



BRANTHAM
Parish Council

Brantham Parish Council
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**The Parish Councillors of BRANTHAM FINANCE COMMITTEE are summoned to attend a meeting on
Wednesday 23 August 2023, 7pm at Brantham Village Hall.**

The Council, members of the public and press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and press are not lawfully excluded.

The meeting is open to members of the public to attend in person. Members of the public not wishing to attend in person may submit written representations on issues to be covered in the agenda or items in general which will be noted for further consideration.

AGENDA

All papers for the meeting can be found [here](#)

FC 08.23.01	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE a) Committee to receive apologies b) Committee to consent to apologies received	CLERK
FC 08.23.02	MINUTES a) To consider and approve the minutes of the previous Finance Committee meeting on 29 June and 14 July 2023	CHAIR
FC 08.23.03	ACTIONS a) To review progress of highlighted actions from previous month	CLERK
FC 08.23.04	BANK RECONCILIATION a) To confirm completion of a bank reconciliation b) To discuss any issues arising from the reconciliation	CHAIR
FC 08.23.05	CONTRIBUTIONS a) To consider any requests received from local groups in line with the BPC Contributions policy and to agree an appropriate donation from Brantham Parish Council <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brantham Cricket Club - £150 b) To note contributions expenditure committed to date	CHAIR
FC 08.23.06	APRIL PAYSLEIPS a) To agree the salary payments as per payslips received from SALC <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sarah Keys – £TBC• Tina Bird – £TBC• Phil Wainwright - £TBC b) To authorise Responsible Finance Officer to make the payments via online banking	CHAIR
FC 08.23.07	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY a) To receive an update on the monies held under the CIL Reserve and monies expended to date on projects b) To consider/agree allocation of funds to potential projects going forward	CHAIR
FC 08.23.08	BPC ASSET REGISTER a) To review the 2023-24 Asset Register to date b) To approve amendments and additions to the BPC Asset Register	CHAIR
FC 08.23.09	INTERNAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN a) To review/approve progress against the BPC Internal Audit Action Plan b) To consider/agree any next steps as appropriate	RFO
FC 08.23.10	REQUESTS FOR PROJECTS FROM BPC COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES	CHAIR

	a) To consider/approve any requests for projects and funding necessary from BPC Committees, Sub-Committees and Groups b) To review update on CIL funding request to BDC for play equipment c) To consider/agree next steps as necessary	
FC 08.23.11	BPC POLICY REVIEW a) To review/amend/approve the following Brantham Parish Council policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions Policy • Data Protection Policy (To follow) • Social Media Policy • Dignity at Work Policy. b) To agree the next BPC Policies to review c) To consider/agree next steps as necessary	
FC 08.23.12	ONLINE PAYMENTS a) To consider/approve a process for making online payments, including review of the example policy circulated b) To consider/agree next steps as necessary	CHAIR
FC 08.23.13	SLCC NATIONAL CONFERENCE a) To approve proposal from the Parish Council Chair that the Parish Clerk is funded to attend the SLCC 2-day National conference in October 2023, 50% funded by BPC b) To consider/agree next steps as necessary	CHAIR
FC 08.23.14	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	ALL
FC 08.23.15	DATE OF NEXT MEETING Wednesday 27 September 2023, 7pm at Brantham Village Hall	CHAIR

Signed:



Sarah Keys

Clerk to the Council



BRANTHAM

Parish Council

MINUTES of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 29 June 2023 at 7pm at Brantham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs. Bridgeman, McCraw and Osben. In Attendance: Sarah Keys (Clerk/RFO).

FC 06.23.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a) Committee to receive apologies – The Committee received apologies from Cllr Cherry.
- b) The Committee to consent to apologies received – **Cllr Bridgeman proposed that the apologies should be approved, aif.**

FC 06.23.02 MINUTES

- a) To consider and approve the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 24 May 2023 – **Cllr McCraw proposed that the minutes were approved, this was seconded by Cllr Bridgeman.** Cllr Osben abstained from the vote. The motion was carried and the minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

FC 06.23.03 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute no.	Action	Ongoing/ Dismissed
FC 04.23.10	Update Staff Appraisal Policy <i>Completed – on agenda for discussion</i>	Dismissed
FC 05.23.03	Contact VWaples to follow up on best practice for online payments <i>Completed – no response to date. The Clerk agreed to contact other Clerks via a FB Clerk's community group for advice. It was agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting</i>	Ongoing

FC 06.23.04 BANK RECONCILIATION

- a) To confirm completion of a bank reconciliation– Cllr Osben agreed that a bank reconciliation to 31 May 2023 had been completed.
- b) To discuss any issues arising from the reconciliation – none.

FC 06.23.05 CONTRIBUTIONS

- a) To consider any requests received from local groups in line with the BPC Contributions policy and to agree an appropriate donation from Brantham Parish Council – none received.
- b) To note contributions expenditure committed to date – The Committee noted the budget of £1801 allocated for the coming year.

FC 06.23.06 APRIL PAYSLEIPS

- a) To agree the salary payments as per payslips received from SALC – Councillors noted the payslips circulated by the Clerk and noted the salary payments as follows:
Sarah Keys – £1762.36
Tina Bird - £270.83
Phil Wainwright - £225.27
- b) To authorise Responsible Finance Office to make payments via online banking – **Cllr McCraw proposed that the Committee should authorise the RFO to make the salary payments via online banking, aif.**

FC 06.23.07 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

- a) To receive an update on the monies held under the CIL Reserve and monies expended to date on projects – the Committee noted the paper circulated by the Clerk outlining CIL income and expenditure to date and noted the



change to the amount allocated for the play area project at GPL Play area following indication from Babergh District Council that the bid submitted by the Clerk would be approved.

- b) To consider/agree allocation of funds to potential projects going forward – the Committee noted no change from the previous month.

FC 06.23.08 INTERNAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN

- a) To review/approve progress against the BPC Internal Audit Action Plan – the RFO reviewed the progress against the Internal Audit Action plan to date.
- b) To consider/agree any next steps as appropriate – the Clerk confirmed that the Action Plan would continue to be updated and reviewed at each Finance Committee meeting.

FC 06.23.09 REQUESTS FOR PROJECTS FROM BPC COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES

- a) To consider/approve any requests or projects and funding necessary from BPC Committees, Sub-Committees and Groups – the Committee noted the request received from the Parish Plan Working Group for £5000 to support the initial costs of creating the plan. **Cllr McCraw proposed that the Finance Committee should recommend to full Parish Council that this request be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Osben. Two Councillors voted in favour of the motion, Cllr Bridgeman abstained from the vote. The motion was carried. (ACTION – Cllr Osben)**
- b) To consider/agree next steps as necessary – see above.

FC 06.23.10 STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY

- a) To review the updated Staff Appraisal Policy as circulated by the Clerk and consider any proposed changes – the Committee reviewed the document.
- b) To consider/agree next steps as necessary – Following discussion **Cllr Osben proposed that the Committee should recommend that this document is approved by the Parish Council, this was seconded by Cllr McCraw and aif. (ACTION – Cllr Osben)**

FC 06.23.11 BPC POLICY REVIEW

- a) To agree arrangements for review of listed Brantham Parish Council policies – the Committee agreed that between 3-4 policies should be reviewed by the Committee over the coming months.
- b) To consider/agree next steps as necessary - The Clerk will review the policy documents, make amendments and circulate prior to the meeting for approval. The following policies will be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting: Contributions Policy, Data Protection Policy, Social Media Policy and a Dignity at Work Policy.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee reviewed the arrangement for reducing the Grounds Maintenance payments to BMCIC. This had proved difficult to arrange via letter with Lloyds Bank. **The Committee agreed that the standing order of £332 to BMCIC should be reduced to £40 (the ongoing rate agreed) with the additional, reducing, payments over the coming 6 months made by cheque.**

The Clerk requested the option to look into the use of dongles for her laptop when linking to her mobile phone's 4G was not possible. Cllr Bridgeman stated that if there was insufficient 4G signal to link to a mobile phone hotspot then there would be insufficient signal for a dongle and therefore it was agreed not to pursue this idea.

FC 06.23.12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 23 August 2023, 7m at Brantham Village Hall. The meeting closed to the public at 7.56pm.

SIGNED.....DATED.....



