

# EUXTON PARISH COUNCIL



Meeting arrangements: Full Council Meeting

Thursday, 16 November 2023, 7.15 pm start

**Annexe, Euxton PC Community Centre, Wigan Road, Euxton**

## A G E N D A

Doc. Ref

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations  
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any interest in respect of any matters contained or brought up at any point in this meeting, in accordance with the current Code of Conduct. Council will consider dispensation requests.
3. Minutes of Council Meetings  
Approve the signing as a correct record, Full Council of 19 October 2023
4. Public Participation  
Matters brought to the Parish Council by residents. The Chair may limit a member of the public to 3 minutes of speaking in order to ensure the smooth running of the meeting. Overall this section will typically be limited to 20 minutes although the Chair may, at their discretion, extend this.
5. Statutory Business
  - 5.1 Councillor casual vacancy
  - 5.2 Planning - Consider planning report from Lead Member for Planning, approve responses and ratify responses made between meetings or to meet deadlines
6. Financial Items
  - 6.1 Approve Expenditures for this month, and any submitted after the agenda Item 6.1
  - 6.2 Receive reports (income, bank reconciliation, budgets) Item 6.2
  - 6.3 To approve a new signatory on the bank accounts
7. Local boundaries and representation, draft article – VT Item 7
8. Policy Review: Social Media Policy Item 8  
Consider the circulated policy, review the document, update and approve
9. Policy Review: Dignity at Work Policy (replacing Bullying & Harassment Policy) Item 9  
Consider and review the circulated document, update and approve
10. Policy Review: Policy List for reference on progress Item 10
11. Footpaths report from PNFS local inspector – consider the report and any actions, support or response from the Council Item 11
12. Matters for information  
*Notify the Chair prior to the meeting starts of any item to be brought up under this section. Only items of information, referral to another authority, or matters offered for consideration at a future meeting can be raised. No legal decisions can be taken.*

*D. Platt*  
CLERK

Published: 11/10/23

Full Council meetings 2024 – 18 January, 15 February, 21 March, 18 April, 16 May, 20 June, 18 July, 19 September, 17 October, 21 November  
Newsletter deadlines: 07/02/24 for March issue; 08/05/24 for June issue; 07/09/24 for September issue; 09/11/24 for December issue;

Date, Valid, Ref	Description/Location (click to be directed to www)	Comment/Recommendation
Ref. No: 23/00908/MNMA   Received: Wed 25 Oct 2023   Validated: Wed 25 Oct 2023	Minor non-material amendment to planning permission ref 23/00584/FULHH (Conversion of detached garage to habitable accommodation) to replace proposed bi-fold doors with sliding patio doors 17 Whitley Drive Buckshaw Village Chorley PR7 7JY	No observations
Ref. No: 23/00875/TPO   Received: Tue 17 Oct 2023   Validated: Wed 25 Oct 2023	Application for work to a protected tree - Chorley BC TPO 1 (Euxton) 1996: Pruning of Oak tree. 29 Gleneagles Drive Euxton Chorley PR7 6FZ	Std A1
Ref. No: 23/00879/FULHH   Received: Tue 17 Oct 2023   Validated: Tue 17 Oct 2023	Two storey rear extension 12 Shawbrook Close Euxton Chorley PR7 6JY	No additional bedrooms no objections
Ref. No: 23/00913/MNMA   Received: Fri 27 Oct 2023   Validated: Fri 27 Oct 2023	Minor non-material amendment to planning permission ref: 19/00284/FULHH (Single storey front extension and pitched roof above existing outrigger) involving the erection of a conservatory, re-location of garage door and an increase in the depth of the porch 1 Greenside Euxton Chorley PR7 6AS	The application 19/00284/FULHH was conditionally granted. However, it expired in March 2022. The application follows the principals of the previous application, and no observations are made in respect of 23/00913/MNMA
Ref. No: 23/00884/TPO   Received: Wed 18 Oct 2023   Validated: Mon 30 Oct 2023	Application for works to protected trees - Chorley BC TPO 1 (Euxton) 2016: T7 - Oak, Minor over-hang to the rear of the garden - prune back no more than 1 Metre; T10 - Mature Oak, over-hanging the front driveway - prune back no more than 2 Metres from over the drive (the north east face of the tree) and crown raise the lower branches to 2.5 Metres; and T11 - Oak over-hanging grassed area and entrance into the woodland walk - Crown raise to 2.5 Metres for better access and to prevent mower damage to the tree branches. 26 Glencroft Euxton Chorley PR7 6BX	The applicant is Chorley BC

