



**PORTREATH**  
PARISH COUNCIL

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

**Adopted: 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

## 1. Introduction

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated and is unlawful.

Portreath 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.

## 2. Definition

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

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Requests for sexual favours
- Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually explicit materials.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, including full-time, part-time, temporary, contract workers, as well as volunteers and elected officials as well as third-party users (customers, parishioners, service users) associated with Portreath Parish Council.

## 4. 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.
- lewd or abusive comments of a sexual nature such as regarding an individual's appearance or body
- asking questions of a sexual nature
- sexual propositions or advances, whether made in writing or verbally
- Third-Party Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment can also take place where an employee is treated less favourably because they have rejected, or submitted to, the unwanted conduct that is related to sex or is of a sexual nature. Whether less favourable treatment occurs as a result will be examined broadly and includes areas such as blocking promotion and refusal of training opportunities or other development opportunities.

## 5. Third-Party Sexual Harassment

### 5.1 Third-Party Sexual Harassment

The Parish Council is committed to providing a safe and respectful working environment for all staff, volunteers, councillors, contractors, and service users. This commitment extends to

protecting our workforce from sexual harassment by third parties, including members of the public, service users, customers, visitors, suppliers, and contractors.

#### 5.2 Legal Duty and Liability

The law requires the Parish Council, as an employer, to take **reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment by third parties**.

#### 5.3 Zero Tolerance

Sexual harassment by third parties will **not be tolerated** under any circumstances. All individuals interacting with the Parish Council are expected to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner.

#### 5.4 Encouragement to Report

Portreath Parish council encourages any worker who experiences or witnesses sexual harassment by a third party to report it immediately. Reports can be made to:

- The Clerk
- The Chair of the Council
- The Chair of the Staffing Committee

Reports will be treated seriously and handled in a sensitive and confidential manner, in line with the Council's grievance and complaints procedures.

#### 5.5 Preventive Measures

The Council will take **reasonable steps to prevent third-party harassment**, including but not limited to:

- Informing third parties of expected standards of behaviour
- Displaying notices or statements about the Council's zero-tolerance approach
- Training staff on how to respond to and report third-party harassment
- Monitoring locations, events, and situations where harassment may be more likely to occur

#### 5.6 Responding to Complaints

When a complaint of third-party harassment is received, the Council will take appropriate steps to **remedy the situation and prevent recurrence**, which may include:

- Issuing a warning to the third party regarding their behaviour
- Banning the third party from Council premises, events, or services
- Reporting criminal behaviour to the police
- Sharing relevant information with other organisations or branches as appropriate to safeguard staff and service users
- Reviewing risk assessments and implementing additional controls if needed

The Parish Council is committed to fostering a workplace where all individuals feel respected, safe, and supported. We will not hesitate to take firm action to address third-party sexual harassment.

## 6. Reporting Procedure

Any 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 Staffing Committee
- The Chair of the Parish Council

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.

## 7. Investigation Procedure

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

## 8. Disciplinary Action

If an investigation confirms that sexual harassment has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. This may include verbal or written warnings, suspension, demotion, or termination, depending on the severity of the offense and the circumstances involved.

## 9. Training and Awareness

Portreath Parish Council is committed to preventing sexual harassment through education and training. All employees and elected officials will receive training on this policy and their rights and responsibilities regarding sexual harassment prevention and reporting.

## 10. Compliance

All employees, employees, , contract workers, volunteers, elected officials as well as third-party users (customers, parishioners, service users) associated with Portreath Parish Council are expected to comply with this policy at all times. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## 11. Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

## 12. Conclusion

Portreath Parish 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.

### Review:

Date	Recommendation/ Amendment/Changes	Approved by Full Council	Sign