



MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL

ANTI-HARASSMENT AND ABUSE POLICY – (COUNCILLORS)

Reviewed by:	Policy Review Task and Finish Group – 13 March 2023
Adopted:	Full Council – 18 May 2023
Next review due:	May 2027

MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL

ANTI-HARASSMENT AND ABUSE POLICY (COUNCILLORS)

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1. Malvern Town Council (hereafter known as 'the Council') will not tolerate any instances of violence relating to members acting in their roles as Malvern Town Councillors. All Councillors have the right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Council-related violence is defined as any incident in which a Councillor is abused, threatened or assaulted by a member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of their activities as a Malvern Town Councillor.

3. Councillors

- 3.1. All Councillors have personal responsibility for their own behaviour and for ensuring that they comply with this policy. Councillors should do the following to help identify and prevent council-related violence:

- i. Do not accept instances of violence directed towards themselves or others. Councillors should report any instances of violence, threats or abuse to the Town Clerk and the Mayor. Any report should include details about when it happened, who was involved and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident.
- ii. Offer good customer service and be aware of the needs of the electorate of Malvern.
- iii. Recognise the potential for situations to escalate and take action to resolve these early on. The Town Clerk should be informed if Councillors believe a customer or member of the public might cause problems.
- iv. Be aware of the Councillor Code of Conduct and comply with it.
- v. Be supportive of fellow Councillors who are victims of council-related harassment.

- 3.2. Councillors have a responsibility to act in a way that does not incite or increase the likelihood of violence or harassment. Any Councillor found to be encouraging or inciting harassment/abuse may be reported to the Monitoring Officer.

4. Actions following an incident

- 4.1. If a Councillor has been abused, threatened or attacked, they should approach the Town Clerk and the Mayor for assistance. All serious incidents must be reported to the Town

Clerk or in their absence, the Operations Manager, who will record the details in the Town Council offices.

4.2. The police should be informed immediately of a serious incident involving physical attack or serious cases of threatening or verbal abuse. This should be done by the Councillor involved and then reported to the Town Clerk and the Mayor.

4.3. The police should also be informed of persistent cases of violence, threats and abuse and this should be done by the Councillor involved in conjunction with the Town Clerk and/or Mayor.

4.4. All serious incidents should be recorded in writing and less serious incidents reported verbally.

4.5. Medical assistance should be sought and provided immediately where required.

5. Reporting and recording systems

5.1. Councillors have a responsibility to report to the Town Clerk and Mayor incidents of council-related violence, including threats and verbal abuse. All incidents including physical attacks, serious or persistent threats and verbal abuse must be recorded in writing at the Town Council offices.

5.2. Details recorded should include when the incident occurred, who was involved and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident.

5.3. Should any incidents involve either the Town Clerk or Mayor, Councillors should inform whichever of those is not involved who will then inform another Town Council Officer with management responsibility or the Chair of a council committee as appropriate.

5.4. The Town Clerk or their deputy will monitor less serious occurrences and take action if there is an increase in the number of reports. This action may include contacting the police, reviewing the risk assessment, and considering further prevention measures.

5.5. Councillors reporting incidents will be given full support during the process and if urgent action is required, the Mayor or Town Clerk will call a meeting of the Emergency Decision Making Group to ensure prompt action is taken.

6. Review and action

6.1. The Council recognises that it is important to review regularly this policy to ensure that it reflects up to date equality legislation and best practice.

- 6.2. A review of the Anti-harassment and Abuse Policy (Councillors) will be carried out as least once every council term as a minimum and any necessary actions taken.