

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – TUESDAY JANUARY 10TH 2023

Item 11 – To receive and approve a report recommending that the Council signs the NALC/SLCC Civility & Respect Pledge

BACKGROUND

As part of item 9 at the November 8th 2022 meeting the Parish Council agreed to a recommendation in a report from the Personnel & Governance Advisory Committee to adopt the Local Government Association Code of Conduct for members.

Those present also noted that this was a step towards the Council adopting the NALC/SLCC Civility and Respect Pledge, details of which were included in the supporting documents for the report.

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.

Definition of Civility and Respect

Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Examples of ways in which you can show respect are 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.

By councils signing up to the civility and respect pledge they are demonstrating that their 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. Some 800 councils have already signed up.

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 committed to training councillors and staff.	
Our council has signed up to the 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 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.	

RECOMMENDATION

That Copythorne Parish Council signs up to the NALC/SLCC Civility and Respect Pledge.

Cllr. Graham Chillcott

Chairman, Copythorne Parish Council

December 20th 2022

CIVILITY AND RESPECT PROJECT



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

ISSUE 4 | AUGUST 2022

SIGN UP TO THE CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

It is evident the vast majority of councillors and officers want to maintain the highest standards of conduct at their council, but unfortunately there are still too many examples of poor behaviour across our sector.

In councils where councillors, the clerk, and staff work in harmony, considerable benefits are provided for the local community and there are many excellent examples of this.

Unfortunately, as we know only too well in our sector there is, and has been a problem with lack of civility and respect in some councils, leading to bullying and harassment. Although this is in the minority it is nonetheless significant and can have a serious detrimental impact on the well-being of those involved, the functionality and finances of the council, as well as the local community.

There is no place for bullying, harassment, and intimidation within our sector and signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge is one of the ways a council can demonstrate that it is committed to standing up to poor behaviour across our sector, and to demonstrate positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

By signing the pledge, your council is agreeing that it will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles, and it:

- 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 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 practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support civility and respect, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

We invite all councils to include an agenda item to review the statements and sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge. Click to take the pledge: [SLCC](#) | [NALC](#).

There is also an [example agenda item for the pledge to assist you](#).



WELCOME TO THE CIVILITY AND RESPECT PROJECT NEWSLETTER

PROJECT UPDATE

We have started to deliver against the objectives set out at the start of the project.

There is now a bespoke training offering to support you, enhance your skills and confidence to handle incivility, disrespect, and poor behaviour. We are also delighted to announce the launch of 'The Pledge' to help your council encourage the right behaviours, stamp out bullying, and demonstrate high standards of conduct.

We are inviting all councils to please take the pledge.



CIVILITY AND RESPECT TRAINING



One of the key aims of the project is to deliver training packages to support councillors, clerks, and employees who are experiencing difficulties with bullying and harassment. We have worked with key partners to create a brand-new series of workshops and are delighted to share the first range of this training with you. The cost for attendance will be supplemented by the project, with a 50% discount being offered until the end of 2022. If we have a high demand for places, we will schedule additional dates (the workshops are delivered virtually).

Breakthrough Communications are experts in the field of training for local councils. They have created a **suite of bespoke workshops and resource packs** for local council clerks, officers, and councillors as part of the Civility and Respect Project.



Each package comprises useful guides and custom-designed toolkits as well as access to on-demand and live virtual training events.

Separate packages have been designed for clerks/officers and councillors, click on the titles below to book your place.

****Resilience and Emotional Intelligence - What it means in practice for clerks and council officers****

Delegate fee £30

The learning content, live workshop, and toolkits will enable participants to develop a better understanding of where our behaviour comes from, consider what resilience means for us in the context of our different local council roles, and will provide an opportunity to explore role-focused scenarios and how we might respond to those different scenarios. We'll consider strategies to manage and deal with different situations effectively, and provide guidelines and suggestions, based on worked-through scenarios. We'll also lead the user through a set of exercises, input, and self-reflection, as well as providing a useful resource pack for building your own resilience and emotional intelligence.

****Leadership in Challenging Situations - Dealing with challenging situations and working with others effectively****

Delegate fee £30

The learning content, live workshop, and toolkits will enable participants to deal with a range of role-focused challenging situations, as well as exploring how we can work with others more effectively. We will consider different leadership styles and approaches in the context of your role, exploring which styles we personally 'default' to and which styles can work effectively for different situations. We will explore scenarios of challenging situations we might face, and discuss how we might deal with these effectively and appropriately. We'll also consider how to build, support, and get the most from an effective and motivated team.

****Respectful Social Media — How to deal with attacks and negative engagement****

Delegate fee £30

The learning content, live workshop, and toolkits will enable participants to explore different methods and strategies for dealing with negative attacks on social media and ways in which you can keep control of social media output. We will consider how we come across on social media as councils, as well as individually, what our personal 'digital tone of voice' sounds like, explore our use of language and its role in positive two-way communication, as well as discussing the type of content we can post on social media depending on our role. For councillors, we will provide suggested social media dos and don'ts and how to be effective on social media, whilst bearing in mind issues around the Code of Conduct. For clerks and officers will explore how the council can de-mystify the role of the council and showcase its people in order to help pre-emptively deal with negative engagement and attacks.

Personal development themed comedian, intuitive catalyst, speaker, author and communications specialist, Becky Walsh has been turning the dry world of self-development on its head with a down-to-earth, uniquely funny style for over two decades. She has created these civility and respect themed webinars to support some of the key issues faced by our sector.



