LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

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28 November 2025

TO: Councillors Chowns, Harvey (Hughes), Hughes and Morris

Dear Member

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Resources Committee** which will be held in the **Council Offices, Church Lane, Ledbury,** on **Thursday, 4 December 2025 at 6:00 pm** for the purposes of transacting the business set out below.

Yours faithfully

Angela Price
Town Clerk

FILMING AND RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS
Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access, in a non-disruptive manner. Whilst those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record or broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act (GDPR) 2018

A G E N D A

1. **To receive apologies for absence**

2. **To receive declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations**
(Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by Ledbury Town Council's Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011)
(Note: Members seeking advice on this item are asked to contact the Monitoring Office at least 72 hours prior to the meeting)

3. **To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of a meeting of the Resources Committee held on 13 November 2025 and to consider any recommendations therein (Pages 713 - 715)**

4. **Council Policies** **(Pages 717 – 740)**

To review covering sheet in respect of the following policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Local Resolution Policy

5. **Date of next meeting**

To note that the date of the next meeting of the Resources Committee will be held on 8 January 2026

5. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

In accordance with Section 12(2) of the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting

6. **Staffing Matters** **(Pages 741-742)**

Distribution: Full agenda to: - Committee members (5)

Agenda front pages to all non-committee members (6)

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2025

PRESENT: Councillors Chowns, Harvey (Chairman), Hughes and Morris

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Price – Town Clerk

R223. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

R224. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

R225. **TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 OCTOBER 2025**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 13 November 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

R226. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED:

To note that the next meeting of the Resources Committee is scheduled for 4 December 2025.

R227. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

R228. **STAFFING MATTERS**

Members raised concerns in respect of the cover that had been provided in respect of the Saturday market set up and take down whilst the Maintenance Operative had been on annual leave. They thanked the member of staff for their undertaking but recognised that an alternative solution needs to found for the future. They raised concerns

over the safe operations and manual handling being undertaken and asked that officers find a solution to this issue ahead of it reoccurring.

Members were provided with an update and anticipated timeline in respect of the staff review. They were advised that the final draft of the report had been received from Adam Kepple-Green and that it was now with the Clerk to review and provide an overview of the findings of the staff review.

1. **That the Council's congratulations be passed onto all staff in respect of the recent training results.**

2. **That staff who have completed the Excel training course be encouraged to think about how they can use what they have learnt and what aspects of the course they can make use of in their roles.**

3. **That officers investigate transferring the Rialtas financial reports into excel spreadsheets to assist with reading and understanding the reports.**

4. **That the information in relation to recent staff absences be received and noted.**

5. **That officers find a solution in respect of cover for the Maintenance Operative when he is on annual leave with regard the set up and take down of the Saturday market.**

6. **That the information in respect of officer TOIL be received and noted.**

6. **That the anticipated timeline for the staff review be noted as follows:**

    i. **November/December 2025 - Clerk to review final draft of staff review report and provide a report to a meeting of the Resources Committee – Support to be provided by Hoople**

    ii. **22 January 2026 – Clerk's report to an extraordinary meeting of the Resources Committee with the intention of making a recommendation to Full Council at their meeting on 29 January 2026**

    iii. **29 January 2026 – Recommendations from Resources Committee to enter into a consultation period with staff with effect from 30 January 2026**

    iv. **30 January 2026 – Three month consultation period commences**

7. **That a recommendation be made to Full Council at its meeting on 13 November 2025 that £5,000 be made available from within budget line 220/4590 – Professional services, for costs associated with the provision of HR support and advice to the Clerk in respect of the Staff Review.**

8. **That the Clerk provide regular updates on the expenditure in respect of the HR support and advice in respect of the staff review, noting that should there be evidence indicating that the approved funds are likely to be insufficient, a timely application for additional funds will be made via Resources Committee to Council.**

The meeting ended at 6.42 pm

Signed …… Dated ……

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

This covering sheet provides an at-a-glance guide to help staff, councillors, and members of the public understand which Council policy to use depending on the nature of the issue or complaint.

