



# Policies & Procedures

POLICIES & PROCEDURES



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# Child Protection Policy

## Introduction

The Council will take all reasonable steps to preserve the rights of young people as while engaged in Council activities or using Council facilities.

The Council recognises its responsibilities under the terms of the Children Act 2004, and other relevant legislation to make arrangements for ensuring that it has regard to need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people when discharging its functions.

The Council will to do this by:

- Raising awareness throughout the Council and beyond of this policy.
- Requiring all working on behalf of the Council to adhere to this policy.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all its services
- Requiring staff and volunteers who work with children and young people to be subject to the appropriate level Criminal Records Bureau check.
- Implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures where allegations of breaches are made by its staff or members.

## Procedures

These procedures advise staff, members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse.

### Responding To Concerns and Allegations:

It is the duty of any member, or council employee or volunteer to report any concerns about a child being subject to abuse, receiving a disclosure or being aware of members or colleagues behaving in an inappropriate manner. All reports should be treated as confidential and with respect to the person raising the concern regardless of the outcome.

In general there are 3 situations that staff, members and volunteers may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse:

1. Responding to a child or young person disclosing abuse
2. Responding to allegations or concerns about a member of staff, elected member or volunteer
3. Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person

### **In the case of an emergency where a child is in danger phone 999 immediately**

Record in writing all the details that you are aware of and what was said, using the child or young person's own words, immediately. Include the following:

1. The date and time

2. The child or young persons name, address and date of birth
3. The nature of the allegation
4. Your observations – a description of the child or young person’s behaviour, physical and emotional state and any visible injuries
5. Exactly what the child or young person said and what you said. Record the child or young persons account of what has happened as closely as possible
6. Sign and date

Do not ask questions, other than the child or young person’s name, address and date of birth. Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you.

Contact local Social Services or the Police without delay and follow their guidance.

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Social Services or the Police must be the ones to inform parents or guardian and the person about whom allegations are being made.

Recorded information should be handed over to Social Services or the Police and any copies stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection legislation.

## Photography

All photography should be made in public where young people are involved. The child or young person should be happy with having their picture taken.

The names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person’s parent.

There may be occasions when photographs of groups of children are taken at public events. Permission to use such images in the press, in village magazines, or on the website would not normally be expressly sought.

## Parks & Play Areas

The Council owns land and play areas which are open to the public, including children and young people, at all times. While the Council has insurance in place, people use these facilities at their own risk.

Parents and carers should ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times.

July 2011

# Complaints Policy

*'A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.'*

Local Government Ombudsman

## Procedure

This policy sets out how the Council will deal with complaints in relation to its administration and procedures.

All complaints should be made in writing and addressed to the Clerk to the Council (or Chairman of the Council where the complaint relates to the Clerk). The Clerk (or Chairman) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint.

### Stage 1

On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk to the Council (or Chairman if the complaint relates to the Clerk) shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant.

The Clerk to the Council (or Chairman) shall report to the next meeting of the Council detail of any complaint settled directly with the complainant.

### Stage 2

Where it is not possible to settle a complaint at Stage 1, the complainant shall have the option to progress the complaint to Stage 2 where it will be considered by the Full Council.

#### Before the Meeting

- The complainant will be invited to attend the Meeting of the Council at which their complaint will be considered. They may bring with them a representative if they wish.
- The complainant shall also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether, for example, notice of it will be given in the usual way.
- Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The Council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which it wishes to rely on at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

#### At the Meeting

- The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
- The chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
- The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and questions may be asked by (i) the clerk or other nominated person and then (ii), Members.

- The Clerk or other nominated person will have an opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii), Members.
- The Clerk or other nominated person and the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
- The Clerk or other nominated person and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties shall be invited back.

#### After the Meeting

- The decision will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days together with details of any action to be taken.

### Complaints about Members of the Council

Complaints about Members of the Council will not be dealt with under this Procedure, but should be made to the Monitoring Officer of Durham County Council and dealt with under such procedure as in place at the relevant time.

### Freedom of Information

Where a requestor expresses dissatisfaction at the response to a Freedom of Information request and requires an Internal Review to be undertaken, this shall be dealt with as at Stage 2 of this Procedure.

Cornsay  
PARISH COUNCIL

July 2011



# Data Protection Policy

The Data Protection Act 1998 (the Act) sets standards for the handling of personal information and regulates how personal information can be collected and used. The Data Protection Act applies to anyone holding personal information about individuals electronically or on paper.

This Policy Statement formalises the Council's position and states its commitment to maintaining the confidentiality of personal information.

The Council is registered as a Data Controller under the Act (Reg. No. Z2749294) and as such has notified the Information Commissioner that it holds personal data about individuals.

