

PENCOED TOWN COUNCIL



RECOMMENDATION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE.

This document supplements/enhances the attached Dignity at Work Policy which is recommended for acceptance by The Council.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. During the BCBC clerks meeting of February 12th, 2024, many reports were made by individual clerks regarding bullying and harassment within their Town and Community Council, usually directed towards the clerk.
- 1.2. There was a general consensus amongst all in attendance that this issue ought to be resolved.
- 1.3. Thus, Pencoed Town Council as a whole needs to take pre-emptive action to prevent such issues arising.
- 1.4. A means of doing this would be taking the Civility & Respect Pledge.

2. Civility & Respect Project

- 2.1. The SLCC, NALC, OVW, and various other council associations have teamed up to produce the Civility & Respect Project due to growing concerns about the impact that bullying, harassment, and intimidation has on council staff and hence the effectiveness of local councils.
- 2.2. This project expresses the view that civility and respect should be at the heart of public life and that good governance is integral to an effective, efficient, and well-functioning democracy at all levels.
- 2.3. Therefore, the bullying, harassment, or intimidation of councillors, clerks, and council staff is absolutely unacceptable in all cases.

2.4. The Civility & Respect Working Group seeks to provide councils with the tools of good governance, to strengthen council standards, get more people involved, promote training of staff and processes to intervene to provide support to struggling councils.

3. Civility & Respect Pledge

3.1. The Town Council, can support the work of the Civility & Respect Project by taking the Civility & Respect Pledge.

3.2. By signing the pledge, the Council as a whole will agree to treat Councillors, Clerks, Employees, members of the public and representatives of other organisations and volunteers with civility and respect and that the council:

- Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff.
- Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors.
- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy.
- Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens.
- Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role/model champion council.
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for members where appropriate.

4. Recommendation

4.1. It is recommended that the Council considers to agree to take the Civility and Respect Pledge as it will further safeguard the Council, its Employees, and Members from any and all potential bullying and harassment. The adoption of the pledge would also serve to strengthen this Council's adherence to the Dignity at Work Policy and Code of Conduct.

4.2. If this recommendation is accepted by the Council, then the Clerk will sign the pledge on the Council's behalf.

Civility and Respect Pledge

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and One Voice Wales (OVW), believe now is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

By our council signing up to the civility and respect pledge we are demonstrating that Pencoed Town Council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.

Signing up is a simple process, which requires councils to register and agree to the following statements:

Statement	Tick to agree
Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.	✓
Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff	✓
Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors	✓
Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.	✓
Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.	✓
Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it and when it happens.	✓
Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme	✓
Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.	✓

March 14th, 2024.