

TOWN COUNCIL

DATE: 5 January 2022

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

PART I

RECOMMENDATION

The Town Council is recommended to adopt and sign the Civility and Respect Pledge, as endorsed by the National Association of Local Councils, the Society of Local Council Clerks, and One Voice Wales.

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report details the Civility and Respect Pledge as designed by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and One Voice Wales (OVW).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 NALC, SLCC, OVW and county associations came together and formed the Civility and Respect Working Group with a desire to work together to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the well-being of councillors, professional officers, and staff.

2.2 As a result, the Civility and Respect Pledge has been crafted to help address growing concerns about the impact bullying, harassment, and intimidation by a small minority is having on councils, councillors, and staff.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Whilst there are no immediate implications, the Town Council (which has previously been proactive in supporting staff and councillors to undertake

training through the provision of fully funded training budgets), is recommended to continue this commitment in 2023/24 and beyond.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Adopting the Civility and Respect Pledge provides a public demonstration that Teignmouth Town Council is committed to ensuring high standards of behaviour and respect at all times between councillors, staff, and members of the public, thus helping to reduce the type of conduct that can lead to complaints, which in turn protects councillors, staff, and the public reputation of the Council.

Iain Wedlake Town Clerk

Definition of Civility and Respect

Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word.

Examples of ways in which you can show respect are 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.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and One Voice Wales (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.

By our council signing up to the civility and respect pledge we are demonstrating that our council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.

Signing up is a simple process, which requires councils to register and agree to the following statements:

Statement	Tick to agree
Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.	
Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff	
Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors	
Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.	
Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.	
Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it and when it happens.	
Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme	
Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.	