In this Statement definitions mean:

**Personal Data:** data relating to a living individual who can be identified from that information.

**Processing:** in relation to data means obtaining, recording or holding such data or information or carrying out any operation on it including disclosure.

**Data Subject:** an individual who is the subject of personal data.

When dealing with personal data, Members and Officers shall ensure:

Data is processed fairly and lawfully

This means that personal information should only be collected from individuals if staff and Councillors have been open and honest about why they want the personal information.

Data is processed for specified purposes only

Data is relevant to what it is needed for

Only data that is needed should be held.

Data is accurate and kept up to date

Personal data should be accurate, if it is not it should be corrected.

Data is not kept longer than it is needed

Data no longer required shall be shredded or securely disposed of.

Data is processed in accordance with the rights of individuals

Individuals must be informed, upon request, of all the personal information held about them.

Data is kept securely

Only Members and Officer can access the data. It cannot be accessed by members of the public.

The Council recognises its responsibility to be open with people when taking personal details from them. This means that Members and Officers must be honest about why they want a particular piece of personal information. If, for example, a member of the public gives their phone number to the Council, this will only be used for the purpose it has been given and will not be disclosed to anyone else without the person's permission.

The Council may hold personal information about individuals such as their addresses and telephone numbers. These will be securely kept and are not available for public access. Once data is not needed any more, is out of date or has served its use it will be shredded or securely disposed of.

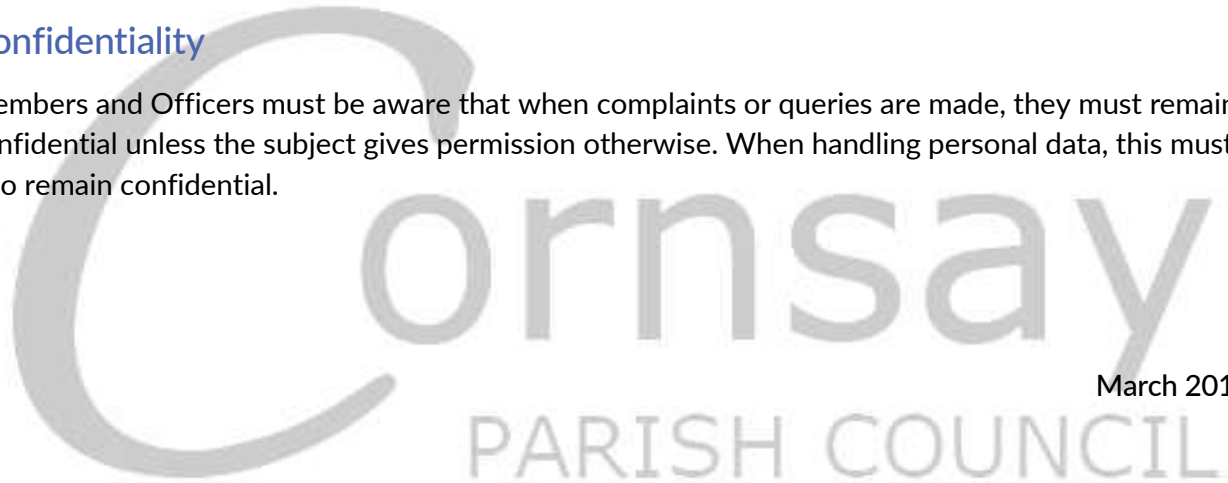
The Council acknowledges that people have the right to access any personal information that is held about them. If any person requests to see any data that is being held about them they shall be sent all personal information being held about them within 40 days. The Council will charge a fee of £10 per subject access request.

## Disclosure

If a Member requires access information to carry out their duties, this is acceptable. However, they shall only be able to access as much information as necessary and it should only be used for that specific purpose. If, for instance, someone has made a complaint a Councillor may access an address and telephone number of the person who has made the complaint so they can assist with the enquiry. Data should never be used for political reasons unless the data subjects have consented.

## Confidentiality

Members and Officers must be aware that when complaints or queries are made, they must remain confidential unless the subject gives permission otherwise. When handling personal data, this must also remain confidential.



March 2011

# Disciplinary Policy

This policy is based on and complies with the 2009 ACAS Code of Practice. It is designed to help council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.

The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

This policy confirms:

- the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
- the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used to when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see the Acas publication "How to manage performance"
- employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
- employees may be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or a work colleague at any disciplinary or investigatory meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case
- the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions.
- If the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date. Any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998
- recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action. The appeal decision is final
- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure, raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure

- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include an oral warning, written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it.
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the Council's and the employee's consent.

### Examples of misconduct

Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct.

- unauthorised absence
- poor timekeeping
- misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
- inappropriate behaviour
- refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- breach of health and safety rules.

### Examples of gross misconduct

Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct.

