



SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Introduction

Keynsham Town Council is committed to providing a work environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. This Policy outlines the Council's zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and the procedures for reporting and addressing such behaviour.

Legal Duty to Prevent Sexual Harassment

In accordance with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2024, effective from 26 October 2024, the Council has a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. This includes:

- Implementing preventive measures such as regular training and clear communication of this Policy.
- Creating a culture of respect and inclusion.
- Taking proactive steps to identify and mitigate risks of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that makes someone feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated. It can include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or touching
- Requests for sexual favours
- Displaying sexually explicit materials
- Sending sexually suggestive emails or messages
- Making sexual comments or jokes
- Intrusive questions about a person's private life or body
- Unwelcome comments about a person's appearance
- Spreading sexual rumours about a person

Scope

This Policy applies to all employees as well as volunteers and elected officials associated

with Keynsham Town Council.

Prohibited Conduct

Sexual harassment in any form is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Making sexual propositions, innuendos, or suggestive comments
- Physical contact of a sexual nature without consent
- Sending sexually explicit messages or materials
- Creating a hostile or offensive work environment based on gender or sexual orientation.

Prevention Measures

Keynsham Town Council will take all reasonable measures to prevent sexual harassment of its staff and members. These steps include:

- Providing training on sexual harassment prevention for all staff and councillors.
- Displaying information about the Council's zero-tolerance to sexual harassment
- Ensuring all employees understand the complaints procedure
- Regularly reviewing and updating this policy.
- Fostering a culture of respect and dignity in the workplace.

A risk assessment has been carried out, and this will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate. The risk assessment will be shared with all employees.

Reporting Procedure (staff member)

Any employee who believes they have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment is encouraged to report it immediately. Reports can be made to:

- The Chair
- The Town Clerk

Reports can be made verbally or in writing and will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Retaliation against individuals who report sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Reporting Procedure (Councillor)

Complaints against elected Members must be addressed to the Monitoring Officer at Bath and Northeast Somerset Council.

Investigation Procedure

Upon receiving a report of sexual harassment, Keynsham Town Council will promptly and impartially investigate the allegations. The investigation will be conducted by the Town Clerk, and the Chair of the Personnel committee, or another member of the Personnel committee, who will interview the parties involved and any witnesses. All parties will be afforded due process and confidentiality to the extent possible.

Disciplinary Action

If an investigation confirms that sexual harassment has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken depending on the severity of the offense and the circumstances involved.

Compliance

All employees are expected to always comply with this policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

False Accusations

While the Council encourages reporting of genuine concerns, knowingly making a false accusation of sexual harassment will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Support

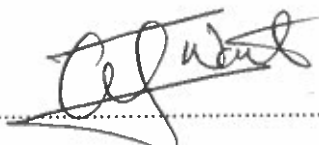
Town Council employees may, whether being a victim of sexual harassment or accused of sexual harassment, within the workplace, seek support by making a critical incident self-referral through the helpline of Health Assured'

Conclusion

Keynsham Town Council is dedicated to fostering a respectful and inclusive workplace where all employees can thrive. The Council takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously and will take prompt and appropriate action to address them.

Amendment History

Paragraph	Detail	Committee or Town Council	Approval date
Review		Personnel	March 2026
Original Adopted		Town Council	March 2026
Next review		Personnel	March 2028

Signed 

Chair of Council

Date *HK* March 2026

Signed 

Town Clerk

Date *HK* March 2026