<p>Ref. No: 23/00881/TPO   Received: Wed 18 Oct 2023   Validated: Mon 30 Oct 2023</p>	<p>Application for work to a protected tree - Chorley BC TPO 13 (School Lane, Euxton) 1999: T1 Oak - 0.75 metre reduction of branches growing on the north and east side of the tree.  12 The Cherries Euxton Chorley PR7 6NG</p>	<p>Std A1</p>
<p>Ref. No: 23/00940/TPO   Received: Sat 04 Nov 2023   Validated: Tue 07 Nov 2023</p>	<p>Application for work to a protected tree - Chorley BC TPO 11 (Euxton) 1987: T10 Oak- reduce lateral branches by up to 3 meters to reduce overhang over nursery building and play area; and lowest large limb to be heavily reduced.  Euxton Methodist Church Wigan Road Euxton Chorley PR7 6LP</p>	<p>Std A1</p>
<p>Ref. No: 23/00938/DIS   Received: Fri 03 Nov 2023   Validated: Fri 03 Nov 2023</p>	<p>Application to discharge conditions no.4 (materials) attached to planning permission ref: 23/00700/FULHH (Two storey rear extension and front porch)  21 Empress Way Euxton Chorley PR7 6QB</p>	<p>No observations</p>
<p>Ref. No: 23/00927/MNMA   Received: Mon 30 Oct 2023   Validated: Mon 30 Oct 2023</p>	<p>Minor non-material amendment to planning permission ref. 09/00659/REMMAJ (Reserved matters application for five 3 storey office buildings and associated car parking and landscaping on the Southern Commercial Area Buckshaw Village) to make changes to the approved design and appearance of Buildings B and E  Land Bounded By Ordnance Road And Buckshaw Railway Station Ordnance Road Buckshaw Village</p>	<p>No observations</p>

## List of Payments made between 20/10/2023 and 30/11/2023

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
20/10/2023	Water Plus	193	51.13		Water
20/10/2023	Water Plus	194	32.77		Water
20/10/2023	RBS Bank	199	3.15		Bank chgs
20/10/2023	Water Plus	202	290.79		Water
20/10/2023	Water Plus	203	51.13		Water
24/10/2023	Euro Digital Systems	204	159.54		Photocopier
25/10/2023	SoloPress Printers	205	1,081.35		APC Calendar
31/10/2023	Southern Electric	206	82.54		Electric S'port Rd
01/11/2023	Plusnet	208	7.49		Mobile
01/11/2023	Easy Websites	209	98.40		Website & Emails
01/11/2023	Chorley Business & Technology	210	444.00		Office
16/11/2023	Stage Systems	211	1,296.37		Grant Singers
16/11/2023	PFA Consulting	212	1,200.00		Grant Prison fight
16/11/2023	DCM Surfaces	213	1,320.00		Wetpour repair G'side
16/11/2023	Eccleston Electrical	214	896.40		Defib fit/light at allots
16/11/2023	Sports Direct	215	59.99		Boots
16/11/2023	Peoples Pension	216	241.87		Pensions
16/11/2023	RBS Bank	217	0.70		Charge
16/11/2023	Various	218	7,350.33		Salaries Nov23
16/11/2023	HMRC	219	2,058.11		Tax & NI Nov23
16/11/2023	TESCO	220	28.78		Fuel
20/11/2023	Water Plus	202A	-0.09		Water
<b>Total Payments</b>			<u>16,754.75</u>		

12:26

## Current Bank A/c

## Cash Received between 20/10/2023 and 30/11/2023

---

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cash Received from</u>	<u>Receipt No</u>	<u>Receipt Description</u>	<u>Receipt Total</u>
08/11/2023	CCLA		Interest	594.80
20/10/2023	Chorley Council		CIL	18,507.80
31/10/2023	NatWest		Interest	78.22
<b>Total Receipts</b>				<b><u>19,180.82</u></b>