- bullying, discrimination and harassment
- incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
- violent behaviour
- fraud or theft
- gross negligence
- gross insubordination
- serious breaches of health and safety rules
- serious and deliberate damage to property
- use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
- disclosure of confidential information.

### Examples of unsatisfactory work performance

- inadequate application of office procedures
- inadequate IT skills
- unsatisfactory management of staff
- unsatisfactory communication skills.

## Disciplinary Investigation

There will be an investigation of the facts. The council will appoint a staffing committee consisting of 5 members who will appoint an Investigator who will be responsible for undertaking the disciplinary investigation. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a councillor. If the staffing committee considers that there are no councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The Investigator will be asked to submit a report within 20 working days of appointment. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be necessary and the council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage (Disciplinary Meeting).

The staffing committee will first notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and ask him/her to attend a meeting with the Investigator. The employee will be given at least five working days' notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that he/she has reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee should be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when he/she meets with the Investigator, he/she will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.

Employees may be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or a work colleague at any investigatory meeting.

If there are other persons (eg employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.

The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. His/her role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the staffing committee whether or not disciplinary action should be taken.

The Investigator's report will contain his/her recommendations and the findings on which they were based. He/she will recommend either:

- the employee has no case to answer and there should be no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure
- the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or
- the employee has a case to answer and there should be action under the Council's disciplinary procedure.

The Investigator will submit the report to the staffing committee which will decide whether further action will be taken.

If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

## The Disciplinary Meeting

If the staffing committee decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a staffing sub-committee of three councillors. The staffing sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The sub-committee's letter will confirm the following:

- the names of its Chairman and other two members
- details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
- a copy of the investigation report, all the supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
- the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing (at least 15 working days) so that he /she has sufficient time to prepare for it
- that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least five working days before the meeting
- that the employee and the Council will provide each other with all supporting evidence at least five working days before the meeting. If witnesses are not attending the meeting, witness statements will be submitted to the other side at least five working days before the hearing
- that the employee may be accompanied by a companion, either a trade union representative or a work colleague

The disciplinary meeting will be conducted as follows:

- the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee
- the investigator will present the findings of the investigation report
- the Chairman will set out the council's case and present supporting evidence (including any witnesses)
- the employee (or the companion) will set out his/her case and present evidence (including any witnesses)
- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness
- the employee (or the companion) will have the opportunity to sum up his/her case
- the Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The Chairman will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision
- the disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.

## Disciplinary Action

If the sub-committee decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

## Oral warning

An oral warning is issued for most first instances of minor misconduct. The council will notify the employee:

- of the reason for the warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- of the right to appeal
- that a note confirming the oral warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for six months.

## Written warning

If there is a repetition of earlier misconduct which resulted in an oral warning, or for different and more serious misconduct, the employee will normally be given a written warning. A written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for 12 months.

## Final written warning

If there is further misconduct during the period of a written warning or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:

- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for 18 months.

## Dismissal

The council may dismiss:

- for gross misconduct
- if there is no improvement within the specified time period in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning

- if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.

The council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, he/she will receive a written statement of the reasons for his/her dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of his/her right of appeal.

If the sub-committee decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action imposed as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless and until it is modified as a result of an appeal.

## The Appeal

An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. His/her written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.

The grounds for appeal include;

- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
- the sub-committee's decision was not supported by the evidence
- the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
- new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.

The Appeal will be heard by a panel of three members who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three members of the council who may include members of the staff committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion, either a trade union representative or a work colleague.

At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:

- introduce the panel members to the employee
- explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the staffing sub-committee
- explain the action that the appeal panel may take.

The employee (or his companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.

The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal hearing.



The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the staffing committee, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.

If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.

The appeal panel's decision is final.

February 2013



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# Dispensation Policy

## Introduction

Parish Councils are now responsible for determining requests for a dispensation by a parish councillor 'under Section 33 of Localism Act 2011. This is because they are a 'relevant authority' under section 27(6) (d) of the Act.

## Purpose

In certain circumstances councillors may be granted a dispensation which enables them to take part in Council business where this would otherwise be prohibited because they have a 'Disclosable Pecuniary Interest'. The Council has also agreed to extend this provision to items where a councillor has an 'Other Registerable Interest' or a 'Non-Registerable Interest'.

Provided councillors act within the terms of their dispensation there is deemed to be no breach of the Code of Conduct or the law.

Section 31(4) of the Localism Act states that dispensations may allow the Councillor:

- (a) to participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting(s); and/or
- (b) to participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting(s).

If a dispensation is granted, the Councillor may remain in the room where the meeting considering the business is being held.

**Please note: If a parish councillor participates in a meeting where he/she has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and he/she does not have a dispensation, they may be committing a criminal offence under s34 Localism Act 2011.**

## Process

Any councillor who wishes to apply for a dispensation must make a request in writing and submit it to the Proper Officer of the parish council (ie the Parish Clerk) as soon as possible before the meeting which the dispensation is required. Requests may also be made at the parish council meeting itself and the nature of the interest has only become apparent to a councillor at the meeting itself.

