

Appendix 'M'

Protocol for Members and Co-opted Members on Language and Behaviour

This Protocol provides guidance to Members and Co-opted Members of the County Council.

The following are definitions of conduct which are deemed to be unacceptable behaviour:

Harassment or offensive behaviour

This may include generally, verbal or physical abuse, inappropriate language or other forms of negative treatment of other Councillors, Co-opted Members, employees of the Authority or members of the public which could be reasonably be perceived as offensive to the individual recipient or a group, or which are likely to bring the Authority into disrepute.

Such forms of harassment or offensive behaviour also includes:

1. Sexual harassment

Is conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men. It includes any unwanted sexual attention, advances, propositions, physical or verbal sexual approaches which are either deliberate, unreasonable, imposed or offensive to the recipient or which are likely to bring the Authority into disrepute.

Examples of sexual harassment may include verbal threats or abuse, sexual mockery or innuendo, lewd behaviour and conversation (not necessarily directed at the victim), unacceptable touching, sexual assault, sexual proposals and the display of sexually offensive material.

2. Racial Harassment

Is conduct of a racial nature which affects the dignity of individuals or groups (as defined by their racial origins). It includes any comments, including 'jokes', of a racial nature (not necessarily directed at the victim) which are deliberate and unwelcome or which are likely to bring the Authority into disrepute. Threats, abuse, mockery together with any form of assault are more serious manifestations of the same problem. The display of racially offensive material is equally unacceptable.