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% of Budget
<b>INCOME</b>						
120 <b>Housekeeping</b>						
1090 Income Publicity	679	0	(679)			0.0%
160 <b>Grants/S137</b>						
1100 Grants and Donations RCVD	1,709	0	(1,709)			0.0%
200 <b>Amenity/Utility</b>						
1100 Grants and Donations RCVD	1,084	0	(1,084)			0.0%
1550 Income Allotments	3,306	0	(3,306)			0.0%
1570 Income RRM	3,780	0	(3,780)			0.0%
220 <b>Other</b>						
1076 Precept	178,200	0	(178,200)			0.0%
1080 Bank Interest Received	5,583	0	(5,583)			0.0%
1620 Income CIL	162,911	0	(162,911)			0.0%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>357,252</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(357,252)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
100 <b>Employees</b>						
4000 Employees	66,699	110,000	43,301		43,301	60.6%
120 <b>Housekeeping</b>						
4010 Payroll Services	372	1,000	628		628	37.2%
4020 Office Premises	2,960	5,000	2,040		2,040	59.2%
4070 Mileage	1,569	3,000	1,431		1,431	52.3%
4075 Employee Training	177	3,500	3,323		3,323	5.1%
4080 General Office	3,451	5,300	1,849		1,849	65.1%
4090 Communications	2,914	4,300	1,386		1,386	67.8%
4100 Insurance	6,694	6,500	(194)		(194)	103.0%
4120 Audit	1,003	1,500	498		498	66.8%
4130 Legal Fees/Planning Investig	0	3,000	3,000		3,000	0.0%
140 <b>Council</b>						
4211 Councillor Training	35	500	465		465	7.0%
160 <b>Grants/S137</b>						
4250 Grants	14,364	11,795	(2,569)		(2,569)	121.8%
4260 Christmas Celebrations	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%
180 <b>Special Events/Projects</b>						
4300 Euxton Gala	3,829	4,500	671		671	85.1%
4310 Road Safety/SPIDs	3,500	3,500	0		0	100.0%
4340 Community Engagement	23	2,500	2,477		2,477	0.9%
4350 ECO/Trees/Foot/Cycle	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
4380 Heritage Projects	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%
4390 Defibrillator Project	3,282	6,210	2,928		2,928	52.9%
4410 Royal Celebrations	71	10,000	9,929		9,929	0.7%
4420 S	(330)	0	330		330	0.0%
200 <b>Amenity/Utility</b>						
4500 Utilities	2,053	3,000	947		947	68.4%
4510 Gardens/Planting/Competitions	1,271	10,000	8,729		8,729	12.7%

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% of Budget
4520 Allotments	3,085	15,003	11,918		11,918	20.6%
4530 Millennium Green	6,318	8,000	1,682		1,682	79.0%
4540 All Purpose Committee	901	2,500	1,599		1,599	36.0%
4560 Multi/All Weather Greenside (n	1,644	24,560	22,916		22,916	6.7%
4570 Amenity/Open Space RRM	167,021	40,000	(127,021)		(127,021)	417.6%
4581 War Memorial	0	500	500		500	0.0%
4585 Street Sweeping Machine Fund	0	4,500	4,500		4,500	0.0%
4590 Yarrow Valley Path	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
220 <b>Other</b>						
4600 Chapel Brook	0	20,000	20,000		20,000	0.0%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>292,904</b>	<b>323,668</b>	<b>30,764</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30,764</b>	<b>90.5%</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	357,252	0	(357,252)			0.0%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	292,904	323,668	30,764	0	30,764	90.5%
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>64,347</b>	<b>(323,668)</b>	<b>(388,015)</b>			
plus Transfer From EMR	170,097					
less Transfer From EMR	0					
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<b>234,444</b>	<b>(323,668)</b>	<b>(558,112)</b>			

## **At the next general election residents of Euxton South will vote to elect the South Ribble MP**

Euxton South is the part of the parish south of Chapel Brook and west of the railway. If you live on Church Walk, Park Avenue, the southern part of Wigan Road, Anderton Road, Dunrobin Drive, Fieldside Avenue, Dawbers Lane or other addresses around them, then you are in Euxton South. At present you are in the Chorley Parliamentary Constituency and your Member of Parliament is Sir Lindsay Hoyle.