ACTIONS

Minute no.	Action	Who
FC 06.23.03	Add online payments to the agenda for the next meeting	Clerk
FC 06.23.09	Recommend to full Parish Council that the request for a budget of £5000 from the Parish Plan Committee should be approved by the Council	Cllr Osben



MINUTES of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Friday 14 July 2023 at 7pm at The Crown, Factory Lane.

Present: Cllrs. Bridgeman, Cherry, McCraw and Osben. In Attendance: Sarah Keys (Clerk/RFO).

FC 07.23.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a) Committee to receive apologies – None received.
- b) Committee to consent to apologies received – see above.

FC 07.23.02 BMCIC REQUEST FOR USE OF LOWER PLAYING FIELD AS CAR PARK

- a) To consider/approve the request from BMCIC to hire the Lower Playing Field for use as a car park on 15/16 July 2023 – the Clerk informed the Committee that a late request had been received from Darren Smith requesting permission for BMCIC to hire the Lower Playing Field for parking during a 5-a-side football tournament. Cars would be charged £1 and 50p per car would be paid to Brantham Parish Council. Following discussion **Cllr Bridgeman proposed that this request was approved, this was seconded by Cllr McCraw, aif.**
- b) To consider/agree next steps as necessary – the Clerk to inform BMCIC that their request had been approved and to provide bank details for payment.

FC 07.23.03 LEGAL CONSULTATION COSTS

- a) To consider/approve the proposal from the Chair of the Legal Sub-Committee that legal advice from Birketts solicitors to be sought when deemed necessary by any tow of the Clerk, the Chairman or the Vice Chairman – Cllr Bridgeman informed the Committee that it had become apparent that on occasion legal advice was necessary at short notice in order to safeguard the Council or to provide urgent advice when necessary. Following discussion **Cllr McCraw proposed that delegated authority was given to any two of the Clerk, the Chairman or the Vice Chairman to request legal advice from Birketts Solicitors when deemed necessary, this was seconded by Cllr Cherry, aif.**

FC 07.23.04 JULY PAYSLEIPS

- a) To agree the salary payments as per payslips received from SALC – Councillors noted the payslips circulated by the Clerk and noted the salary payments as follows:
 - Sarah Keys – £1574.61
 - Tina Bird - £297.92
 - Phil Wainwright - £247.83
- b) To authorise Responsible Finance Office to make payments via online banking – **The Chair proposed that the Committee should authorise the RFO to make the salary payments via online banking, aif.**

FC 07.23.05 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair highlighted that a number of litter bins had been removed from the Brantham Open Space and queried whether this had been done by Babergh District Council. Cllr McCraw confirmed that he had queried this at BDC but it did not seem to be the case. The Clerk confirmed that she would query this with SFG.

FC 07.23.06 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 23 August 2023, 7m at Brantham Village Hall. The meeting closed to the public at 7.24pm.

SIGNED.....DATED.....



REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTION

Organisation/Group details	
Organisation/Group name	Brantham Cricket Club
Contact name	
Contact address	
Contact email	
Contact telephone	

Approximate funding requested: ...£150.....

PC Funding received previously: ...£300 across two requests...I think!

Reason for funding request

The cricket club would like £150 towards the cost of a new specialist square mower. We had one about 4 years back thanks to a PC contribution but that was a regular garden mower for getting longer grass down. This is a different, more specialist mower designed for cutting already short grass shorter and most cricket and bowls clubs will have one of these. Our current version of this mower is old, several parts are failing or work intermittently, and the cost of repair is now not economically viable.

Signed James Pearce Date 15/08/2023



CIL SPENDING REVIEW – April 2023 for the year ending 31 March 2024

Neighbourhood CIL is governed by the CIL Regulations and the rate at which it is paid is set out in national legislation. For those Parish Councils with a made Neighbourhood Plan it is 25% (with no CAP0 and for Parishes where there is no made Neighbourhood Plan it is 15% subject to a cap which is set out nationally (in legislation). *The cap is worked out at £100 index linked per occupied property within the parish. The cap rate is set for the year and changes on the 1st January each year.*

1. CIL Resources available

CIL funding currently stands at:

Financial Year	Income	Expenditure	CIL running Total	Timescales
2018-19	£2556.87		£2556.87	16.10.23
2019-20	£104.01 £3258.75		£5919.63	03.04.24 19.10.24
2020-21	£3,258.67 £2,681.48		£11,859.78	03.04.25 09.10.25
2021-22			£11,859.78	
2022-23	£9,734.69 £7,747.54	£10,123.64	£19,218.37	07.04.27 12.10.27
2023-24	£53,848.41		£73,066.78	14.04.28
Committed		£25,563.09	£47,503.69	Balance after committed funds
Totals	£83,190.42	£35,686.73		

2. Projects completed as bids against the Neighbourhood CIL Pot

The following projects having been previously approved as valid projects for the Neighbourhood CIL pot are now completed with monies being fully paid out

Project	Budget	Predicted Cost	Sources of External Funding	Neighbourhood CIL (Parish) Funding	Start date	Current Position
Lower Playing Field Goal Posts	None	Approx. £10,000	None	£10,123.64	June 2023	Completed

3. Projects identified as potential bids against the Neighbourhood CIL Pot

The following projects have been identified as valid bids against the Neighbourhood CIL Pot, have approval and are awaiting completion with monies being fully allocated and therefore committed:

Project	Budget	Predicted Cost	Sources of External Funding	Neighbourhood CIL (Parish) Funding	Start date	Current Position
Play area updates	None allocated	£27,599.99	Neighbourhood CIL (BDC)	£22,488.99	July 2023	Funding request to

			£5111			BDC CIL amended and under review
Play area signage	None	£3074.10	£0	£3074.10	May 2023	Underway

4. The following projects may be identified or submitted as potential discussion bids and will provide the basis for infrastructure spending as developments come online

Items highlighted in GRAY will be identified on an “as and when demand” as the parish continues to grow

Project	Budget	Predicted Cost	Sources of External Funding	Neighbourhood CIL (Parish) Funding	Additional consultation required	Further information
CCTV at LPL and GPL	None allocated	£7000.00	BDC CIL for Merriam Close	£3500	Approval from BPC required	Quotes being sought
Village Hall	None allocated	Unknown	Neighbourhood CIL (BDC), bDC CIL Infrastructure pot and external funding	Unknown	Consultation with Brantham residents and PC needed	
Signage for cycleway to Manningtree	None Allocated	Unknown	SCC Locality Budget	£Unknown	PC Approval needed	
Crossing on A137	None allocated	£100,000	S106? / Locality funding	£unknown	Community Consultation needed	
Other major projects	None allocated	Unknown	To be determined		Subject to consultation	
New Grit Bins	On as an when basis			Neighbourhood CIL (Parish)		
New Waste Bins	On as and when basis			Neighbourhood CIL (Parish)		

ASSET REGISTER



BRANTHAM
Parish Council

This document details all of the Assets held by Brantham Parish Council

Adopted by the Finance Committee at a meeting on TBC

VERSION: 1.0

It should be noted that some of the valuation figures have been arrived at through best endeavours using the information known at the time of first compiling the register. This document is reviewed on an annual basis and assets are either entered (as acquired) or removed (as disposed of). Adjustments may be made during the year as and when appropriate.