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1. Complaints Policy

Use this policy when the complaint is about:

- **The Council's administration, procedures, or service delivery**
- **Actions or inactions of the Council as an organisation**
- **The way an employee has handled a service-related concern**
- **General dissatisfaction from a member of the public about Council services**

Do NOT use this policy when the complaint relates to:

- **Financial irregularities or criminal activity**
- **Councillor conduct (these must go to the Monitoring Officer)**
- **Complaints made by staff about staff (Grievance or Dignity at Work)**
- **Complaints made about the Clerk (these go to the Chair)**

Examples of when to use:

- **A member of the public believes the Council failed to respond appropriately to a service request**
- **Errors, delays, or poor communication from the Council**
- **Dissatisfaction with how an administrative task was carried out**

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2. Dignity at Work Policy

Use this policy when the issue involves:

- **Bullying or harassment affecting staff or councillors**
- **Behaviour that breaches dignity, respect, civility or courtesy in the workplace**
- **Staff experiencing harassment from:**
  - **another employee**
  - **a councillor**
  - **a member of the public**
  - **a contractor or supplier**

This policy should also be used for:

- **Staff (or others engaged by the Council) raising concerns about:**
  - **unwelcome conduct**
  - **intimidation or humiliation**
  - **discriminatory behaviour**
- **Managers supporting staff through early resolution, mediation, or formal grievance routes**

Do NOT use this policy when:

- **The concern is not about behaviour, but about contractual or workplace issues → use the Grievance Policy**
- **The complaint is about councillor conduct that breaches the Code of Conduct → must go to the Monitoring Officer**

Examples of when to use:

- **An employee reports demeaning comments or exclusion by a colleague**
- **A councillor behaves in a way that an employee finds intimidating or disrespectful**
- **A staff member experiences harassment from a member of the public during work**
- **Concerns about conduct that may escalate without intervention**

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3. Local Resolution Policy & Procedure

***Use this policy when the issue is a low-level complaint involving councillors*, specifically:**

- **Minor complaints between councillors**
- **Minor complaints from officers about councillors**
- **Complaints that a councillor has not shown respect or has acted inconsiderately (verbally or in writing)**

The purpose of this policy is:

- **To resolve complaints informally and quickly**
- **To avoid unnecessary referral to the Monitoring Officer for minor issues**
- **To support amicable solutions—e.g., apology, agreement on behaviour, undertaking to change conduct**

Do NOT use this policy when the complaint is:

- **From a member of the public**
- **About serious breaches:**
  - **bullying**
  - **abuse of position**
  - **repeated misconduct**
  - **failure to declare interests**

- **Made by the Clerk**
- **Vexatious, malicious, frivolous, or repeated complaints**

Examples of when to use:

- **Two councillors have had a disagreement and one feels the other has been discourteous**
- **A staff member raises a minor concern about the tone or manner of a councillor (but not serious enough for Monitoring Officer referral)**
- **Early intervention to prevent escalation of interpersonal conflict**

Summary Table

Issue Type	**Correct Policy**
Member of the public unhappy with Council service	Complaints Policy
Staff complaint about bullying or harassment	Dignity at Work Policy
Staff complaint about councillor behaviour (low-level)	Local Resolution Policy
Serious councillor misconduct / Code of Conduct issues	Monitoring Officer referral (outside all three policies)
Staff complaint about workplace processes (not behaviour)	Grievance Policy (not included in uploads)
Complaint about Clerk	Complaints Policy (addressed to Chair)
Employee dispute about performance management	Grievance Policy or Dignity at Work depending on n

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Approved: October 2025
Review Date: October 2027

Policy Purpose

1. The Town Council provides many services to community groups, companies, and individuals. We try to get our service delivery right every time, but there are occasions when users of our services may be dissatisfied with our performance, for any number of reasons. This policy sets out how to raise a complaint with Ledbury Town Council.

