

Englishcombe Parish Council

Bullying and Harassment Policy

1. Statement of Intent

The Parish Council is committed to creating a working environment that is free from bullying and harassment. All staff have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

2. Definitions

- Bullying: Repeated negative behaviour intended to undermine or intimidate.
- Harassment: Unwanted conduct affecting dignity, related to a protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010).

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, councillors, contractors, and volunteers.

4. Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

- Verbal abuse, personal insults, shouting, or ridicule.
- Physical abuse or threats.
- Spreading malicious rumours.
- Exclusion or victimisation.
- Unwelcome sexual advances or gestures.

5. Responsibilities

- The Clerk is responsible for handling complaints and ensuring policy compliance.
- All staff are responsible for upholding the values of dignity and respect.

6. Procedures

- Informal Resolution: Employees are encouraged to speak with the person involved or seek mediation.
- Formal Procedure: Submit a written complaint to the Chairman. Investigation will follow the grievance procedure.
- Investigation: An impartial Councillor or external investigator will review evidence and conduct interviews.

7. Disciplinary Action

If bullying or harassment is confirmed, the Council may take action under its disciplinary procedures, including dismissal.

Adopted: 2nd July 2025

Review: July 2026

8. Support

- Complainants and accused may be offered support and representation.
- Confidentiality will be maintained.

9. Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually and monitored through staff feedback and HR records.