Item	Description	Location	Date Purchased	Value B/forward	Additions in year	Disposals in year	Values C/forward	Notes
STREET FURNITURE								
Grit bin		Birch Drive - shops	Unknown					
Grit bin		Birch Drive/Sycamore Way	Unknown					
Grit bin		Blenheim Close - behind shops	Unknown					
Grit bin		Blenheim Close - lower end	Unknown					
Grit bin		Brantham Leisure Centre	Unknown					
Grit bin		Brooklands Rise - Outside school	Unknown					
Grit bin		Brooklands Road - near school	Unknown					
Grit bin		Brooklands Road - lower end	Unknown					
Grit bin		Brooklands Road - near bus stop	Unknown					
Grit bin		Cedar Close	Unknown					
Grit bin		Cedar Close	Unknown					
Grit bin		Church Lane - outside church	Unknown					
Grit bin		Church Lane - junc w Rectory Lane	Unknown					
Grit bin		Kettles Way	Unknown					
Grit bin		New Village - Outside Braiswick	Unknown					
Grit bin		Palfrey Heights - Entrance	Unknown					
Grit bin		Palfrey Heights - lower	Unknown					
Grit bin		Palfrey Heights - road to A137	Unknown					
Grit bin		Pine Close - Entrance	Unknown					
Grit bin		Pine Close - Inside	Unknown					
Grit bin		Pine Close - entrance 2	Unknown					
Grit bin		School Lane/Church Lane	Unknown					
Grit bin		Westerns End - top	Unknown					
Estimated total of grit bins listed above				3,105			£3,105.00	£135 per bin
Grit bin	Green plastic	Village Hall	Jan-19	135				
Litter Bin		A137 - junc w cattawade st	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Acacia Court	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Acacia Court	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Brooklands Road - No. 28	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Cattawade Street - Green	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Gravel Pit Lane - play area	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Kettles Way	Unknown					

Litter Bin		Merriam Close - play area	Unknown					
Litter Bin		New Village - opp Wesley House	Unknown					
Litter Bin		New Village - Junc of Cattawade St	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Old Bridge #1 - rear of Crown	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Old Bridge #2 - rear of Crown	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Palfrey Heights - top green	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Palfrey Heights - opp no 32	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Sycamore Way - near shops	Unknown					
Litter Bin		Temple Pattle - Play area	Unknown					
Estimated total of litter bins listed above				3,216			£3,216.00	£201 per bin
Litter Bin	Topsy Royale Green	Lower Playing Field	Jan-21	201			£201.00	
Dog litter bin		Birch Drive - by church lane footpath	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Birch Drive - by church lane footpath	Donated from BDC 2021					
Dog litter bin		Brooklands Road - opp no. 27	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		New Village - Braiswicks	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Merriam Close - play area	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Pattern Bush Close - rear of school	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Rectory Lane - opp graveyard	Unknown					
Dog litter bin	Large, metal, red	Temple Pattle - cinder path	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Temple Pattle - play area	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Brantham Hill - Catholic church	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Brooklands Rise - outside school	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Gravel Pit Lane - beside no. 6	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Old Bridge - rear of Crown	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Palfrey Heights - opp no. 5	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Factory Lane - bottom of Cinder path	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Palfrey Heights - lower green	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Palfrey Heights - footpath to A137	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Mill Lane - near The Bull	Unknown					
Dog litter bin		Ipswich Road, near Bull	2016					
Estimated total of dog litter bins listed above				4,000			£4,000.00	£200 per bin
Dog litter bin		Pattles Fen - School Lane	Jan-20	200			£200.00	
Dog litter bin		Main road	Jan-20	200			£200.00	
Dog litter bin	Metal w lift up lid	Opposite Birch Drive	Mar-22	180			£180.00	
Dog litter bin	Metal	Brooklands Road by bus stop	Oct-22	162			£162.00	
Planters x 2		Acacia Court	May-15	300			£300.00	
Village Sign		Metal	Unknown	750			£750.00	
Footpath Signage		Various	Unknown	2,460			£2,460.00	
Notice Board	Wall mounted plastic with key	Village Hall	Unknown	465			£465.00	
Notice Board	Wall Mounted - black	Acacia Court	Mar-22	511			£511.00	
Bus Shelter	Brick built	A137 near Gravel Pit Lane	Unknown	5,000			£5,000.00	
Bus Shelter	Brick built	A137 opposite Birch Drive	Unknown	3,000			£3,000.00	
Bus Shelter	Brick built	A137 opposite Palfrey Heights	Unknown	5,000			£5,000.00	
Bus Shelter	Clear plastic open end	Brooklands Road near Westerns End	Unknown	5,000			£5,000.00	
Bus Shelter	Brick Built	Cattawade	Unknown	5,000			£5,000.00	
Bus Shelter	Clear plastic open end	Palfrey Heights	Unknown	3,000			£3,000.00	
Bench		A137 Junc with Palfrey Heights	Unknown	400			£400.00	
Bench		Bergholt Road - Picnic area	Unknown	400			£400.00	

Bench		Cattawade Street	Unknown	400			£400.00	
Bench		Cattawade Street	Unknown	400			£400.00	
Bench		GPL Play area	Unknown	400			£400.00	
Bench		Merriam Close Play area	Unknown	400			£400.00	
Bench		Palfrey Heights North of bottom green	Unknown	400			£400.00	
Bench	Wooden bench	Palfrey Heights - Top green	Unknown	600			£600.00	
Bench	Wooden bench	Temple Pattle - Play area	Unknown	400			£400.00	
Bench x 3	Picnic style bench	GPL & Merriam Close play areas	Jan-21	925			£925.00	
Fencing	Various styles	Play areas	Unknown	7,780			£7,780.00	

STREET LIGHTING

Footway light	331	Picnic site - Bergholt Road	Unknown					
Footway light	332	Picnic site - Bergholt Road	Unknown					
Footway light	283	No 9 - Birch Drive	Unknown					
Footway light	262	Catholic church - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	263	1 Florence Villas - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	264	Greytiles - Brnatham Hill	2019					
Footway light	265	2 Edith Villas - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	266	Hillcrest - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	267	Highfields - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	268	Maythornes - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	269	2 The Pennings - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	270	The Conifers - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	271	High Oaks - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	282	Windyridge - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	344	Kimberley - Brantham Hill	2019					
Footway light	284	Brooklands Road opposite No1	Unknown					
Footway light	187	Opposite Rectory Lane	Unknown					
Footway light	277	Opposite Slough Road	Unknown					
Footway light	340	Sycamore Way footpath	Unknown					
Footway light	340	Sycamore Way footpath	Unknown					
Footway light	341	16 Sycamore Way	Unknown					
Footway light	342	71 Palfrey Heights	Unknown					
Footway light	272	Patmore - Slough Road	Unknown					
Footway light	273	Dennede - Slough Road	Unknown					
Footway light	74	Knebworth - Slough Road	Unknown					
Footway light	275	Coronation - Slough Road	Unknown					
Footway light	278	White House (near A137) - Slough Road	Unknown					
Footway light	279	Two Mile House - Slough Road	Unknown					

Estimated total of street lights listed above

35,200

£35,200.00

PROPERTY

Leisure Centre	Clubhouse building	New Village	Unknown	250,000			£250,000.00	
Leisure Centre	Clubhouse extension	New Village	Jan-12	20,000			£20,000.00	
Leisure Centre	Bowls Pavilion	New Village	Unknown	20,000			£20,000.00	
Leisure Centre	Football Stand	New Village	Unknown	20,000			£20,000.00	
Leisure Centre	Gates and Fences	New Village	Unknown	5,000			£5,000.00	
Leisure Centre	Floodlights	New Village	Unknown	30,000			£30,000.00	
Leisure Centre	Tennis Courts	New Village	Unknown	40,400			£40,400.00	