2. This procedure should be used to address complaints about Ledbury Town Council administration and procedures and may include the way employees have dealt with your concerns. It is not appropriate to deal with all complaints using this procedure. For example, complaints about financial irregularity, criminal activity, Councillor or Clerk conduct require special consideration or may be subject to other Council or third-party procedures. If your complaint does not fall within the scope of this procedure please contact either the Clerk to the Council or the Chair of the Council for further advice.

Information

3. **The following is a definition of Complaint offered by the Local Government Ombudsman**

   3.1 "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 the service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the Council itself or a person or body action on behalf of the Council".

4. **Informal Resolution**

   4.1 It is hoped that most complaints can be resolved quickly and amicably through this route. Concerns can be raised by telephone, email or a visit to the Council offices and should always be directed through the Council offices and addressed to the Clerk

   4.2 The complaint will be handled by the Clerk who will acknowledge its receipt, undertake any necessary enquiries, seek its resolution and provide feedback to the complainant.

5. **Formal Resolution**

   5.1 In the event that an informal approach has not resolved the complaint, or the complaint is considered to be serious, then the formal resolution process shall be followed.

   5.2 The Clerk to the Council is responsible for managing the formal complaints process.

5.3 A formal complaint must be submitted in writing/email to the Council, it should be addressed to the Clerk, marked “Confidential – Formal Complaint”. If a formal complaint is being raised against the Clerk, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of the Council. The complaint should cover as much details as possible and enclose relevant supporting documentation.

5.4 The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days.

5.5 The Clerk will carry out an initial investigation into the complaint and will, within ten working days, provide the complainant with a suggested resolution or an update on progress and likely completion date.

5.6 If the complainant is satisfied with the resolution the complaint is closed.

5.7 The Clerk will report to the Council summary details of the complaint and a brief summary of its resolution.

5.8 This summary report will exclude names(s) of the complainant.

5.9 If the Clerk is unable to resolve the complaint, or the complainant is not satisfied with the proposed resolution then the matter will be referred to a meeting of the Resources Committee.

5.9.1 **Procedure prior to any meeting**

5.9.1.1 The complainant shall be invited to a meeting and may bring someone with them to act as support.

5.9.1.2 7 clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of all documentation and/or other evidence to be relied upon.

5.9.1.3 In response, the Council shall provide the complainant with copies of any unrestricted documentation upon which it intends to rely at least two clear working days in advance of the meeting.

5.9.2 **Procedure at the meeting**

5.9.2.1 The Resources Committee shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the press and public.

5.9.2.2 The Chair shall introduce everyone and explain the procedure.

5.9.2.3 The complainant (or their representative) shall outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by the Clerk and Committee Members.

5.9.2.4 The Clerk will have an opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by the complainant and Committee Members.

5.9.2.5 The complainant and then the Clerk shall be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

5.9.2.6 The Clerk and the complainant shall be asked to leave the room while Members consider the matter.

5.9.2.6.1 If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties shall be invited back.

5.9.2.7 A decision on the matter will usually be made by the Committee in the meeting. If the decision is not able to be made immediately, the Clerk and the complainant shall be advised when the decision is likely to be finalised and how it will be communicated to them.

5.9.2.8 The announcement of any decision will be made in public at the meeting, and/or confirmed at the next Council meeting.

5.9.3 **Post meeting procedure**

5.9.3.1 The decision should be confirmed In writing to the complainant within seven working days of it having been made, together with details of any action to be taken.

6. Complaints against individual employees

6.1 If a complaint is made in respect of the actions/non-actions of an individual member of Ledbury Town Council staff the decision of the Council is final.

6.2 A complaint made about a member of staff will be handled by the Clerk, unless it is made regarding the Clerk, in which case the complaint will then be handled by the Chair of the Council.

6.3 A complaint against a member of staff could result in disciplinary action; or in cases of gross misconduct dismissal from the Council's employment.

