,341.78
03 JUN	Direct Debit EDF ENERGY 671063327375		18.00	62,323.78

Print screen May 2024 balance Unity bank account

20/05/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: SW Springer	£100.00	£0.00	£99,445.09
20/05/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: Anna Chelmicka	£350.00	£0.00	£99,095.09
20/05/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: Greenfields	£2,154.00	£0.00	£96,941.09
20/05/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: ALCA	£15.00	£0.00	£96,926.09
20/05/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: Primrose Gardening	£1,711.67	£0.00	£95,214.42
20/05/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: ALCA	£50.00	£0.00	£95,164.42
20/05/2024	Transfer	B/P to: Auditing Solutions	£600.00	£0.00	£94,564.42
21/05/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: Daphne Dunning	£2,605.26	£0.00	£91,959.16
23/05/2024	Direct Debit	Direct Debit (NEST)	£115.29	£0.00	£91,843.87