RECREATION EQUIPMENT

LOWER PLAYING FIELD								
Play equipment	Junior Swing 2 seat	Lower Playing Field	Unknown					
Play equipment	Toddler Swing 2 seat	Lower Playing Field	Unknown					
Play equipment	Metal 2 seat	Lower Playing Field	Unknown					
Play equipment	Basket Ball hoop	Lower Playing Field	Unknown					
Estimated total of play equipment listed above				10,100			£10,100.00	
Play equipment	Wicksteed Teen Shelter	Lower Playing Field	Nov-20	7,500			£7,500.00	
Play equipment	Wicksteed Spider climber	Lower Playing Field	Nov-20	10,700			£10,700.00	
Play equipment	Wicksteed Cradle Swing	Lower Playing Field	Nov-20	3,500			£3,500.00	
Play equipment	Treetop Towers BASO	Lower Playing Field	June 2022	11,931			£11,931.00	0
Play equipment	Wicksteed Square end goals	Lower Playing Field	Mar-23	10,124			£10,124.00	
MERRIAM CLOSE								
Play equipment	Toddler swing 2 seat	Merriam Close play area	Unknown	1,500			£1,500.00	
Play equipment	Orbit roundabout	Merriam Close play area	Unknown	5,000			£5,000.00	
Play equipment	APL Multi-play climbing frame	Merriam Close play area	Dec-14	5,635			£5,635.00	
Play equipment	APL Sit-on springer	Merriam Close play area	Dec-14	585			£585.00	
Play equipment	APL Sit-on springer	Merriam Close play area	Dec-14	585			£585.00	
Play equipment	Cradle swing	Merriam Close play area	Jul-23	5,111			£5,111.00	
GRAVEL PIT LANE								
Play equipment	Swings - 2 seat + 2 cradle	GPL Play area	Unknown					
Play equipment	Traditional roundabout	GPL Play area	Unknown					
Play equipment	High pedestal slide	GPL Play area	Unknown					
Estimated total of play equipment listed above				9800			£9,800.00	
Play equipment	APL Zip wire	GPL Play area	July 2016	8,736			£8,736.00	
Play equipment	APL Adventure trail	GPL Play area	July 2016	7,440			£7,440.00	
Play equipment	Playground signs	GPL Play area	September 2016	178			£177.50	
Play equipment	Goal Posts	GPL Play area	December 2016	180		180	£0.00	
Play equipment	Goal Posts	GPL Play area	July 2023		6,185		£6,185.00	
Play Equipment	4-way springer	GPL Play area	July 2023		830		£830.00	
Play equipment	Horse springer	GPL Play area	July 2023		881		£881.00	
Play equipment	Play Tower	GPL Play area	July 2023		5,721		£5,721.00	
SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE								
SID	Post-mounted	Various locations	December 2020	3,425			£3,425.00	
SID	Post-mounted	Various locations		3,425			£3,425.00	
SID	Post-mounted	Various locations	December 2021	3,425			£3,425.00	
SID	Post-mounted	Various locations	December 2021	3,425			£3,425.00	
PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE								
Office Equip	Laminator	Office	June 2016	31			£30.53	
Office Equip	HP Envy Laptop	Office	May-21	779			£779.00	
Office Equip	Epson Printer	Office	May-21	330			£330.00	
Office Equip	Filing Cabinet	Office	Unknown	150			£150.00	
Ceremonial	Gavel and Hammer	Office	Unknown	50			£50.00	
Office Equip	Office Chair	Office	Feb-22	79.99			£79.99	
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT								
Equipment	Lawn Rake	Secure location	Aug-21	35			£35.00	
Equipment	Safety glasses	Secure location	Aug-21	16			£16.00	
Equipment	Gardening Gloves x 4	Secure location	Aug-21	50			£50.00	
Equipment	Tree pruners	Secure location	Aug-21	30			£30.00	

Equipment	warning sign	Secure location	Aug-21	26			£26.00	
Equipment	Bowsaw	Secure location	Aug-21	15			£15.00	
Equipment	Petrol Lawnmower	Secure location	Aug-21	424			£424.00	
Equipment	Petrol Brushcutter	Secure location	Sep-22	563			£562.50	
Equipment	Hedgetrimmer & battery	Secure location	Oct-22	183			£183.00	
				£589,310.26	£13,617.00	£180.00	£602,612.02	



INTERNAL AUDIT 2022-23

BPC ACTION PLAN

NB: Lines highlighted in Light Blue have been completed

Subject	Requirements	Recommendations	Actions for the Council	Who	Date Completed
SECTION 2 Financial Regulation and Standing Orders	Are Financial Regulations up to date and reviewed annually	Council might like to review the Procurement Thresholds amendments (SI 2022/139) of the Public Contracts (Amendment) regulations 2022 which came into force on 21Dec 2022 and make the changes to the contract value limits from £25,000 to £30,000 for non-central government authorities. The contract value limits are to be calculated incl. of VAT (effective from 01 Jan 2022)	Update Finance Regulations in line with the Procurement Thresholds amendments of the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2022	Clerk/RFO & Finance Committee	May 2023
SECTION 2 Financial Regulation and Standing Orders	Has the Council properly tailored the Financial Regulations	Ensure that the Financial Regulations are tailored to the Council by completing the sections within the [square] brackets and ensuring that all values are appropriate to the Council in terms of procurement and budgets	Update FR with particular attention to square brackets and values	RFO/Finance Committee	May 2023
SECTION 5 Budgetary controls	Verify that budget has been properly prepared and agreed	Council should be aware that the preparation of the annual budget is one of the key statutory tasks to be undertaken by an authority and should ensure that it is full Council, not a committee, that considers, approves and adopts the budget – for clarity the minutes of the Parish Council should show the actual figures being approved so that there is clarity on the budget, precept and implications for Band D Council Tax	Minute budget and precept decisions fully in full Parish Council minutes	Clerk	



INTERNAL AUDIT 2022-23

BPC ACTION PLAN

Section 8 – Payroll controls	Is there evidence that the Council is aware of its pension responsibilities?	Council is advised that every three years an employer must put certain staff back into a pension scheme. This is known as re-enrolment. Council must carry out its duties and comply with the deadlines as stated in communications from the Pension Regulator	Carry out re-enrolment	RFO	May 2023
Section 9 – Asset control	Is the asset register up to date and reviewed annually	Council is advised to review the values stated above ensuring that the bough forward balance of £573,499 mirrors the declared value on the audited accounts for the year ending 31 March 2022 (£571,905)	To review the balances on the Asset Register	RFO	
Section 14 – additional information	Is there evidence that Minutes are administered in accordance with legislation?	Council is advised to ensure that all absences are not merely recorded but approved by the Council thereby ensuring that the absence is not treated as unapproved	Clerk to ensure that absences are recorded appropriately	Clerk	Noted and new minuting used May 2023
		Council should note that the resolutions that are made at the meetings when the public are not in attendance should still be recorded in the minutes for the meeting	Clerk to minute in camera sections of minutes appropriately	Clerk	Noted and new minuting used May 2023



Contributions Policy

Brantham Parish Council

Author: Sarah Keys (Parish Clerk)

ADOPTION DATE:	
MINUTE NO.	
VERSION NO.	2
REVIEW DATE:	

Contributions Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The Parish Council recognises the important impact that the activities of many local organisations and individuals have on the wellbeing of the local community. Brantham Parish Council has statutory powers to make funds available to local organisations for the overall benefit of Brantham and its residents.

This document outlines Brantham Parish Council's guidelines for making contributions. It also formalises the application process to ensure access, openness and fairness to the groups and organisations we aim to support. We will ensure that our contributions activity is fair and transparent.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

It is Brantham Parish Council's intention (subject to budget restrictions and available resources) to support initiatives and create opportunities in the local community that are not, as a matter of course, funded by the Council.

Priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received grants from Brantham Parish Council. The size of any grant awarded is at the discretion of the Parish Council but will not exceed £500 in any one application.

The Council reserve the right to ask an organisation for audited accounts or accounts that have been independently examined by a suitably qualified person, for the previous two financial years or, in the case of a newly formed organisation, a detailed budget and business plan.

Each application will be assessed on its own merits and will be considered along with other applications by the Council's Finance Committee. Due account will be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or own fund-raising activities.

The Council may make the award of any grant or subsidy subject to such additional conditions and requirements, as it considers appropriate.

All applications should be submitted in writing using the form published on the Parish Council website. The administration of and accounting for any grant or subsidy shall be the responsibility of the recipient.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

The following organisations may apply to Brantham Parish Council:

- A Brantham based charity
- An organisation serving the needs of the residents of Brantham
- Resident(s) of Brantham requesting a contribution for a project/event that will be for the benefit of the community as a whole
- A local branch of a regional or national organisation/group which serves the needs of the residents of Brantham
- Applications from religious groups will be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated irrespective of their religious beliefs.
- Applications from education, health or social service establishments will be considered where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups and where there are benefits to the wider community within the Parish

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

Brantham Parish Council will normally reject applications from:

- Projects which are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies who would normally be funded by a local or regional authority
- Projects which improve or benefit privately owned land or property
- Support for individuals or private business projects
- “For profit” commercial organisations
- Regional and national organisations unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the grant would be used specifically for the residents served by Brantham Parish Council
- Organisations with political affiliations or those established for the purpose of forwarding a party-political agenda
- Organisations who discriminate on the grounds of race or religion.
- “Upward funders”, i.e. local groups whose fund raising is sent to their central HQ for redistribution.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED

The project should be something that makes the local community a better place to live, work and play. It should be something that will provide a long lasting and sustainable benefit to our local area. The project should improve the social, environmental and/or economic profile of Brantham. Priority will be given to those applications which add value over applications for running costs.

WHAT IS UNLIKELY TO BE FUNDED

The following projects are unlikely to be funded:

- Projects which have a large shortfall in the funding required to complete the project
- Projects that simply replace existing facilities with no significant improvement
- Projects that are seeking long-term funding for running costs or other costs
- Projects that cannot demonstrate financial sustainability going forward

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

Brantham Parish Council support must be acknowledged as appropriate on all publicity and promotional material including posters, advertisements, press releases and leaflets.