6.4 The Council will not, under any circumstances, enter into any correspondence, or discussion, with a complainant about any action taken, formally or informally against any member of its staff following the determination of such a complaint. This is expressly to protect the employee rights under employment law.

7. Formal Complaint Regarding a Councillor's Conduct

7.1. If a complaint is regarding a Councillor's Conduct it must be directed to the Monitoring Officer at Herefordshire Council.

The procedure to be followed and guidance on the process can be found on the Herefordshire Council website:
https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/council/get-involved/8

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Date Created: March 2023

Next Review: March 2025

Ledbury Town Council believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expect all councillors, officers, and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the council.

1. Equality

No aspect of this procedure will discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, religion, politics, marital status, disability and/or union membership or any other grounds likely to place anyone at a disadvantage, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

2. Purpose

Ledbury Town Council is committed to creating a working environment where all council employees, Councillors, contractors, and others who come into contact with them in the course of their work, are treated with dignity, respect, and courtesy. We aim to create a workplace where there is zero tolerance for harassment and bullying.

In support of this objective, Ledbury Town Council has signed up to the Civility Pledge, as a commitment to civility and respect in our work, and politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Further information about the Civility and Respect Pledge is available NALC & SLCC.

We recognise that there is a continuum where unaddressed issues have the potential to escalate and become larger, more complex issues and this policy sets out how concerns will be managed however the emphasis of this policy is on resolution and mediation where appropriate, rather than an adversarial process.

3. This document:

- explains how we will respond to complaints of bullying or harassment.
- ensures that we respond sensitively and promptly; and,
- supports our employees in ensuring their behaviour does not amount to bullying and/or harassment by giving examples.

4. Scope

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by the Clerk and all employees engaged to work at Ledbury Town Council. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with Ledbury Town Council this should be raised to their nominated contact, manager, or the Chair of the Council, in the first instance. Should the complaint be about the Chair of the council the complaint should be raised to the resources committee.

Agency staff, or contractors are expected to treat council colleagues, and other representatives and stakeholders with dignity and respect, and the council may terminate the contract, without notice, where there are suspicions of harassment or bullying.

Complaints about other employment matters will be managed under the council's grievance policy.

It is noted that the management of a situation may differ depending on who the allegations relate to (e.g., employees, contractor, Councillor), however, the council will take appropriate action if any of its employees are bullied or harassed by employees, Councillors, members of the public, suppliers or contractors.

5. The position on bullying and harassment

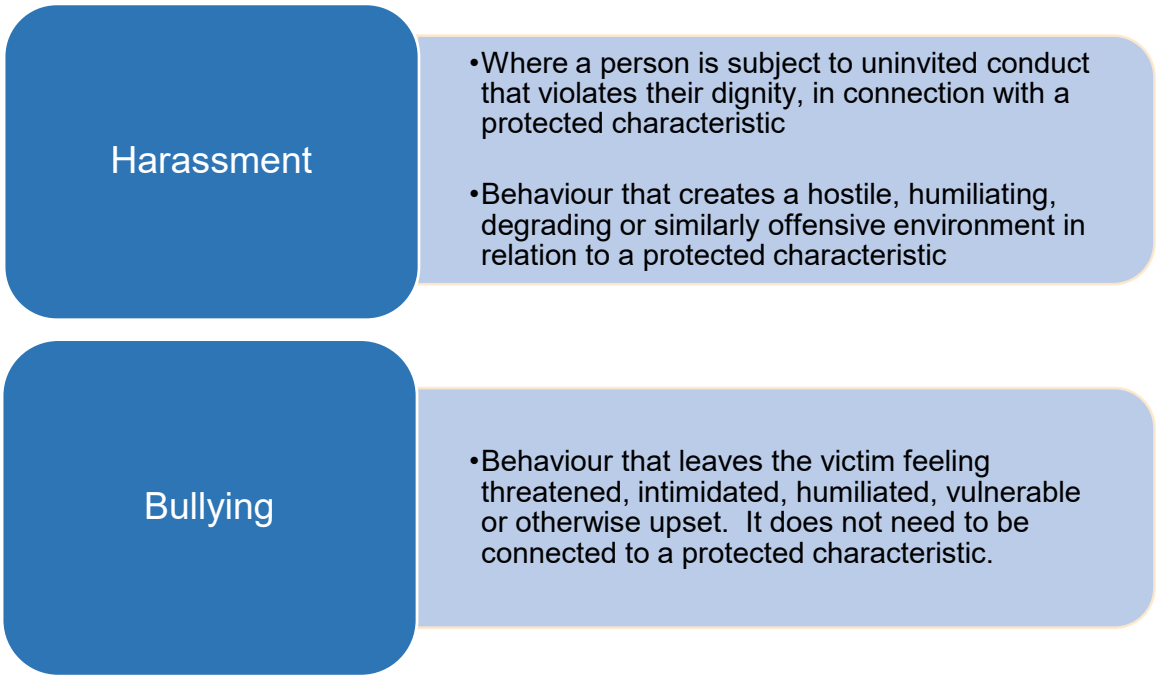
All staff and council representatives are entitled to dignity, respect, and courtesy within the workplace and to not experience any form of discrimination. Ledbury Town Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether harm is intended or not. Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. You should also be aware that, if you have bullied or harassed someone (e.g., physical violence, harassment), in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

