

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE
Grievance and Harassment Policies
DATE
17/11/2025
LEAD OFFICER.
Harry Steer, ER Consultant & Policy Lead
1 Summary description of the proposed change
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
<p>The current Grievance and Harassment Policy in its current state is overwhelming and difficult to understand. It is not well laid out, mixes policy and procedure, and contains far too much information in one place.</p> <p>To make it more accessible, understandable, and work better for the Council, the policy has been split between Grievance and Harassment into two separate policies, each with their own procedure attached. Further to this, there is more specificity added around informal resolution, faster timescales, new outlines of HR responsibilities, and clearer routes of escalation.</p> <p>While these changes do not represent a substantive change to the policies or procedure, in that the function and general process are the same, these changes should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make the policy more approachable for employees and managers - Support informal-first resolution with more clarity - Make the procedures faster and more responsive - Reduce HR resource requirements due to better clarity - Foster a culture of raising problems early so they can be dealt with in a timely manner
2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment
<p>E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user.</p> <p>E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile</p> <p>These policies were benchmarked against other local authority Grievance and Harassment policies, as well as checked against the ACAS Code and guidance, and information gathered from UK employment law firms.</p> <p>Consultation has been completed with the Employment Relations Team, interest groups, forums and trade unions to further shape the policy via feedback implemented into the policy.</p> <p>Consideration was given to making further updates to the policies, however at this time we remain legally compliant and will submit further changes once work has been done to address the concerns raised in the Staff Survey.</p>

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	No
Disability	No	Yes	No
Gender reassignment	No	No	No
Marriage/civil partnership	No	No	No
Pregnancy/maternity	No	No	No
Race	No	No	No
Religion/belief	No	No	No
Sex	No	No	No
Sexual orientation	No	No	No
Care experience	No	No	No
Other (e.g. low income groups)	No	No	No

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The primary impact will be on older or disabled employees. This is due to better accessibility of the documents, with lower information overload and more clear structure and readability that will assist employees in understanding the policies and procedures for Grievance and Harassment.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

N/A

6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

Recommendation: Proceed with the changes made, with any further feedback welcomed.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Sam Beck-Farley, Chief Organisational Culture Officer

Date of authorisation

17/11/2025