Financial support can only be used for the purpose for which the contribution is made.

Funding must not be distributed to any other organisation.

Applications should be submitted, using the Contributions Request Form to:

The Clerk, Brantham Parish Council, 34 Sycamore Way, Brantham, CO11 1TL

clerk@branthamparishcouncil.co.uk

Decisions will be based on the following criteria:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| • General eligibility | • Community involvement |
| • Impact on key local need | • Feasibility |
| • Community Support | • Sustainability |
| • Value for money | • Likely effectiveness |
| • Environmental impact | |



APPLICATION FOR A CONTRIBUTION

Before completing this form, please carefully read Brantham Parish Council's [Contributions Policy](#). Copies of this form must be submitted to the Parish Council along with any necessary supporting document to the address or email detailed above.

General Information for Applicants

*It is Brantham Parish Council's intention (subject to budget restrictions and available resources) to support initiatives from local community groups and organisations. Priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received grants from Brantham Parish Council. The size of any contribution is awarded at the discretion of the Parish Council but **will not exceed £500 in any one application.***

If you have any queries on the completion of this form please contact the Parish Clerk using the details above.

ORGANISATION/GROUP DETAILS

Organisation/Group name:

Address:

Contact Email:

Contact Telephone:

Registered Charity no. (if applicable):

If you are part of a larger organisation enter its name:

Aims and objectives of your organisation/group:

DETAILS OF PROJECT/ACTIVITY

**Provide an overview of
your project/request:**



What is the likely number of beneficiaries?	
Age profile of beneficiaries	
Provide details of long-term sustainability	

DETAILS OF PARISH COUNCIL FUNDING REQUESTED	
Contribution requested	
Received in the last 4 years	

Please use this space for any other information about your project or organisation that may be helpful to your application:
--

I certify that the responses provided are accurate to the best of my knowledge

Signature of applicant _____

Office held _____ Date _____



Data Protection Policy

Brantham Parish Council

Author: Sarah Keys (Parish Clerk)

ADOPTION DATE:	
MINUTE NO.	
VERSION NO.	1
REVIEW DATE:	

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. Everyone has rights with regard as to how their personal information is handled. During the Parish Council's activities, it will collect, store and process personal information about its staff and Councillors, and it recognises the need to treat it in an appropriate and lawful manner.
- 1.2. The types of information that the Parish Council may be required to handle include details of current, past and prospective employees, suppliers, and customers in accordance with our document retention policy. The information, which may be held on paper or on a computer or other media, is subject to certain legal safeguards specified in the Data Protection Act 1998 (the Act) and other regulations. The Act imposes restrictions on how it may use that information.
- 1.3. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

2. STATUS OF THE POLICY

- 2.1. This policy sets out the Parish Council's rules on data protection and the legal conditions that must be satisfied in relation to the obtaining, handling, processing, storage, transportation and destruction of personal information.
- 2.2. If you consider that the policy has not been followed in respect of personal data about yourself or others you should raised the matter with the Chair of the Parish Council.

3. DEFINITION OF DATA PROTECTION TERMS

- 3.1. Data is information which is stored electronically, on a computer, or in certain paper-based filing systems.
- 3.2. Data subjects for the purpose of this policy include all living individuals about whom we hold personal data. A data subject need not be a UK national or resident. All data subjects have legal rights in relation to their personal data.
- 3.3. Personal data means data relating to a living individual who can be identified from that data (or from that data and other information in our possession). Personal data can be factual (such as a name, address or date of birth) or it can be an opinion (such as a performance appraisal).
- 3.4. Data controller Is the Proper Officer of Brantham Parish Council, who determines the purposes for which, and the way any personal data is processed. It has a responsibility to establish practices and policies in line with the Act. It is the data controller of all personal data used in our business.
- 3.5. Data users include employees whose work involves using personal data. Data users have a duty to protect the information they handle by following our data protection and security policies at all times.
- 3.6. Data processors include any person who processes personal data on behalf of a data controller. Employees of data controllers are excluded from this definition, but it could include suppliers which handle personal data on our behalf.
- 3.7. Processing is any activity that involves use of the data. It includes obtaining, recording or holding the data, or carrying out any operation or set of operations on the data including organising, amending, retrieving, using, disclosing, erasing or destroying it. Processing also includes transferring personal data to third parties.
- 3.8. Sensitive personal data includes information about a person's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or similar beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health or condition or sexual life, or about the commission of, or proceedings for, any offence committed or alleged to have been committed by that person, the disposal of such proceedings or the sentence of any court in such proceedings. Sensitive personal data can only be processed under strict conditions and will usually require the express consent of the person concerned.

4. DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

- 4.1. Anyone processing personal data must comply with the eight enforceable principles of good practice. These provide that personal data must be:
- Processed fairly and lawfully.
 - Processed for limited purposes and in an appropriate way.
 - Adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose.
 - Accurate.
 - Not kept longer than necessary for the purpose.
 - Processed in line with data subjects' rights.
 - Secure.
 - Not transferred to people or organisations situated in countries without adequate protection.

5. FAIR AND LAWFUL PROCESSING

- 5.1. The Act is intended not to prevent the processing of personal data, but to ensure that it is done fairly and without adversely affecting the rights of the data subject. The data subject must be told who the data controller is, the purpose for which the data is to be processed by us, and the identities of anyone to whom the data may be disclosed or transferred.
- 5.2. For personal data to be processed lawfully, certain conditions must be met. These may include, among other things, requirements that the data subject has consented to the processing, or that the processing is necessary for the legitimate interest of the data controller or the party to whom the data is disclosed. When sensitive personal data is being processed, more than one condition must be met. In most cases the data subject's explicit consent to the processing of such data will be required.

6. PROCESSING FOR LIMITED PURPOSES

Personal data may only be processed for the specific purposes notified to the data subject when the data was first collected or for any other purposes specifically permitted by the Act. This means that personal data must not be collected for one purpose and then used for another. If it becomes necessary to change the purpose for which the data is processed, the data subject must be informed of the new purpose before any processing occurs.

7. ADEQUATE, RELEVANT AND NON-EXCESSIVE PROCESSING

Personal data should only be collected to the extent that it is required for the specific purpose notified to the data subject. Any data which is not necessary for that purpose should not be collected in the first place.

8. ACCURATE DATA

Personal data must be accurate and kept up to date. Information which is incorrect, or misleading is not accurate, and steps should therefore be taken to check the accuracy of any personal data at the point of collection and at regular intervals afterwards. Inaccurate or out-of-date data should be destroyed.

9. TIMELY PROCESSING

Personal data should not be kept longer than is necessary for the purpose. This means that data should be destroyed or erased from the Parish Council's systems when it is no longer required. For guidance on how long certain data is likely to be kept before being destroyed, please refer to Brantham's Document and Electronic Data Retention Policy.

10. PROCESSING IN LINE WITH DATA SUBJECT'S RIGHTS

Data must be processed in line with data subjects' rights. BPC must ensure individuals can exercise their rights in the following ways:

1. Right to be informed
 - a. providing privacy notices
 - b. keeping a record of how BPC uses personal data to demonstrate compliance
 - c. Right of access; enabling individuals to access their personal data and supplementary information
 - d. be aware of and verifying the lawfulness of the processing activities
2. Right to rectification:
 - a. rectifying or amending personal data of the individual if requested
 - b. carrying out the above process within one month
3. Right to erasure:
 - a. deleting or removing an individual's data if requested and there is no compelling reason for its continued processing.
 - b. Right to restrict processing:
 - c. complying with any request to restrict, block or suppress the processing of personal data or retaining only enough data to ensure the right to restriction is respected in the future
4. Right to data portability:
 - a. providing individuals with their data so that they can reuse it for their own purposes
 - b. providing it in a commonly used format (i.e. machine-readable format)
5. Right to withdraw consent
 - a. respecting the right of an individual to withdraw consent to the processing at any time for any processing of data to which consent was obtained
 - b. withdrawal can be by telephone, email or by post.
6. The right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office:
 - a. contacting the Information Commissioners Office on 0303 123 1113 or via email <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/> or at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

11. STATUS OF THE POLICY

- 11.1. The Parish Council must ensure that appropriate security measures are taken against unlawful or unauthorised processing of personal data, and against the accidental loss of, or damage to, personal data. Data subjects may apply to the courts for compensation if they have suffered damage from such a loss.
- 11.2. The Act requires us to put in place procedures and technologies to maintain the security of all personal data from the point of collection to the point of destruction. Personal data may only be transferred to a third-party data processor if he agrees to comply with those procedures and policies, or if he puts in place adequate measures himself.
- 11.3. Maintaining data security means guaranteeing the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the personal data, defined as follows:
 - Confidentiality means that only the Proper Officer is authorised to use the data and can access it.
 - Integrity means that personal data should be accurate and suitable for the purpose for which it is processed.
 - Availability means that authorised users should be able to access the data if they need it for authorised purposes.
- 11.4. Security procedures include:
 - Secure lockable desks and cupboards. Desks and cupboards should be kept locked if they hold confidential information of any kind. (Personal information is always considered confidential.)