We expect all representatives of the council to treat each other with respect and uphold the values of the code of conduct, civility and respect pledge, equality opportunities policy, and all other policies and procedures set by the Council.

We expect you to demonstrate respect 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.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. See the grievance policy for further details regarding the process. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. While we will assume that all complaints of bullying and harassment are made in good faith, in the event that allegations are found to be malicious or vexatious the person raising the complaint may be subject to action under the council's disciplinary procedure.



6. What Type of Treatment amounts to Bullying or Harassment?

'Bullying' or 'harassment' are phrases that apply to treatment from one person (or a group of people) to another that is unwanted and that has the effect of violating that person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person.

Examples of bullying and harassment include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances e.g., promotion, access to training
- Threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Verbal abuse or offensive comments, including jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex, or sexual orientation
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Lewd or suggestive comments or gestures
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations, work activities or social activities.
- Withholding information a person needs in order to do their job
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or inappropriate birthday rituals
- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing, or jostling
- Rifling through, hiding, or damaging personal property
- Display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work

- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, whether directly and / or in front of others
- The use of obscene gestures
- Abusing a position of power

Bullying and harassment can occur through verbal and face to face interactions but can also take place through sharing inappropriate or offensive content in writing or via email and other electronic communications and social media.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable, and behaviour could be harassment when the person had no intention to offend. We all have the right to determine what offends us. Some behaviour will be clear to any reasonable person that it is likely to offend – for example sexual touching. Other examples may be less clear; however, you should be aware that harassment will occur if behaviour continues after the recipient has advised you that the behaviour is unacceptable to them.

Harassment can also occur where the unwanted behaviour relates to a perceived characteristic (such as offensive jokes or comments based on the assumption someone is gay, even if they are not) or due to their association with someone else (such as harassment related to their partner having a disability for example). See the council's equality and diversity Policy.

All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity and should feel able to challenge behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

It is important to recognise that bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues/Councillors is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management routines and should not be interpreted as anything different.

7. Victimisation

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e., you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the council will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

8. Reporting Concerns

8.1 What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a member of the public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague)?

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact with at work, please raise this with your nominated manager in the first instance or, with the clerk. Any such report will be taken seriously, and we will decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

8.2 What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a councillor?

8.2.1 If you are being bullied or harassed by a Councillor, please raise this with the clerk or the Chair of the Council in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you. There are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. The Informal Resolution is described below. Formal concerns regarding potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct must be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

8.2.2 The council will consider reasonable measures to protect your health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties or change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

8.3 What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to harassment or bullying?

If you witness such behaviour, you should report the incident in confidence to the clerk. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

8.4 What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed by another member of staff?

If you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. These are described below.

