



**To All Members of the Working Practices Committee,**

You are summoned to a meeting of the **Working Practices Committee** on **Wednesday 15 February 2023 at 7.30pm** at the Billingshurst Centre. (This follows an extraordinary meeting of the Planning & Environment Committee.)

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting and speak for a maximum of three minutes about an item on the agenda for this meeting during the Public Session at the discretion of the Chairman.

**G.C. Burt**  
**Clerk to the Council**

**9 February 2023**

## **A G E N D A**

1. Chairman's Announcements
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Receive Declarations of Interest and Notification of Changes to Members' Interests.
4. Public Session.
5. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 October 2022, previously sent.
6. Matters Arising, not separate agenda items.
7. To consider recommending to Council the signing of The Civility & Respect Pledge - Appendix A.
8. Exclusion of Press and Public
9. To consider various staffing matters – Appendix B.
10. Any other matters for information only.

Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 19 April 2023

**Members of the public should be aware that being present at a meeting of the Council or one of its Committees or Sub-Committees will be deemed as the person having given**

consent to being recorded (photograph, film or audio recording) at the meeting, by any person present.

**MEMBERS:** DH, RM, CG, DW, SW, ST

**BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL**

**WORKING PRACTICES COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2022**

**CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE**

**REPORT BY CLERK**

**FOR DECISION**

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and Office of Violence against Women (OVW) are encouraging councils to sign up to the Civility & Respect Pledge.

*It is designed to help define the right behaviours within your council, to prevent bullying and to support councils demonstrating high standards of conduct.*

See attachments.

Officers consider that possibly, the Council has sufficient policies in place already to cover these issues, as listed under council documents on the website.

Although I hope that councillors agree with me that there is currently an excellent relationship between elected members and staff, this has not always been the case in the now distant past. The point has also been made to me that with local elections in May, the make-up of the council could change at a stroke with many new unknown individuals joining; any additional *armour in the armoury* would thus not be wasted.

The Committee is invited to consider whether to recommend to Council that it signs up to The Civility & Respect Pledge.

## Billingshurst Parish Clerk

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**From:** WSALC Admin <admin@wsalc.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 10 August 2022 09:40  
**Subject:** Introducing the Civility and Respect Pledge  
**Attachments:** 2022 08 Dignity at Work Policy.docx; Civility and respect newsletter AUG22.pdf

### Introducing the Civility and Respect Pledge

NALC, SLCC, and OVW believe **now** is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Showing respect can be 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.

We are delighted to announce the launch of 'The Civility and Respect Pledge', it's easy to sign up to and is designed to help define the right behaviours within your council, to prevent bullying and to support councils demonstrating high standards of conduct. We are inviting all councils to please take the pledge.

**We're asking all councils to add an item to your next meeting agenda to discuss civility and respect and sign up to pledge that your council will:**

- Treat other councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles
- Commit to training councillors and staff
- Sign up to the code of conduct for councillors
- Have good governance arrangements in place
- Commit to seeking professional help at early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- Call out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
- Continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council
- Support the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the civility and respect pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

Visit the SLCC and NALC Civility and Respect webpages for suggested wording for this as an agenda item.

[Find out more details and sign up here](#)



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# CIVILITY AND RESPECT PROJECT



## WELCOME TO THE CIVILITY AND RESPECT PROJECT NEWSLETTER

### PROJECT UPDATE

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

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

We are inviting all councils to please take the pledge.



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVV, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

ISSUE 4 | AUGUST 2022

## SIGN UP TO THE CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

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

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

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

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

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

- Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors
- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
- Will seek professional help at early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
- Will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support civility and respect, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

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

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

