



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Periton Parish Council recognises its legal duties to protect its employees and Councillors from bullying and harassment and to ensure that its employees and Councillors do not bully or harass others.

We strive to offer an environment where everybody is treated with dignity and respect, therefore, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment.

We will investigate any complaint brought to our attention in a fair, independent and confidential way and, after consideration of the facts, prompt and appropriate action will be taken.

This policy aims to explain the support available and how you can address issues surrounding bullying or harassment, as well as giving guidance on what harassment and bullying actually is.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers, but is not limited to, harassment on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, beliefs, disability or age. This policy covers, but is not limited to, physical and verbal bullying and cyber bullying (referred collectively as “bullying”).

This policy outlines the expected behaviour of all employees and Councillors and the management of concerns raised under this policy.

3. BULLYING

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

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.

Bullying behaviour in the work place can include:

- Competent staff being constantly criticised, having responsibilities removed or being given trivial tasks to do
- Shouting at staff
- Persistently picking on people in front of others or privately
- Blocking promotion
- Regularly and deliberately ignoring or excluding individuals from work activities
- Setting a person up to fail by overloading them with work or setting impossible deadlines

- Consistently attacking a member of staff in terms of their professional or personal standing
- Regularly making the same person the 'butt' of jokes

Examples of non-bullying behaviours:

- Fair and reasonable criticism of your performance or behaviour
- Constructive feedback
- Not being invited to a meeting where you are not required
- Being placed on a performance procedure where your performance is not of an appropriate standard

4. HARASSMENT

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment is also unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has that same purpose or effect.

Protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Examples of bullying and harassing behaviours include when somebody:

- Puts you down or deliberately embarrasses you
- Makes insulting or offensive comments or jokes
- Scares you, makes threats or shouts at you
- Ignores you or unreasonably keeps you out of meetings or events
- Stops or blocks you from doing your job
- Threatens you or commits physical violence
- Leaves offensive items around your work area
- Makes unwelcome sexual advances or touched you in an intrusive way
- Makes sexual jokes repeatedly
- Displays pornographic photographs or drawings around your work area
- Send you messages with material of a sexual nature

5. PROCEDURE

Any employee experiencing bullying or harassment should report this to their line manager. Any complaint made against an employee will be investigated under Perton Parish 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.

We will investigate any complaint that is brought to our attention in a fair, independent and confidential way and, after considering all the facts, the appropriate action will be taken promptly.

You can either make a formal or informal complaint.

An informal complaint would involve talking to your line manager or union and addressing the other person to ask them to stop their harassing or bullying behaviour.

For information about formal complaints refer to the comments, compliments and complaints procedure.

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