## Consideration

The Council may grant a dispensation to a councillor who has an interest to participate in any discussion of a matter at a meeting and/or to participate in any vote on the matter if they consider that:

- (a) so many members of the decision-making body have interests that it would impede the transaction of the business (ie the meeting would be inquorate); or

- (b) the authority considers that the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or
- (c) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

## Criteria

In reaching a decision on a request for a dispensation the Council will take into account:

- (a) the nature of the Councillor's interest
- (b) the need to maintain public confidence in the conduct of the Council's business
- (c) the possible outcome of the proposed vote
- (d) the need for efficient and effective conduct of the Council's business
- (e) any other relevant circumstances.

## Terms of Dispensations

Dispensations may be granted:

- (a) for one meeting; or
- (b) for a period not exceeding 4 years.

## Disclosure

Any Councillor who has been granted a dispensation must declare the nature and existence of the dispensation before the commencement of any business to which it relates.

A copy of the dispensation will be kept with the Register of Councillors' Interests.

Commsay  
PARISH COUNCIL

January 2013

# Equal Opportunities Policy

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation

This Council is committed to Equal Opportunities and acknowledges its obligations to

- To eliminate discrimination and harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- To foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

The Council also undertakes not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of trade union membership and activity, political belief and unrelated criminal convictions.

The Council aims to be free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation of any kind. The Council will ensure that all its consultations with staff and the community it serves are conducted in a fair manner and are accessible to all sectors of the workforce and the community as appropriate.

The Council is committed to developing, implementing and reviewing its policy.



September 2011

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# Filming & Broadcasting Policy

## Introduction

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 issued under s43(2) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 came into force on the 6<sup>th</sup> August 2014.

This amended the requirements of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960. The 1960 Act provided that members of the public had no statutory right to film, take photographs or record full Council or Committee meetings (those meetings that are open to the public).

The amended 1960 Act provides that a person **may not orally report** or comment about a meeting as it takes place if he is present at the meeting of a Parish Council or its Committees but otherwise may:

- (a) Film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting.
- (b) Use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;
- (c) Report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or **orally report or comment after the meeting**.

## Guidelines and Principles

These have been produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

### **Open and Accountable Local Government - A guide for the press and public on attending and reporting meetings of Local Government**

The plain English Guide gives practical information about what the new rules mean for members of the public attending meetings of local government bodies, this includes Parish and Town Council.

Part 1 is the relevant section and focuses on the use of various communication tools for reporting the proceedings of any meeting of a local government body which is open to the public.

DCLG guidance suggests that Councils may wish to have a policy in place in respect of the filming, recording, photographing or other reporting of (i) persons who object to the same and (ii) children and vulnerable adults.

## Council Policy Statement

The Council acknowledges that it is required by legislation to allow any member of the public to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings.

The Council acknowledges that **no** prior permission is required but asks that any person wishing to film or audio record a public meeting let Council staff know in order that all necessary arrangements can be made for the public meeting.

The Council will provide “reasonable facilities” to facilitate reporting.

The Council will provide a space to view and hear the meetings, seats and a table. This will not be part of the seating arrangements for the Council itself or an area required by Council staff or invited guests.

It is not permitted to provide a running verbal commentary.

Those undertaking reporting must not act in a disruptive manner. This could be any action or activity which disrupts the conduct of meetings or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film etc. the proceedings.

Examples are listed but are not inclusive:

- Moving to areas outside the areas designated for the public without the consent of the Chairman,
- Excessive noise in recording or setting up or re-siting equipment during the debate/discussion.
- Intrusive lighting and use of flash photography; and
- Asking for people to repeat statements for the purpose of recording.

Public will be excluded from a meeting, under the Council’s Standing Orders, if acting in a disruptive manner.

Recording equipment must be removed from the chamber if at any stage the meeting becomes a private meeting.

No trailing cables or plugging in to sockets of electrical equipment will be permitted.

Children and vulnerable adults are not to be filmed, recorded or photographed or otherwise reported about where the relevant responsible adult has not given consent (which in the case of a vulnerable adult is a medical professional, their carer or legal guardian, and in the case of a child, their parent, legal guardian or teacher).

Part of the public area will be used, if required, for children and vulnerable adults or those public attending who do not wish to be filmed, however, this is within the limitation of the Council Chamber and its layout.

Persons taking part in the public participation section, excluding children and vulnerable adults as indicated above, may be filmed, recorded or photographed or otherwise reported whether they are in a designated area or not.