****Civility and respect — Uncovering the issues for the public sector****

Delegate fee £15

Condescending comments, demeaning emails, disrupting meetings, reprimanding someone publicly, talking behind someone's back, giving someone the silent treatment, not giving credit where credit is due, rolling eyes, and being yelled at, is a regular occurrence for many councils. In this webinar, we talk about the issues we face in our council roles. We will then talk about the impact this has on the individuals involved and the organisation as a whole.

Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

Councillors only session - 12 September 2022 — 1.30 pm (60 minutes)

To register a place, clerks please email sue@haptc.org.uk, copying in your councillor delegate(s).

Clerks only session - 8 September 2022 — 11am (60 minutes) **SLCC | Uncovering the issues for public sector.**

****What makes people become challenging?****

Delegate fee £15

In this webinar, we dive into human psychology, neuroscience, and power dynamics. What triggers people to behave from the worst of themselves? How as leaders can we create environments with fewer trigger situations and more safety? We will discuss real-life situations and how to turn them around when they start to get out of hand.

Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

Councillors only session - 26 September 2022 — 1.30 pm (60 minutes)

To register a place, clerks please email sue@haptc.org.uk, copying in your councillor delegate(s).

Clerks only session - 22 September 2022 – 11am (60 minutes) **SLCC | What makes people become challenging?**

****Personal resilience and self-protection****

Delegate fee £15

Having a good understanding of yourself means you'll know what to do when someone tries to push your buttons. In this webinar, we discuss emotional resilience and emotional intelligence and how this applies to specific council situations.

Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

Councillors only session - 3 October 2022 — 1.30 pm (60 minutes)

To register a place, clerks please email sue@haptc.org.uk, copying in your councillor delegate(s).

Clerks only session - 6 October 2022 – 11am (60 minutes) **SLCC | Personal resilience and self-protection.**

****Understanding psychopathic and narcissistic behaviour****

Delegate fee £15

Both psychopathic and narcissistic people generally lack empathy and tend to have unrealistically high opinions of themselves. They often exploit and manipulate others and can be hard to spot as they can also be superficially charming. They are also attracted to roles of power and are often found in leadership positions and in political roles. In this webinar, we learn how to spot them and how to monitor your own behaviour to lessen their impact on you and your organisation.

Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

Councillors only session - 17 October 2022 — 1.30 pm (60 minutes)

To register a place, clerks please email sue@haptc.org.uk, copying in your councillor delegate(s).

Clerks only session - 20 October 2022 — 11am (60 minutes) **SLCC | Understanding psychopathic and narcissistic behaviour.**

Paul Hoey and Natalie Ainscough of Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd are national experts in effective local governance with a particular emphasis on supporting the local standards framework for members introduced by the Localism Act 2011. They worked with the Local Government Association (LGA) to produce the latest Code of Conduct and so are uniquely placed to deliver this workshop.

Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd
Supporting Local Governance

****The (New) Code of Conduct****

Delegate fee £15

This session is aimed at members and officers of local councils who have adopted the new Local Government Association (LGA) Code of Conduct for members (as endorsed by NALC and SLCC) or who are considering adopting it. It will look at key aspects of the code, the practical implications of working with it and look at the guidance which sits alongside it.

This is an interactive session where attendees will be invited to ask questions about any aspect of the code, as the session aims to help people understand how to effectively implement the code at a local level.

Councillors only session - 19 October 2022 — 7 pm (120 minutes)

To register a place, clerks please email sue@haptc.org.uk, copying in your councillor delegate(s).

Clerks only session - 28 September 2022 – 10am (120 minutes) **SLCC | The New Code of Conduct.**

For more information about the training available, please contact michelle.moss@nalc.gov.uk.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

Develop your career, support your council and strengthen your community

In addition to the civility and respect training programme we're pleased to be able to share details of an event being run by the year six students studying the community governance degree, De Montfort University.

****Managing conflict and difficult conversations****

Delegate fee - £90

The training specifically covers conflict management; a thread of management essential to the clerking industry given the depth and breadth of communications and dealings clerks have with other people and organisations.

The event will be led by Sue Noble from www.noblelearning.co.uk, a highly experienced coach and mentor who has extensive experience in the local government sector and training staff from town and parish councils.

It will be an interactive event, enabling attendees to actively learn new coping skills and mechanisms, whilst building relationships with other professionals in the town and parish sector.

At the end of the formal training session, there will be an opportunity to network with colleagues and hear about further training opportunities, whilst sampling delicious wines from Oaken Grove.

For clerks only - 14th September 2022 | Henley Town Hall, Henley on Thames, RG9 2A | [SLCC](#) | **Managing Conflict and Difficult Conversations**.

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

One of the project objectives is to strengthen the governance arrangements across our sector to better support councils.

The Dignity at Work Policy is the first of a series of new or revised governance documents which are being developed by the project team.

The documents have been reviewed by a focus group made up of clerks, councillors, monitoring officers, and county associations, and approved by NALC and SLCC for use.

The Dignity at Work Policy will replace any previous Bullying and Harassment Policy. It encompasses behaviours beyond bullying and harassment, and zero tolerance, with the aim of dealing with concerns before they escalate.



It has been produced with supporting guidance because it is so 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 Civility and Respect Pledge.

Councils who 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.

Dignity at Work Policy

**Please visit our dedicated civility and respect pages
for lots more information and support**

[SLCC](#) | Civility and Respect Project and
[NALC](#) | Civility and Respect Project



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

Civility and Respect Pledge suggested agenda item:

‘To pass a resolution to sign up to the civility and respect pledge’

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