### **At the next election though, this changes.**

Euxton South is in a ward with Croston and Mawdesley and, when the next general election comes round, as it soon must, Euxton South will be in the South Ribble Parliamentary Constituency. The current Member of Parliament for this constituency is Katherine Fletcher. This ward was contested in a recent local election for the seat on Chorley Borough Council vacated on the death of Councillor Keith Iddon.

The change arises from the work of The Boundaries Commission reviewing parliamentary constituency boundaries and proposing changes, where necessary, to ensure that constituencies are of similar size. This requires consequent changes to local ward boundaries that make up the parliamentary constituencies.

Euxton Parish is far too large to be a single ward. Part of it, in Buckshaw, is in a ward together with the part of Buckshaw that is in Whittle-le-Woods Parish. This ward remains in the Chorley Parliamentary Constituency. The remaining part of Euxton was still too large for the Boundaries Commission to retain as a single ward and part of it, Euxton South, had to be removed and placed in a different ward. The resulting ward, Croston, Mawdesley and Euxton South, is the largest in area in either the Chorley or the South Ribble Parliamentary Constituencies’.

All a little confusing, but one boundary unaffected by these changes is that for the Euxton Parish Council. The Parish continues to be made up of Euxton and Euxton South together with the part of Euxton in Buckshaw.

Cllr Vyn Thornhill



# Social Media Policy Proposal

## Objective

Euxton Parish Council believes that social media offers residents of Euxton an innovative and convenient way of engaging with the Council. Euxton Parish Council is exploring how social media can be used to improve how the Council communicates with residents and in doing so has set up a Facebook page and X (formerly Twitter) account. Both are called 'Euxton Council'.

## Content

Euxton Parish Council will use its social media accounts to help increase awareness of the services the Council provides as well as publishing a variety of Council information not limited to Dates of Council Meetings, Agendas and Minutes. The Council may ask for feedback on certain topics and suggestions.

The Council can also use its social media accounts to support and share posts from a number of users that may interest the residents of Euxton. Possible examples would range from events at Euxton Library, messages and updates from the Police to pending roadworks and Euxton Community Groups. The Councils social media accounts will not be used to support or promote private businesses and will be non political.

## Who can access the Facebook page and X (formerly Twitter) account?

The Facebook page and X (formerly Twitter) account are the property of the Council in exactly the same way that the website or newsletter is.

Facebook assigns an 'Owner' to a page and this has to be linked to a personal account. For the Council the 'Owner' is the Clerk and the Clerk can appoint 'Administrators' to help support in running the page.

X (formerly Twitter) operates differently and does not assign roles, it assumes all accounts are individually run. The Council can still appoint 'Administrators' and supply them with log in details.

Euxton Parish Council offers 'Administrator' status to the Clerk & Deputy Clerk and Councillors [insert position here eg; Chairman of the Council]. If either of these councillors turns down the offer, the Council, at the direction of the Council Chairman shall appoint another councillor as an 'Administrator'

The Code of Conduct applies at all times. All posts are official Council communications.

## Social Media Connections and Endorsements

There is no fixed approach on who the Council will have in its social media network, but as a guide, the connections may include the following

- Lancashire County Council, Chorley Council
- Councillors who represent any part of Euxton at any level of local or national government
- Local Community Organisations and Groups
- Local Media and News Outlets
- Police, Fire and other Emergency Services

The Council does not endorse any individual or organisation merely by virtue of creating a social media connection, regardless of the terms used by social media providers such as 'follow' or 'like'.

Once connected, the Council will not remove an individual or organisation from its network unless there is some overriding reason to do so; for example, change of councillor at election, or because the individual or organisation poses a significant and material risk to the Council's reputation and credibility.

### **Contacting the Council via Social Media**

Social networks have their own rules and guidelines, which the Council will always follow. The Council reserves the right to remove any contributions that break these rules and those listed below.

**Council may wish to add in here an instant return on any social media contacts with the Council directly from Facebook - so the sender understands the response times:**

If your enquiry is about services of the Borough or County Council it is quicker for you to report them directly to them. If you require a quick response or action from the Parish Council (about its services) Call 01257 234004 or Email [clerk@euxtoncouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@euxtoncouncil.org.uk) 😊  
Thank you for Facebook messaging the Council but we cannot monitor Social Media messages as closely as we do phone calls or emails.