Persons filming meetings etc. are likely to record personal data of individuals. These persons must take care to ensure that personal data is used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## Responsibilities

The policy is intended to clarify the requirements of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 for the benefit of employees, Councillors, members of the public and members of the press.



The Chairman of the Council or Committee meetings will be responsible for its implementation and deal with any disruption associated which disrupts the conduct of meetings or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film, audit record, take photographs and use social media such as tweeting and blogging.

The Chairman of the Council or Committee will remind those present at the meeting of this Policy. In particular reminding individuals who wish to film to avoid those who have expressed a wish not to be filmed or children or vulnerable adults without the express permission of the parent or responsible adult.

### Enforcement of the Policy

Enforcement of the policy will be undertaken by the Chairman of the Council or Committee meeting as appropriate.

Behaviour deemed to be disruptive will be dealt with under Council Standing Order No. 2 (Disorderly Conduct at Meetings)

September 2014



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Cornsay  
PARISH COUNCIL

# Grievance Policy

## Introduction

This policy is based on and complies with the 2009 ACAS Code of Practice. It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.

This policy confirms:

- employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a trade union representative or work colleague. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for his /her grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case
- the Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date.
- any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final
- information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and
- action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998
- recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure
- if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the Council's and the employee's consent.

## Informal Grievance Procedure

The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with his/her manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the chairman or vice-chairman.

## Formal Grievance Procedure

If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally, the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the chairman or vice-chairman.

The Council will appoint a staffing committee of 5 members who will appoint a sub-committee of three members to investigate the grievance. The sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.

## Investigation

The sub-committee will investigate the matter before the grievance meeting which may include interviewing others (e.g. employees, councillors or members of the public).

## Notification

Within 10 working days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance, the employee will be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The sub-committee's letter will include the following:

- the names of its Chairman and other members
- a summary of the employee's grievance based on his/her written submission
- the date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will be within 25 working days of when the council received the grievance
- the employee's right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague
- a copy of the Council's grievance policy
- confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses at least five working days before the meeting
- confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence at least five working days before the meeting.

## The grievance meeting

At the grievance meeting:

- the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee
- the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence.
- the Chairman will ask the employee what action does he/she wants the council to take

- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
- the Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the council will take and of the employee's right to appeal
- a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.

## The appeal

If an employee decides that his/her grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the sub-committee, he/she may submit a written appeal to the staffing committee. An appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving the sub-committee's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.

Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, eg:

- a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
- the decision was not supported by the evidence
- the action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate
- new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.

The Appeal will be heard by a panel of three members who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three council members who may include members of the staff committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will take place within 25 working days of the council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:

- introduce the panel members to the employee
- explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the staffing sub-committee
- explain the action that the appeal panel may take.

The employee (or his/her companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of his/her appeal.

The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.

The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the staffing committee or substitute its own decision.

The decision of the appeal panel is final.

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Cornsay  
PARISH COUNCIL

# Grants & Donations Policy

The Council regularly receives requests for grants and donations from a variety of organisations and the aim of this Policy is to encourage and support activities and projects which benefit residents.

## Eligibility

The Council will only consider applications for grants and donations from organisations and groups which are based within the Parish, or who can demonstrate that the donation will substantially benefit residents of the Parish.

The Council cannot fund:

- Individuals
- Religious or political groups and activities
- Organisations not registered as charities or not considered not-for-profit
- National organisations, except where it can be demonstrated that the donation will substantially benefit residents of the Parish

## Applications

All applications for grants or donations shall be made in writing to the Clerk to the Council who shall arrange for those applications which meet the Council's criteria to be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

Applications should provide:

- Details of the group/organisation applying together with appropriate contact information
- The purpose to which any grant or donation will be put
- The amount of funding requested
- If the total cost of the project is not being applied for, details of other funding\*
- An explanation of how the funding will benefit residents of the Parish\*
- The group/organisation's most recent set of accounts or income and expenditure\*

\*In cases where Members of the Council are acting as representatives of a group/organisation applying for funding, that/those Member(s) may provide a verbal explanation of the benefits of the funding and the financial position of the organisation. In this case, that Member shall not take any part in the discussion or decision on the awarding of a grant (see also note 5).

Applicants whose application meets the criteria will be informed of the date of the meeting at which their application will be considered and will be notified of the outcome within 10 working days of that meeting. Successful applicants shall provide details of to whom payment should be made and acknowledge receipt of the payment.

## Conditions

1. Where a request for a grant/donation is agreed, the Council shall determine the amount, using the figure stated by the applicant as a guide only.
2. The grant or donation shall be used only for the stated purpose otherwise the monies shall be returned to the Council, except where the Council's prior written consent has been given for the funds to be used for another purpose.
3. The Council may request that applicants provide written feedback explaining how the grant/donation has benefited their group/organisation. If feedback is required, this will be communicated in the decision letter.
4. The Council reserves the right to request repayment of any grant/donation where an applicant does not comply with these conditions.

