



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Sexual Harassment Policy

Policy Statement

Alston Moor Parish 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.

Scope

This policy applies to all councillors and employees, including full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract workers, as well as volunteers associated with Alston Moor Parish Council.

This policy also applies to sexual harassment from third parties such as the general public attending council meetings.

Definition

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Inappropriate touching or physical contact, including hugging
- Requests for sexual favours
- Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually explicit materials

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 an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive work environment based on gender or sexual orientation.

Reporting Procedure

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

- The chair of the parish council
- The vice chair of the parish council
- A councillor of the parish council
- The Clerk of the parish council

Reports can be made orally or in writing and will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All reports received will be acknowledged in writing and by email.

Retaliation against individuals who report sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In cases involving the general public will be reported to the police directly.

Investigation Procedure

Upon receiving a report of sexual harassment, Alston Moor Parish Council will promptly and impartially investigate the allegations. The investigation will be conducted by the chair or vice chair, who will interview the parties involved and any witnesses. All parties will be afforded due process and confidentiality to the extent possible.

If the complainant deems the chair or vice chair unsuitable for their specific case another member of the council may be selected.

Disciplinary Action

If an investigation confirms that an employee has breached this policy, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. This may include verbal or written warnings, suspension, or termination, depending on the severity of the offence and the circumstances involved. If a councillor has breached this policy, they will be reported to the monitoring officer for further action. If the self employed or volunteers breach this policy, they will be reported to the police directly and dismissed from their service.

Compliance

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

Date of policy: October 2025

Supersedes: New Policy

Policy effective from: October 2025

Date for next review: October 2027