- Methods of disposal. Paper documents should be shredded.
- Equipment. Data users should ensure that individual monitors do not show confidential information to passers-by.

12. DEALING WITH SUBJECT ACCESS REQUESTS (SAR)

The Parish Council is aware that people have the right to access any personal information that is held about them. If a person requests to see any data that is being held about them, this will be handled in accordance with Brantham's Subject Access Request (SAR) Policy.

13. PROVIDING INFORMATION OVER THE TELEPHONE

Any member of staff dealing with telephone enquiries should be careful about disclosing any personal information held by the Parish Council. In particular they should:

- Check the caller's identity to make sure that information is only given to a person who is entitled to it.
- Suggest that the caller put their request in writing if they are not sure about the caller's identity and where their identity cannot be checked.
- Refer to the Clerk for assistance in difficult situations. No-one should be bullied into disclosing personal information.

14. ACCESS TO POLICIES REFERRED TO UNDER THIS POLICY

For details of all of the policies relevant to Brantham Parish Council as a local government authority please visit the Parish Council's website: <http://brantham.onesuffolk.net/>



Social Media Policy

Brantham Parish Council

Author: Sarah Keys (Parish Clerk)

ADOPTION DATE:	
MINUTE NO.	
VERSION NO.	2
REVIEW DATE:	

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Brantham Parish Council

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. How social media will be used by the Council**
- 3. Who is covered by this policy**
- 4. Code of Practice**
- 5. Managing Social Media Accounts**

1. Introduction

Social media is a term for websites based on user participation and user-generated content, including social media sites and other sites that are centered on user interaction.

This policy is intended to help Councillors and Council staff make appropriate decisions about the use of social media, and to outline Brantham Parish Council's position on various aspects of its use, including the management of comments made by members of the public when using BPC's social media sites.

It includes standards and guidelines for Councillors and Council staff to observe when using social media as a channel for communication, the management of public comments, and the action to be taken in respect to breaches of this policy.

This policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but are not limited to):

- Brantham Parish Council website
- Facebook, Myspace and other social networking sites
- Twitter and other micro-blogging sites
- Youtube and other video clips and podcast sites
- LinkedIn
- Blogs and discussion forums
- Email

This policy supplements, and should be read in conjunction, with all other policies and procedures adopted by Brantham Parish Council. The current Code of Conduct applies to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication.

Over time Brantham Parish Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services the Council delivers. When these changes occur this policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements. This policy may be amended at any time.

2. How Social Media will be used by the Council

Social media may be used for:

- Engagement with individuals and communities for the promotion of Council based services, decisions and actions
- Supporting local democracy
- Distribute in whole or part information from council notices, agendas, approved minutes and dates of meetings
- Information specifically agreed to be communicated via social media at Council meetings
- Advertising events and activities that Brantham Parish Council has organised or co- organised, or supports as being beneficial for the community
- Sharing good news stories relevant to the local area
- Announcing new information relevant to people living in or around the Brantham area
- Providing and exchanging information about local services and events
- Supporting community cohesion, neighbourliness and resilience
- Gathering local resident's insights
- Promoting cultural events or tourism in the area

- Advertising vacancies
- Re-tweeting or sharing relevant information from partner agencies such as Principal Authorities, Police, Library, Health etc.
- Post, retweet or share relevant information from local community groups for community benefit such as information from community associations, community groups, schools, sports clubs, Scouts/Guides and charities
- Link to appropriate websites and other social media accounts of sites or organisations that meet the council's expectations of conduct
- Post other items as the council see fit
- Refer resident queries via social media to the Clerk for wider dissemination to Councillors if required

Councillors and staff should be aware that not all communication through social media requires a response, although an acknowledgement should be made if appropriate.

Brantham Parish Council runs its social media pages so that it can pass information on to residents quickly. Social media accounts will not necessarily be checked daily and posts will not necessarily be responded to. BPC's social media accounts are primarily a tool to pass information on.

Though BPC is keen to hear resident's views, it will not be able to take comments made on its social media accounts as official comments, particularly on planning applications. In order to manage the messages received, residents will be asked – if necessary – to forward their comments to BPC. This can be done by emailing the Parish Clerk, by contacting a Parish Councillor or by attending a monthly meeting.

3. Who is covered by this policy

The principles of this policy apply to elected and co-opted Parish Councillors, council staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as staff in this policy).

All Councillors and staff are expected to comply with this policy at all times to protect the reputation, privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the council, its services, employees, partners and community.

Individual Parish Councillors and council staff are responsible for what they post, both in a council and personal capacity.

In the main, Councillors and council staff have the same legal duties online as anyone else, but failure to comply with the law may have more serious consequences.

The Council may take disciplinary action in respect serious breaches of this policy by employees. This may include unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive comments by an employee.

Volunteers in breach of the policy will result in the council no longer using their services and, if necessary, appropriate action will be taken.

The behaviour required in the Councillor's Code of Conduct shall apply to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication. Councillors will bear in mind that inappropriate conduct can still attract adverse publicity, even where the code does not apply.

Councillors must be aware that their profile as a Councillor means the more likely it is they will be seen as acting in an official capacity when blogging or networking.

Councillors and staff must remember that communications on the internet are permanent and public.

When communicating in a 'private' group it should be ensured that the council would be content with the statement should it be made public.

A Councillor or council staff member's behaviour on any social media site must be consistent with the behaviour required generally.

4. Code of Practice

When using social media, Councillors and staff must be mindful of the information they post in both a personal and council capacity and keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative.

Councillors and staff should not post comments that they would not be prepared to make in writing or face-to-face. When participating in online communication, Councillors and staff must:

- Be responsible and respectful, ensuring posts are positive, informative and balanced
- Respect the privacy of other Councillors, staff and residents
- Keep the tone of comments respectful and informative, never condescending or 'loud' i.e. use sentence case format and not write in capital letters or red to emphasize points
- Seek permission to publish original photos or videos (posting copyright images or text on social media sites is an offence so Councillors and staff must ensure any information does not infringe copyright).
- Always disclose their identity and affiliation to the Council, and never hide their identity using false names or pseudonyms
- Be objective, balanced, informative and accurate.
- Spell and grammar check everything

Parish Councillors and council staff must not:

- Give out the personal data of others on social media, including home address and telephone numbers.
- Use an individual's name in social media communications or post information about an individual unless given written permission to do so (publishing personal data of individuals without permission is a breach of Data Protection legislation)
- Present personal opinions as that of Brantham Parish Council.
- If a Councillor or member of staff blogs, tweets or communicates online personally, and not in the role as a Councillor or member of council staff, they must not claim to act or give the impression that they are acting as a representative of the Council i.e. they should not include web links to official Council websites, Council logos, Council email addresses or any other Council identification as this may give or reinforce the impression that they are representing the Council.
- Present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the Council; they must protect the good reputation of the Council
- Make false or misleading statements
- Post personal or political content, content that is contrary to the democratic decisions of the council or post controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks
- Make derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive comments about any person including council staff, Councillors, the council or about the people, businesses and agencies the council works with and serves, or post online activity that constitutes bullying or harassment. Language that may be deemed offensive relating in particular to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age or religion or belief should not be published on any social media site
- Engage in personal attacks, online fights, hostile communications or in any way allow their interaction on websites or blogs to damage their working relationships with others
- Publish photographs or videos of minors without parental permission
- Post any information that may be deemed libel (publishing untrue statements about a person which is damaging to their reputation is libel and can result in a court action)
- Post obscene material (publication of some obscene material is a criminal offence and is subject to a custodial sentence)
- Conduct any online activity that violates laws, regulations or that constitutes a criminal offence
- Bring the council into disrepute, including through content posted in a personal capacity

Councillors views posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by the council at a council or committee meeting may constitute Pre-disposition, Predetermination or Bias and may require the individual to declare an interest at council meetings

Anyone with concerns regarding content placed on social media sites that denigrate Parish Councillors, Council staff or residents should report them to the Parish Clerk for referral to the moderator(s) and/or the Council as required.