## Notes

1. The Council's decision on any application is final and there is no right of appeal.
2. The Council reserves the right to decline any application without giving reasons for its decision.
3. The Council will not commit to any continuing expenditure.
4. Nothing in this Policy prevents the Council from providing a grant or donation to a group, organisation or project without application where the Council considers that the giving of such a grant or donation will bring benefits to residents of the Parish.
5. Where a Member of the Council is a member of a group/organisation applying for funding, that Member shall consider whether, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, it is necessary for them to declare an interest in the matter. Advice may be sought from the Clerk or Monitoring Officer of Durham County Council if required.

September 2011



# Internal Audit Policy

The purpose of internal audit is to assist the Council in maintaining and improving internal control in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

The objective of internal audit is to review and report upon the adequacy of the internal control systems operated by the Council and to achieve this adopt a predominantly systems based approach to audit.

The internal control system comprises the systems in place within the Council to provide reasonable assurance that the Council's objectives will be achieved with particular reference to:

- The effectiveness of operations
- The economic and efficient use of resources
- Compliance with applicable policies, procedures, law and regulations
- The safeguarding of assets and interests from losses of all kinds including those arising from fraud irregularity and corruption
- The integrity and reliability of information accounts and data

Accordingly in the internal audit may:

- Carry out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year in order to be able to complete Section 4 of the Annual Return
- Review the reliability and integrity of financial information
- Review the means of safeguarding assets and as appropriate verify their existence
- Appraise the economy and efficiency with which resources are employed and identify where appropriate opportunities to improve performance and make recommendations as required.
- Review the established systems to ensure compliance with those policies, procedures, laws and regulations which could have a significant impact on operations determining whether the council is in compliance
- Review operations and activities to ascertain whether results are consistent with objectives and whether they are being carried out as planned

There are no limitations to the internal audit's scope of activities. The scope of internal audit allows for unrestricted coverage of the Council's activities including both financial and non-financial systems of internal control.

The Internal Audit shall as a minimum cover the following areas:

- Bookkeeping
- Risk Management
- Budgetary Controls
- Income Controls
- Payroll Controls
- Asset Controls
- Bank Reconciliations

- Year-end Procedures

Internal audit must be independent in its planning and operation and as such will have unrestricted access to the officers of the Council and the ability to report to the Council. Objectivity will be preserved by ensuring that the internal auditor is free from any conflict of interest and does not undertake any other duties on behalf of the Council

There will be no limitations on the internal auditor's access to records and they shall have authority to access all assets, records, documents, correspondence and control systems in addition to receiving any information and explanation as considered necessary and the requiring of any employee of the council to account for cash or any other Council asset under his control.

The existence of internal audit does not diminish the responsibility of the Council to establish systems of internal control to ensure that activities are conducted in a secure and well ordered manner.

The Internal Auditor shall report the results of the audit and any appropriate recommendations to the Council.



# Media Policy

## Introduction

Cornsay Parish Council is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities. Where this information is not available via the Council's publication scheme, please contact the Clerk.

The Council shall, where possible, co-operate with those whose work involves gathering material for publication in any form including use of the internet.

This policy explains how the Council may work with the media to meet the above objectives in accordance with the legal requirements and restrictions that apply.

## Legal requirements and restrictions

This policy is subject to the Council's obligations which are set out in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1986, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998, other legislation which may apply and the Council's standing orders and financial regulations. The Council's financial regulations and relevant standing orders referenced in this policy are available via the Council's publication scheme.

<sup>1</sup>The Council cannot disclose confidential information or information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law. The Council cannot disclose information if this is prohibited under the terms of a court order, by legislation, the Council's standing orders, under contract or by common law. Councillors are subject to additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council's publication scheme.

## Meetings

A meeting of the Council and its committees is open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude them because their presence at the meeting is prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business or other special reason(s) stated in the resolution. In accordance with the Council's standing orders, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council and its committees, if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.

Where a meeting of the Council and its committees include an opportunity for public participation, the media may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's standing orders.

The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes e.g. using a mobile phone or tablet, recording for a TV/radio broadcast, providing commentary on blogs, web forums, or social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) which enable a person not at the meeting to see, hear or be given commentary about the meeting is permitted unless:

- (a) the meeting has resolved to hold all or part of the meeting without the public present or
- (b) such activities disrupt the proceedings or
- (c) <sup>2</sup> and 3 below apply.

<sup>2</sup>The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a child or vulnerable adult at a Council or committee meeting is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission.

<sup>3</sup>Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by a person who is present at the meeting is not permitted.

The Council shall, as far as it is practicable, provide reasonable facilities for anyone taking a report of a Council or committee meeting and for telephoning their report at their own expense.

