

Connected Communities Executive Advisory Panel

16th February 2024

Report Title	Update to North Northamptonshire Council Unacceptable Behaviour Policy
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Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	
Which Corporate Plan priority does the report most closely align with? Our priorities for the future North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)	Safe and thriving places

List of Appendices

Appendix A – North Northamptonshire Council Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek feedback on a proposed revision of the North Northamptonshire Council ‘Unacceptable or Unreasonable Communications and Behaviour policy’ ahead of presentation to Members of the Executive.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The was drafted by Future Northants for implementation at vesting day. A review is now required to ensure the policy reflects North Northamptonshire

Council working practices and experiences and embodies the values of North Northamptonshire Council.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended the Executive Advisory Panel consider the revised policy and provide comment and feedback.
- 3.2. Reason for Recommendations –
 - The current policy confirming how the council will manage unacceptable behaviour was drafted under the Future Northants programme. It is recommended that policies are reviewed regularly to reflect the environment the authority operates in.
 - The Council has a responsibility to mitigate risk and ensure health, wellbeing and safety of staff and contractors and a robust policy should provide clarity on what behaviours are unacceptable and how those will be managed. The policy should also address persistent vexatious contacts, which put a strain on a services ability to deliver its statutory requirements and impact on other customers.
- 3.3. Alternative Options Considered: Do nothing and continue to operate under policy drafted by Future Northants and adopted at vesting day.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. The Council provides services to thousands of customers across a wide area and varying demographics. It is an unfortunate reality that incidents of what is considered unacceptable behaviour can occur and to mitigate it is both advisable and expected to have a policy which confirms what behaviours are not considered acceptable and how incidents will be managed.
- 4.2. A review on the current policy was undertaken by the Customer Services and Health, Safety & Wellbeing teams, in consultation with our recognised trade unions and service users.
- 4.3. The policy was reviewed alongside the internal staff alert register of recorded potential risk, and reported incidents of unacceptable behaviours to ensure a robust consideration of issues
- 4.4. The policy will inform the handling of difficult and contentious situations, ensuring that staff, contractors and customers understand the Council prioritises health, safety and wellbeing always

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. The existing policy was drafted by Future Northants program and adopted for vesting day. It is now time to review and revise the council's policy to ensure it

best suits the needs of North Northamptonshire Council and is informed by experience and evolved working practice.

- 5.2. The proposed policy has been consulted on widely between internal services, colleagues and our recognised unions combining experience and knowledge to address the requirement of assuring safety of staff, contractors and customers and provide practical measures for managing unacceptable behaviour.
- 5.3. Key changes are format and specificity. It addresses the generality of the original policy, providing clarity around what is classed as unacceptable behaviour and how the council will manage those behaviours.
- 5.4. A choice to retain the current policy could undermine confidence of the staff that assurance of health, safety and wellbeing is a corporate priority.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. If approved, the draft policy will be communicated to colleagues and replace the current policy on the Council's website.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. There are no resource or financial implications arising from the proposal in this report.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. The draft policy has been reviewed by the Council's Legal Team who has confirmed the right to restrict or dictate the method of service delivery should a customer's behaviour be deemed a health, safety or wellbeing risk for staff or contractors to the council and/or pose an exceptional strain on the council's ability to deliver services.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. The policy supports our Corporate plan key commitments to provide safe and thriving places and connected communities allowing our staff and customers to carry out business with the assurance they are doing so in a safe environment with assurances of managed risks.

7.4. Risk

- 7.4.1. There are no risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report; the revised policy provides clarity for customers and staff and increases transparency around decision making.

7.4.2. The current policy does not provide sufficient clarity on what is unacceptable behaviour and how it should be managed and as such there is potential for risk if behaviours are not addressed robustly or timeously.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. Consultation for this policy was undertaken in conjunction with Health, Safety and Wellbeing, heads of services, staff and trade union representatives between Spring and Autumn 2022.

7.5.2. Engagement sessions enabled staff to have direct input and provide feedback which was incorporated into the final draft.

7.5.3. Consultation ensured the policy was informed by and reflects staff experience and opinion.

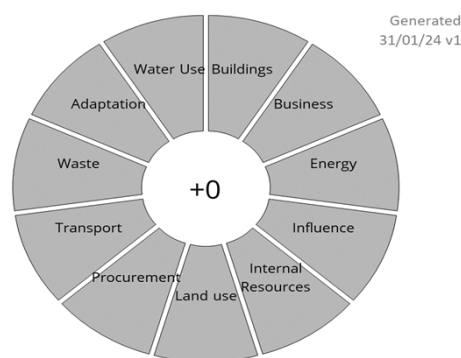
7.5.4. Consultation has ensured the policy provides clarity to our staff and customers on what is unacceptable and provides our managers with practical means

7.6. Equality Implications

7.6.1. Equality Screening Assessment completed confirms no impact to protected groups. ESA sign off pending.

7.7. Climate Impact

1.1.1. The assessment completed, zero impact. The contents of the policy revision have no direct positive or negative dependencies on NNC's climate response.



North Northamptonshire Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, 5 yrs & 11 mos away.

7.9.2 The infographic shows the relative costs and benefits of the decision on 11 different categories with respect to the climate: Buildings, no effect. Business, no effect. Energy, no effect. Influence, no effect. Internal Resources, no effect. Land use, no effect. Procurement, no effect. Transport, no effect. Waste, no effect. Adaptation, no effect. Water Use, no effect.

7.8. **Community Impact**

7.8.1. No community impact.

7.9. **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.9.1. Management of unacceptable behaviour could positively impact crime and disorder reducing requirement to access emergency services with practical methods of managing unacceptable behaviours which should provide a deterrent to criminal behaviour.

8. **Background Papers**

8.1. Current policy – [Unacceptable or unreasonable communications and behaviour policy](#)

8.2. Equality Screening Assessment