5. Managing Social Media Accounts

The Parish Clerk, or a designated Parish Councillor agreed by the Parish Council, will be responsible for posting content on council website and social media pages and moderating Parish Council social media output.

The Parish Clerk, or a designated Parish Councillor agreed by the Parish Council, is responsible for monitoring content to ensure it complies with the Social Media Policy.

The Parish Clerk, or a designated Parish Councillor agreed by the Parish Council, will have authority, without notice or comment, to remove any posts from council social media pages which are deemed to be of an inflammatory, defamatory or libelous nature. Such posts may also be reported to the hosts (i.e. Facebook) and also to the Parish Clerk for council records.

The Parish Clerk, or a designated Parish Councillor agreed by the Parish Council, will also have the authority to block or ban access from an individual or company's account to BPC's social media pages.

When participating in online communication, BPC will generally allow posts on its social media pages from members of the public that:

- Are responsible and respectful
- Respect the privacy of other Councillors, staff and residents
- Are objective, balanced, informative and accurate
- Posts may be deleted and the holder of an account banned if a comment or post:
 - Gives out the personal data of others on social media, including home address and telephone numbers.
 - Mentions an individual's name in social media communications or post information about an individual unless deemed reasonable (publishing personal data of individuals without permission is a breach of Data Protection legislation)
 - Makes intentionally false or misleading statements
 - Includes potentially inflammatory, defamatory, libellous or offensive remarks
 - Makes derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive comments about any person including council staff, Councillors, the council or about the people, businesses and agencies the council works with and serves, or post online activity that constitutes bullying or harassment.
 - Uses language that may be deemed offensive, in particular relating to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age or religion or belief
 - Engages in personal attacks, online fights, and/or hostile communications
 - Includes the publication of photographs or videos of minors without parental permission
 - Includes any information that may be deemed libel (publishing untrue statements about a person which is damaging to their reputation is libel and can result in a court action)
 - Includes obscene material (publication of some obscene material is a criminal offence and is subject to a custodial sentence)
 - Conducts any online activity that violates laws, regulations or that constitutes a criminal offence

It is ultimately up to the Parish Clerk – either acting individually or in consultation with Councillors - as to whether a post will be deleted and/or an account blocked.

The Parish Clerk will also be responsible for checking the correct security settings are in place on the social media sites used.

Councillors may assist the Parish Clerk to disseminate information however all must ensure they follow this policy.

No social media account details may be changed without the permission of the Parish Clerk or full council.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. Next due



Dignity at Work Policy

Brantham Parish Council

Sarah Keys

ADOPTION DATE:	
MINUTE NO.	
VERSION NO.	1
REVIEW DATE:	

INTRODUCTION

Brantham Parish Council believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expect all Brantham Parish Councillors, officers and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the Brantham Parish Council.

Purpose

Brantham Parish Council is committed to creating a working environment where all Brantham Parish Council employees, Brantham Parish Councillors, contractors and others who come into contact with us in the course of our 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, Brantham Parish 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 from [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.

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.

Scope

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by clerks/chief officers and all employees engaged to work at Brantham Parish Council. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with Brantham Parish Council this should be raised to their nominated contact, manager, or the Chair of the Brantham Parish Council, in the first instance. Should the complaint be about the chair of the Brantham Parish Council the complaint should be raised to the deputy chair.

Agency staff, or contractors are equally expected to treat Brantham Parish 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 Brantham Parish 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, Brantham Parish Councillor), however, the Brantham Parish Council will take appropriate action if any of its employees are bullied or harassed by employees, Brantham Parish Councillors, members of the public, suppliers or contractors.

The position on bullying and harassment

All staff and Brantham Parish Council representatives are entitled to dignity, respect and courtesy within the workplace and to not experience any form of discrimination. Brantham Parish 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 Brantham Parish Council to treat each other with respect and uphold the values of the code of conduct, civility and respect pledge, and all other policies and procedures set by the Brantham Parish 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 Brantham Parish Council's disciplinary procedure.

Harassment

- Where a person is subject to uninvited conduct that violates their dignity, in connection with a protected characteristic
- Behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic

Bullying

- Behaviour that leaves the victim feeling threatened, intimidated, humiliated, vulnerable or otherwise upset. It does not need to be connected to a protected characteristic.

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:

- 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

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.

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 Brantham Parish 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.

Reporting Concerns

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 at work, please raise this with your nominated manager in the first instance or, with the clerk/or a Brantham Parish Councillor. Any such report will be taken seriously, and we will decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a Brantham Parish Councillor:

If you are being bullied or harassed by a Brantham Parish Councillor, please raise this with the clerk/chief officer or the chair of the Brantham Parish 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 Brantham Parish Councillors Code of Conduct must be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

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.

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/chief officer or a Brantham Parish Councillor. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

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.

Informal resolution

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 Brantham Parish Council's policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the clerk/chief officer, your nominated manager or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

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 should raise the issue with the chair of the Brantham Parish Council. (If your concern relates to the chair, you should 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:

- there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of the Brantham Parish Council staff
- such behaviour is contrary to our policy
- for employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence

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.

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.

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.

Raising a formal complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about bullying and harassment through the Brantham Parish Council's grievance procedure. You should raise your complaint to the clerk/chief officer or the chair of the Brantham Parish Council. A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

The clerk/chief officer or the chair of the Brantham Parish 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.

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.

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

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.

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 complaint (see the grievance policy for further information, and details of your right to be accompanied).

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.

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. You should 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.

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.

GUIDANCE FOR USING THE DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a Brantham Parish Council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

This guidance is provided to support understanding of the policy, and its application, as well as where local adaptations may be required. The guidance is not part of the policy and should be removed from the policy adopted and shared with Brantham Parish Council employees.

The Dignity at Work Policy will replace a previous 'Bullying and Harassment' Policy, to create a policy that is focussed on encompassing behaviours beyond simply bullying and harassment, and zero tolerance with the aim of dealing with concerns before they escalate. It is important that any commitment made in the policy is applied in practice.

Wording has been suggested to demonstrate a Brantham Parish Council's commitment to promoting dignity and respect where they have signed up to the NALC, SLCC and OVW Civility and Respect Pledge. Brantham Parish Council's that have not signed up to this are requested to consider making this pledge which is based on basic behaviours and expectations of all Brantham Parish Council representatives to create workplaces that allow people to maintain their dignity at all times. If your Brantham Parish Council has not agreed to the pledge this wording should be removed.

The policy is drafted with consideration of employment language and terminology that is reflective of a modern working environment, setting a tone that is engaging, collaborative and inclusive. A Brantham Parish Council may want to update references where relevant to reflect local terminology and structure, however should be considerate of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The examples of bullying and harassment are just that – examples. This should not be considered an exhaustive list.

Notes:

Protected Characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Employees can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

Examples of harassment related to a protected characteristic could include;

- Making assumptions about someone's ability due to their **age**, or denying development opportunities to someone based on their age. This could also include assumptions about their lifestyle or making inappropriate jokes related to age.

- Making fun or mimicking impairments related to a health condition, or using inappropriate language about disabilities. Constantly selecting social activities that make it impossible for a colleague with a **disability** to participate in.
- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender, or disclosing information about their gender identity could be harassment on the grounds of **gender reassignment**.
- **Pregnancy/Maternity** harassment could include refusing opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity leave, or inappropriate touching and invasion of personal space such as unwanted touching of a pregnant person's stomach.
- Harassment based on **race** could include derogatory nicknames, or stereotyping based on ethnicity. It could include racist comments or jokes, or assumptions about someone's lifestyle based on their ethnicity.
- **Gender** harassment could include not considering people for a job based on gender stereotyping roles, or implementing practices that disadvantage one gender over another. Rude, explicit jokes, even if not directed at an individual, or comments on individuals' dress or appearance.
- Regularly arranging team meals over periods of fasting or religious occasions or failing to adjust a dress code to accommodate religious dress could be examples of harassment based on **religion/belief**.
- Excluding same sex partners from social events could be both **sexual orientation** and **marriage/civil partnership** discrimination, as could not offering the same work-related benefits.