The Council's standing orders will confirm if attendance by the public, their participation, photographing, recording, filming or other reporting is permitted at a meeting of a sub-committee.

## Other communications with the media

This policy does not seek to regulate councillors in their private capacity.

The Council's communications with the media seek to represent the corporate position and views of the Council. If the views of councillors are different to the Council's corporate position and views, they will make this clear.

The Clerk may contact the media if the Council wants to provide information, a statement or other material about the Council.

Subject to the obligations on councillors not to disclose information referred to in <sup>1</sup> above and not to misrepresent the Council's position, councillors are free to communicate their position and views.

Ormsay  
PARISH COUNCIL

January 2015

# Recruitment Policy

## Statement / Aim

This policy is to ensure the:

- the efficient and effective recruitment of staff
- legislation in regard to recruitment is adhered to
- applicants are treated fairly, consistently and courteously
- recruitment and selection decisions are based on merit alone
- appointment of suitably qualified and skilled employees

## Equality

Cornsay Parish Council will review every vacancy, and is committed to equality of opportunity and non-discrimination in its recruitment and employment practices.

We actively welcome applications from a wide range of candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience and no job applicant or employee will be treated less favourably than another.

## Personnel Committee

The recruitment process shall be the responsibility of a Personnel Committee appointed by the Council. The committee shall consist of 3 [or such other number as the Council may direct] members. The Committee shall appoint its chair from within its membership.

## Job descriptions and person specification

Before advertising a post, the current job description will be reviewed or where there is no job description one will be drawn up. The person specification will identify qualifications, skills and attributes required for the post and a brief explanation of contracts offered for example full time, part time, job share, casual and fixed term will be given.

## Advertising

Job vacancies are advertised in a variety of places for example local newspapers, CDALC, job centre, via partners and on the parish noticeboard and website.

## Advertisement

This will include the post title, reference number if appropriate, salary grade, key duties and functions of the post, main required skills and knowledge, experience and qualifications, permanent

or temporary position, full or part time or job share, any core hours necessary for the role, closing date, interview date and how to apply quoting the contact point address or telephone number.

In the interests of economy, advertisements placed in local newspapers may refer potential applicants to the website or contact person from whom full details can be obtained.

## Applications

Application packs will be sent to potential applicants within 2 working days of a request being received.

Application packs will include the job description, person specification, details in the advertisement and the deadline for submitting applications. Late applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

The application form will enquire if the applicant has been convicted of a criminal offence and if so to give details. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 a conviction can become spent. If so the applicant is not obliged to disclose it.

The application form will not ask for the applicant's age, however the applicant should be asked to disclose if they are related to any Councillor or employee of the Parish Council.

## Shortlisting

The Personnel Committee shall undertake a shortlisting exercise to agree the candidates it wishes to invite for interview. The shortlist should be manageable – 4 to 6 applicants should be sufficient.

The shortlisting should be made against job description and person specification, criteria and notes to be taken for each application for example qualifications, relevant experience, and up to date training.

Where the Committee considers that candidates should be asked to give a presentation at interview, details shall be agreed so that candidates can be advised in advance of the subject matter and time allowed.

## Interviewing

The successful shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend for an interview. The invitation will be given in writing either by letter or e-mail and will give a minimum of 10 days' notice.

If a presentation is required or the candidate will be required to undertake a task (e.g. typing test) this will be communicated in the invitation.

The Council will take all reasonable steps to provide any facilities or make such adjustments for the interview where requested by a candidate. The Committee will also agree a suitable date for the interviews to be held.

## Interview panel

The interview panel will be the Personnel Committee.

The Committee shall meet in advance of the date of the interview to agree the questions to be asked.

## Interview Procedure

- The Chair of the interview panel will greet each candidate, and introduce themselves, panel members and anyone else present and explain the purpose for their being present. The process should be explained to the candidate alongside the fact that notes will be made to assist in the decision making process.
- If a presentation is required the candidate will be allowed a reasonable period of time to set up and prepare themselves. A stopwatch or timer will be used to ensure all candidates are allowed the same amount of time, and candidates will be advised when they have 1 minute remaining.
- The panel members will take turns to ask questions. Questions will include asking candidates to give examples of past experience relating to the specific aspects of the job on offer.
- A check should be made to check the applicants identity with appropriate documentation for example Birth Certificate, Passport ensuring that any photograph and passport are consistent with the appearance of the applicant and that the passport is still valid and additional documentation if the applicant's name has changed such as marriage certificate, divorce details or deed poll documentation.
- Candidates will be invited to ask questions.
- At the end of the interview the panel will check that the candidate is willing to accept the post if offered.
- The candidate will be thanked for attending and advised of how the decision will be conveyed. The details should be checked with the contact details of the candidate.
- The interview panel will make an appointment.
- The successful candidate will be notified and that the offer of the post would be subject to satisfactory references and checks.
- Candidates who are unsuccessful at interview stage will be informed at the earliest opportunity and offered feedback. If unsuccessful candidates wish to know why he or she were rejected the reason for this should be given.