9. Informal resolution

9.1 If you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the council's policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the clerk, your nominated manager, or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

9.2 If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if you are being bullied by your own nominated manager, you are advised to raise the issue with the Chair of the Council. (If your concern relates to the Chair, you are advised to raise it with the chair of the personnel/staffing committee). The Chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by telling the alleged perpetrator, without prejudicing the matter, that:

9.2.1 There has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of the council staff.

9.2.2 Such behaviour is contrary to our policy.

9.2.3 For employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence.

9.3 It may be possible for this conversation to take place with the alleged perpetrator without revealing your name, if this is what you want. The person dealing with it will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

9.4 In certain circumstances we may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The Chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

9.5 If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not usually be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as extremely serious allegation or in cases where a problem has happened before) we may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. We will consult with you before taking this step.

10. Raising a formal complaint

10.1 If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about bullying and harassment through the council's grievance procedure. In this case you **MUST** raise your complaint to the Clerk or the Chair of the Council. A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

10.2 The Clerk or the Chair of the Council will appoint someone to investigate your complaint in line with the grievance policy. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided):

- The name of the alleged perpetrator(s),
- The nature of the harassment or bullying,
- The dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred,
- The names of any witnesses and
- Any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally.

10.3 The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be told your name and the details of your grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible. Where you and the alleged perpetrator(s) work in proximity to each other, we will consider whether it is appropriate to make temporary adjustments to working arrangements whilst the matter is being investigated.

10.4 Where your complaint relates to potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct, these will need to be investigated by the Monitoring Officer. The council will consider any adjustments to support you in your work and to manage the relationship with the councillor the allegations relate to, while the investigation proceeds.

10.5 Investigations will be carried out promptly (without unreasonable delay), sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. When carrying out any investigations, we will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with the data protection policy.

10.6 The council will consider how to protect your health and wellbeing whilst the investigation is taking place and discuss this with you. Depending on the nature of the allegations, the Investigator may want to meet with you to understand better your compliant (see the grievance policy for further information, and details of your right to be accompanied).

10.7 After the investigation, a panel will meet with you to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation in accordance with the grievance procedure. At the meeting you may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a trade union official.

10.8 Following the conclusion of the hearing the panel will write to you to inform you of the decision and to notify you of your right to appeal. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome and wish to appeal you **MUST** put your appeal in writing explaining the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the decision. Your appeal will be heard under the appeal process that is described in the grievance procedure.

11. The use of the Disciplinary Procedure

If at any stage from the point at which a complaint is raised, we believe there is a case to answer and a disciplinary offence might have been committed, we will instigate our disciplinary procedure. We will keep you informed of the outcome.

This is a non-contractual policy and procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

LOCAL RESOLUTION POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. Policy

1.1 Purpose

It is the policy of the Town Council to seek to resolve low-level complaints about Members locally wherever possible. This includes:

1.1.1 Minor complaints from Members about other Members

1.1.2 Minor complaints from Officers about Members

1.1.3 Allegations that a Member has failed to show respect and consideration for others, whether verbally or in writing

1.2 Exclusions

The following types of complaints will **not** be considered under this policy and will instead be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Herefordshire Council:

1.2.1 Complaints instigated by a member of the public

1.2.2 Serious complaints, including breaches of the Code of Conduct, failure to disclose interests, bullying, abuse of position, or repeated breaches

1.2.3 Complaints made by the Town Clerk

1.2.4 Vexatious, malicious, or frivolous complaints

1.2.5 Members' complaints about Officers (these will be handled under the Council's internal staffing policies)

1.2.6 Repetitive low-level complaints

1.3 Background

Currently, there is no consistent process for Parish or Town Councils to manage minor complaints against Members other than referring them to the Monitoring Officer at Herefordshire Council.