**Council may wish to add in here**

### **Posting**

Council may wish to add in here a sentence about frequency of posts, items to cover eg. Christmas, Remembrance, AGM, Elections, boundary changes etc

### **Costs**

There are no initial set up costs or ongoing costs for Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) at this time or are they expected in the future.

Once the accounts are set up and the profiles ready for launch, the week to week impact on the Clerks time should not exceed 30 mins.

## **Dignity at Work Policy**

Euxton 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**

Euxton 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

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 officers/all employees engaged to work at Euxton Parish Council. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with Euxton 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 Vice Chair / Chair of Personnel Committee 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. Euxton Parish Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our workplace or at work-related events outside of the 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, [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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a person is subject to uninvited conduct that violates their dignity, in connection with a protected characteristic</li> <li>• Behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristics.</li> </ul>
Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour that leaves the victim feeling threatened, intimidated, humiliated, vulnerable or otherwise upset. It does not need to be connected to a protected characteristic.</li> </ul>

**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:

- 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.

*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**

#### **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.

**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,

- 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.*



### GUIDANCE FOR USING THIS POLICY

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 OVW 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 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.
- 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 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.

### **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.

### **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.

i

---

<sup>i</sup> The source of this document is a NALC Civility & Respect document freely available on NALC website, then adapted for our use.

**POLICY AND DOCUMENT REVIEWS**

<b>Policy or Document</b>	<b>Created/reviewed last</b>	<b>Action/Note</b>	<b>Meeting Mins www</b>	<b>Web</b>
Code of Local Government Conduct 2012 version*	Updated Code presented 19/05/2022	None - unless Gov't update		✓
Freedom of Information Publication Scheme* 'FOI'	Reviewed 16/03/2023			✓
Standing Orders*	Reviewed 17/09/2020	This is the most up to date model		✓
Financial Regulations*	Reviewed 17/09/2020	Newly written Financial Regulations due out before Summer 2024		✓
Complaints & Vexatious Complaints Policy*	Reviewed 16/02/2023			✓
Anti Fraud & Corruption Policy*	Reviewed 21/07/2022			✓
Financial Risk Assessment* <sup>1</sup>	Reviewed 19/10/2023			✓
Review of Effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit* <sup>1</sup>	Reviewed 19/10/2023			✓
Insurance Asset Register <sup>1</sup>	Reviewed 16/03/2023			✓
Audit Asset Register <sup>1</sup>	Reviewed 16/03/2023			✓
Insurance (policy and contents) <sup>1</sup>	Reviewed 19/10/2023			
Apologies protocol	Adopted 20/02/2022			
Bullying & Harassment Policy (Dignity at Work)	Created 17/09/09	Needs revised document	Nov 23	
Business Continuity Plan	Reviewed 19/10/2022			
Committee System All Purposes TOR Leisure TOR Personnel TOR Allotment TOR	Revised 18/08/11 Adopted 14/04/11 Adopted 17/09/20 Revised 19/03/15 Revised 18/04/19			
Communications Protocol	Reviewed 18/05/2023			
Contracts List	Reviewed 20/09/2023			

Councillor Vacancy Procedure	Reviewed 13/03/2023			✓
Data Protection Policy	Approved 15/10/09 Reviewed Sept11/Oct11	Needs revised document	Out to Wkg Gp	✓
Document Retention List	Reviewed 18/05/2023			✓
Equality & Diversity Policy	Approved 20/09/2023			✓
Filming/Recording Council meetings guidance	Reviewed 20/04/2023			✓
Grant Policy	Reviewed 20/01/2022			✓
Grievance and Discipline Policy	Reviewed 20/10/2022			
Health & Safety Policy	Reviewed 20/04/2023			
Investment Policy	Reviewed 19/01/2023			✓
Lone Working Policy	Reviewed 19/01/2023			✓
Meeting Guidance (for public)	Reviewed 20/07/2023			✓
Member/Employee Protocol	Reviewed 20/04/2023			
Representative Protocol	Reviewed 19/10/2023			✓
Social Media Policy	June 2015		16/11/23	X
Training Policy	Reviewed 16/02/2023			✓
Volunteer Form, Checklist, suggested areas	Reviewed 15/06/2023			

\* Documents/Policies which are required.

