



Eynsford Parish Council

Zero Tolerance Policy

Introduction

Eynsford Parish Council (“EPC”) treat everyone with respect and courtesy and ask those members of the public treat councillors, staff, and volunteers in the same manner.

This policy does not seek to diminish any individual’s right to free speech or their right to criticise the work of either the collective council or individual councillors. It does however aim to ensure that any such views are expressed in an appropriate and non-threatening or non-abusive manner.

EPC acknowledges that in the course of carrying out their duties, the staff and councillors may be confronted by aggressive or violent behaviour from members of the public. Whilst it is acknowledged that such incidents may arise, EPC affirms that such behaviour is wholly unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Scope of Policy

This policy covers.

anyone involved in working for, volunteering, or representing EPC.

any tenant or licensee of EPC land.

any person on EPC land; and

Any person liaising with EPC or any representative of EPC.

Definitions and Limitations

EPC is not prepared to tolerate abuse, aggression or threats made in person, over the telephone or in written communication, including on social media.

Although not an exhaustive list, EPC considers threatening behaviour to include:

- Attempted or actual aggressive, threatening, or physical actions made towards any councillor, clerk, contractor, staff, or volunteer.
- The use of aggressive, threatening, or abusive language, (including raising of the voice, swearing, shouting, or written) which threatens or intimidates councillors, staff, or volunteers.

This policy applies throughout all council meetings, but it also applies to any councillor, clerk, contractor, staff, or volunteer away from council meetings but only in so far as it relates to the business of EPC.

Reporting and Monitoring

Any incident or threat of abuse or aggression whether made in person, over the telephone or in written communication, including on social media will be recorded in an Incident Logbook to be kept at the offices of EPC.

EPC reserves the right to remove any offender from council meetings and cease all contact with them with immediate effect.

EPC reserves the right to cease all contact with any offender where the incident takes place away from council meetings. In this situation the offender will be notified either verbally or in writing that their conduct is not acceptable and that the details of the incident have been logged. It will be stated that only acceptable written correspondence, either by post or email will be permitted in the future from them. Where appropriate, EPC will consider reporting the incident or series of incidents to the Police. If any offender has a tenancy or licence with EPC then EPC may consider bringing such agreement to an end where practicable.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if regular or serious incidents require that the policy needs to be revised.

January 2024