All unsuccessful application forms, interview questions and other documentation forming part of the selection process will be retained for six months after which they will be destroyed.

## References

Request for references will be made before the interview if the candidates are happy for this to happen or will be made afterwards as the offer of a post will always be subject to satisfactory references.

If verbal or telephone references are obtained prior to confirmation in writing, a written note should be made of them and their source.

## Pre-Employment Checks

Pre-Employment checks will be made on all successful candidates:

- References – how and when they will be obtained (2 references required, one by current employer. If a candidate brings to interview a copy will be made, and if successful the referee will be contacted by phone to confirm the reference. After a written reference is received a telephone call will be made to referee thanking and confirming the reference)
- Qualifications - applicants will be required to produce the original certificate in order that a copy is made, which should be retained on the individual's personal file or staff file.
- The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 Successful applicants will be required to produce a National Insurance number from a P45 or other relevant documentation. (Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence to employ a person aged 16 or over without the authorisation of the immigration authorities). Copies of documentation confirming the candidate's right to work in the UK will be made and retained.
- If appropriate checks reveal that a person has a previous conviction, we will comply with the DBS Code of Practice, Vetting and Barring Scheme and Data Protection Act when receiving such information. We will consider all of the circumstances before making a recruitment decision including our duties.

## Induction

- Information about terms and conditions of employment and salary payment (probationary period length, supervision dates, information on salary, contract within 8 weeks of appointment, appraisals and training available.
- Tour of premises (staff rooms, where to store personal belongings, kitchen, toilets, location of first aid box etc)
- Routines of the setting, hours of work and timetable for the day
- Punctuality, level of performance and dress code of staff
- Areas of development and training needed

## Officer and Professional Support

The Clerk shall provide support to the Personnel Committee during the recruitment process. Where deemed necessary, professional HR support shall be obtained from Durham County Council's HR team or such other provider as the Council may determine.

February 2015



# Vulnerable Persons Policy

The abuse of vulnerable adults constitutes a clear infringement of their rights and freedoms as citizens. This policy aims to protect vulnerable adults, who are at risk of all forms of abuse, receive a safe sound and supportive service, through the process of identifying, investigating, managing and preventing such abuse. As a Council we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity to all members of our community.

- It is every adult's right to live in safety and to be free from abuse or fear of abuse from others.
- It is every adult's right to live an independent life based on 'self-determination' and personal choice.
- It is the responsibility of all Members and Officers of the Council to actively work together to help prevent abuse of vulnerable adults. This will be achieved by raising awareness, empowering people to make their own decisions and putting safeguards in place.
- When a situation is discovered in which a vulnerable adult reports, or is thought to be at risk of abuse, then the Council will react quickly in a coordinated manner to help them to overcome these difficulties.
- The Council recognises that people can be discriminated against on the basis of race, culture, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. We are committed to working with vulnerable adults in a positive manner that values them as individuals.

## Definitions

**"Vulnerable adult"** describes a person who is an adult (aged 18 or over), and who is, or may be in need of, community care services because of frailty, learning or physical disability or mental health difficulty and who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself or take steps to protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation.

**"Harm"** should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

**"Abuse"** is a violation of individual human and civil rights by any other person(s). This definition of abuse includes singular and repeated acts or mistakes. Abuse may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction, to which he or she had not consented, never could consent to or whose consent was deemed invalid due to a real lack of understanding as to the issue they were consenting to.

- Abuse may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of the person subject to it.
- Physical abuse includes hitting, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate touch or punishment.
- Sexual abuse includes rape, sexual assault or sexual acts of touching of intimate places.
- Psychological abuse includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, compulsion, inappropriate language, verbal or racial abuse, isolation, omission to provide opportunities.

- Financial or Material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, the misuse of misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits, damage or threats of damage to property.
- Discriminatory abuse includes racist, sexist opinions, opinions on an individual's disability, or any other forms of harassment, taunts or similar treatment.

**“Neglect or acts of omission”** is failing to act appropriately whether intentionally or negligently. This may include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational and leisure services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as; medication, adequate and appropriate nutrition, information, clothing, comfort, relationships, safety and environment.

Signs of Neglect may include:

- An individual showing obvious signs, such as low weight and appearing hungry.
- Soreness, chafing to areas of skin owing to poor personal hygiene.
- Deterioration of condition of skin around pressure areas.
- Changes in behaviour/interaction with staff and other service users.
- Loss of interest in activities

If you have concerns about an individual's vulnerability at any point in time, contact the Police or Social Services without delay.



September 2011