<sup>1</sup> Should be reviewed annually prior to 31 March

*This document is a Councillor aid to help identify the policies and documents the Council has in place and when they were introduced or reviewed last. Councillors can access all the documents which are ticked in the 'drive' column*



Euxton  
Parish Council



# Euxton Parish Footpaths

## 1. Introduction

Walking is a great way to improve or maintain your overall health. Just 30 minutes every day can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power & endurance. It can also reduce your risk of developing issues such as heart conditions, diabetes and some cancers. In today's stressful world, including the disadvantages of people working from home, mental health benefits are increasingly important. Unlike some other forms of exercise, walking is free, local and doesn't require any special equipment or training. However, good & accessible paths should be a key and affordable enabler to all people requiring access to local footpaths.

Peak & Northern Footpaths Society (PNFS) promotes the interests of public footpath users. As a registered charity, PNFS monitor, protect and improve rights of way for the benefit of everyone. Whether footpath users are ramblers, runners, dog walkers or just strollers.

## 2. PNFS - Footpath Inspectors.

PNFS Footpath Inspectors (PI) look at the rights of way in their area, report faults and obstructions to the accountable local authority and work with them to reach a satisfactory result.



Inspectors roles includes:

- 1.Walk the paths in the allocated area and get to know them. Carrying out and reporting at least once every two years
- 2.Recording footpath inspections on the PNFS Footpath Inspections Database (FID).
- 3.Report footpath faults to the relevant Highway Authority, monitor their response and communicate with PNFS when that response isn't adequate.
- 4.Comment on any proposed footpath diversions, closures or creations if requested to do so.
- 5.Respond to reports from Path Checker App in your area.

### 3. PNFS Path Checker App

The PNFS Path Checker app is designed to be used when a problem is found on a path. It shows the grid reference for the location and allows any member of public to record details about the issue and select an existing or new photograph. Then you hit Submit to send it all to PNFS. The app is completely free to download and use.

### 4. Slow Ways

Slow Ways is an initiative to create a national network of walking routes connecting all of Great Britain's towns and cities as well as thousands of villages. Using existing paths, ways, trails and roads, people can use Slow Ways routes to walk or wheel between neighbouring settlements, and combine them to create longer distance trips. It's designed to make it easier for people to imagine, plan and go on walking journeys.

There are currently over 8,000 Slow Ways stretching for over 120,000km. This network of routes was created by 700 volunteers during the Spring 2020 lockdown, creating a unique Slow Ways map in the process.

## 5. Euxton Parish Council.

Euxton parish council (EPC) have a proactive approach on local footpaths. An excellent guide is included on the website and is currently being updated. This approach provides an excellent opportunity for collaboration with the PNFS local footpath inspector.



## 6. Recommended Actions

1. Compile a strategic path plan to enable safe and open walking across the Euxton network.
  - I. Identify strategic improvements that will open up the path network to everyday walkers including Slow Ways network. Also consider dog walkers access and disabled access.
  - II. Identify funding routes to enable improvements including LCC, EPC, PNFS and other sources.
  - III. Create local walking routes to include in the walking guide. A selection of routes, distances and local interest places could be created to promote local walks (PI).
2. Path Faults Reporting
  - I. - Euxton Walking Guide and/or newsletters etc to include Path Checker link.
  - II. Any public issues will then be reported to PI and assessed.
  - III. EPC can request PI to conduct ad hoc path checks based on public reports.
  - IV. Maintenance and/or improvement issues can be assessed and reported to EPC and LCC.
3. Create volunteer group for maintenance activities.
4. Guided walks could be hosted by PI and/or others.

## 7. Next Steps

Euxton parish council (EPC) have leadership on how to move forward with such an approach, as such I am writing to offer my assistance (as a PNFS footpath inspector and local resident) to the recommended actions points above.

I would ask EPC for its thoughts on this suggested initial plan, possibly building upon these suggestions and develop a joint strategy / plan.

I am available to attend any meetings where this document, or footpaths in general, could be discussed and worked on with the EPC.