With this in mind, Ledbury Town Council has adopted the following Local Resolution Policy & Procedure to promote early, informal, and proportionate resolution of such matters.

2. Procedure

2.1 Accountability and Roles

For the purposes of this procedure:

The Town Clerk is accountable to the Council as a whole but, on a day-to-day basis, the Mayor (Chairman of the Council) will act as their line manager.

2.2 The Process

2.2.1 Submitting a Complaint

All complaints should be submitted in writing to the Town Clerk, who, as the Proper Officer, will undertake an initial review to determine whether the complaint is minor and appropriate for local resolution.

Where suitable, the Town Clerk may seek an early informal resolution by liaising directly with the individuals involved before initiating the full procedure.

The Member subject to the complaint must be provided with full details of the allegation(s) to ensure fairness and the opportunity to respond in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

2.2.2 Local Resolution Process

The purpose of this process is not to adjudicate or make findings of fact but to facilitate mutual understanding and agreement between the parties involved. The Town Clerk will act as facilitator throughout the process.

The arrangements will depend on the parties involved:

2.2.2.1 Member vs. Member (excluding Mayor):
The Town Clerk and Mayor will meet separately with both the complainant and the Member concerned to seek a mutually acceptable resolution.

2.2.2.2 Member vs. Mayor (excluding Deputy Mayor):
The Town Clerk and Deputy Mayor will meet with the complainant and the Mayor to seek resolution.

2.2.2.3 Officer (not Clerk) vs. Member (excluding Mayor):
The Town Clerk and Mayor will meet with both parties to facilitate an agreement.

2.2.2.4 Officer (not Clerk) vs. Mayor:
The Town Clerk and Deputy Mayor will meet with the officer and the Mayor to seek resolution.

2.2.2.5 Town Clerk as Complainant:
Where the Town Clerk makes a complaint, best practice dictates that it should be referred directly to the Monitoring Officer for consideration.

2.2.3 Possible Outcomes

If an agreement is reached, no further action is required.
If agreement cannot be reached, the complainant (Member or Officer) may refer the matter to the **Monitoring Officer**.

Possible outcomes may include (but are not limited to):

2.2.3.1 A written apology

2.2.3.2 A written undertaking not to repeat the behaviour

2.2.3.3 An agreement to attend relevant training

2.2.3.4 A mutual understanding that no further action is necessary

2.2.3.5 Closure of the matter following resolution

2.2.4 Timescales

All efforts should be made to complete the local resolution process as promptly as possible. Timelines may vary depending on the availability of those involved.

2.2.5 Recording and Confidentiality

2.2.5.1 All meetings held under this procedure will be conducted in a confidential manner to protect the privacy of all parties involved.

2.2.5.2 Brief notes may be taken during the meeting by the Town Clerk (or designated facilitator) solely as an aide-mémoire to assist in accurately capturing the discussion and any agreements reached. These notes will be destroyed following the meeting once the formal confidential summary or minutes have been completed.

2.2.5.3 A concise written record of any outcomes or agreed actions will be retained securely by the Town Clerk in accordance with the Council's data protection and record retention policies.

2.2.5.4 The purpose of maintaining a formal record is to:

2.2.5.4.1 Capture any agreements reached;

2.2.5.4.2 Provide an audit trail if the matter is later referred to the Monitoring Officer; and

2.2.5.4.3 Serve as a point of reference in the event of any similar future concerns.

2.3 Code of Conduct Breaches

2.3.1 It is essential to note that the Town Council does not have powers to investigate or determine breaches of the Code of Conduct.

2.3.2 Under the Local Government Act 2000, the authority to investigate or make findings in relation to breaches of the Code of Conduct rests solely with the Monitoring Officer or the Standards Committee of Herefordshire Council.

2.4 Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed periodically or in response to changes in legislation or best practice guidance issued by the Monitoring Officer or the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).