A person does not need to be employed or have 2 years qualifying service to make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

- Job applicants who believe they have not been appointed because of a 'protected characteristic' can make a claim.
- New or established employees who are dismissed, or treated unreasonably because of a health condition can make a discrimination claim.
- An employee subjected to harassment can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.
- An employee asked to retire can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

Legal risks

Successful unfair dismissal claims are limited to a compensation cap, whereas those for unlawful discrimination have no cap.

A positive employment culture, and swift action if conduct falls beneath acceptable standards will help mitigate the risks. An unhealthy culture will make it difficult to defend claims.

The time to defend and the cost of defending tribunal claims can be significant, irrespective of the outcome.

Culture and behaviour

We work in eclectic communities and working environments, and a positive culture within the Brantham Parish Council enables employees with different backgrounds and beliefs to share ideas and shape how the Brantham Parish Council achieves its objectives for their community.

It is important to recognise that different individuals may find different behaviours bullying or harassing so while there is not always intent to offend or cause harm, that does not mean that the effect of the behaviour has not caused harm or offence.

It can take people a period of time to decide to raise their concerns, as they worry about consequences (perhaps from peers by complaining about a colleague who is popular, or they fear victimisation from the perpetrator or others). The Brantham Parish Council should consider whether there are opportunities (such as 121s to offer opportunity to reflect on relationships/morale) to identify issues earlier and address negative behaviours. Individuals can often mention concerns they are experiencing but not want to take it further. The Brantham Parish Council should remind the complainant that it has a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment and remind them of the policy in place to address concerns. If the allegations mentioned are significant, the Brantham Parish Council may want to suggest that it will need to investigate further, even if a 'grievance' is not raised, so as to ensure that any concerns and risks are managed, and the Brantham Parish Council is meeting its responsibilities and duty of care as an employer.

Whilst both staff and Brantham Parish Councillors jointly determine the working culture, Brantham Parish Councillors are key in demonstrating what is and isn't acceptable behaviour. This is apparent from how Brantham Parish Councillors behave with each other in Brantham Parish Council meetings and also in how standards of behaviour are applied through the use of informal discussion and formal policies.

Scope

All Brantham Parish Council representatives are expected to uphold the values of the Dignity at Work Policy, however this policy sets out how allegations from employees will be managed. As indicated in the policy, concerns from a contractor, agency worker etc. should be raised to the identified person, and an appropriate approach will be considered based on the situation and relationship of the complainant with the Brantham Parish Council.

Likewise, concerns raised about the behaviour of a contractor or agency worker would not generally be managed via the full process (such as the disciplinary process) but appropriate action would be considered based on the situation. To treat people (such as contractors, or a casual worker) engaged by the Brantham Parish Council the same as an employee could blur the status of the employment relationship, so consider seeking professional advice if needed.

Managers

Recognising that Brantham Parish Councils are of varying sizes, where the term manager/nominated manager is used it is recognised this could be the clerk/chief officer, another employee of the Brantham Parish Council, or a Brantham Parish Councillor depending on the situation. It is good practice to have a clearly identified person who is the responsible 'line manager' or equivalent contact for an employee so that there is clarity on how the employee should report concerns to, who they notify if they are sick or to request leave etc. More often for Brantham Parish Council employees this may be the clerk/chief officer, and for the clerk/chief officer this could be the chair/deputy Chair, or possibly chair of a staffing/personnel committee.

Bullying and harassment & performance management

The policy sets out that bullying and harassment does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. It is not uncommon for an employee, when receiving critical feedback, to claim that this is bullying and/or harassing. It is the role of the nominated manager to provide effective and constructive feedback to encourage performance at the required standard.

Even when the feedback is not positive it should be fair, communicated in a professional and reasonable manner and shared with the objective of aiding understanding and achieving an improvement to overcome the shortfalls. There is no absolute definition of when the feedback may not be appropriate. Often it will be for the person/panel hearing the dignity at work complaint/grievance to determine whether the performance management has upheld the standards expected in terms of respect and civility and any feedback has been shared in a fair and professional way.

Responsibilities

All staff and representatives of the Brantham Parish Council are responsible for their own behaviour in the workplace and for taking steps to revise unacceptable behaviour and appropriately challenge that of others.

Leaders – Brantham Parish Councillors, clerks, chief officers, managers - are responsible for ensuring that these standards of treating people with civility, respect and courtesy are upheld, both through their own example, and by communicating and promoting these expectations to all employees. They are also responsible for ensuring that concerns raised are treated seriously and addressed in line with this policy in a timely manner.

During the investigation

Employers have a duty of care to provide a safe place of work. If a complaint is made, discuss how to manage working relationships whilst the allegation is being investigated and until the outcome is disclosed. This is as much for the protection of the alleged perpetrator as for the aggrieved.

Consider whether a neutral person should be offered as a 'listening ear' for both parties in the investigation. This could be a Brantham Parish Councillor or nominated manager who is not involved in the investigation or allegations and can be a point of check in as raising, or being subject to allegations can be stressful.

Offer other support that may be appropriate to the situation such as signposting to support groups, time off for counselling etc. If you have suspended a staff member, your duty of care continues and it is important to consider their wellbeing and mental health.

Ensure that you communicate regularly with both parties.

The investigation and any subsequent hearing should be completed in accordance with the grievance policy which sets out a process for dealing with concerns. You should ensure that the grievance policy adopted adheres to any local policies and procedures, with consideration of any timescales and escalation routes in your locally adopted policy.

Confidentiality

It may be possible for concerns to be raised with the perpetrator without disclosing the name of the complainant however in a small Brantham Parish Council it is likely that it will be clear that the accused will know where the accusation has come from. The Brantham Parish Council representative (clerk/chief officer/Brantham Parish Councillor) speaking to the alleged perpetrator must be clear that the discussion is confidential and the individual would be at risk of formal disciplinary action if there is any sort of victimisation or retaliation for the individual raising their concern.

During any formal investigation it may be necessary to disclose the nature of the allegations and where they came from to ensure a fair and balanced investigation and process. This should be discussed with the person raising the concerns to understand any issues and how they may be mitigated. In some situations it may be appropriate to provide anonymised witness statements however this would be a last resort, and could compromise the fairness of the process. Where there is a genuine fear of consequences and this may need to be considered, it is recommended that professional advice is sought. For the same reason it can be difficult for a Brantham Parish Council to consider an anonymous complaint, however if the concerns are significant and compromise the Brantham Parish Council in their duty of care to employees, then consideration of how the deal with the matter may be required.

Victimisation

All employees have the right to raise genuine concerns without the fear of reprisals. If the aggrieved (or a witness) is treated differently / less favourably because they have raised a complaint, then this is victimisation. This would

include isolating someone because they have made a complaint, cancelling a planned training event, or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload. Victimisation can lead to a claim to an employment tribunal.

False allegations

If an employee makes an allegation that they know to be untrue, or gives evidence that they know to be untrue, the Brantham Parish Council should consider the matter under the disciplinary procedure. Such an allegation would be potentially be gross misconduct.

Complaints against Brantham Parish Councillors

Following the Ledbury case, the law is clear that any formal complaint about a Brantham Parish Councillor regarding a breach of the code of conduct must be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation (either by the complainant, or the Brantham Parish Council with agreement of the complainant). During the investigation, it is critical to ensure that where an employee of the Brantham Parish Council has made the complaint, that the Brantham Parish Council agrees reasonable measures with the employee to protect their health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties, change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

Careful consideration is required where a grievance is raised against the Brantham Parish Council as a whole due to lack of support related to Brantham Parish Councillor behaviours. The specific allegations will need to be considered to determine whether the allegations can be addressed by the Brantham Parish Council, or require exploration of the Brantham Parish Councillors behaviour in order to respond, in which case the Monitoring Officer may be required to investigate the alleged behaviours of a/any Brantham Parish Councillors where this may relate to the code of conduct. It is a matter of fact whether the complaint is against the Brantham Parish Council and can therefore be dealt with by the Brantham Parish Council's grievance procedure or against a Brantham Parish Councillor and can only be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer.