

Full Council

Report Title:	Civility and Respect Pledge
Meeting Date:	15 November 2022
Contact Officer:	Lizzie Fuller, Committee Services Officer

Action Required

1. To consider passing a resolution to sign up to the civility and respect pledge.

Background

2. Town and Parish Councils across the country are being encouraged by NALC (National Association of Local Councils) and SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) to sign up to the Civility and Respect Project and Pledge. To date, over 500 councils have signed the pledge. A list of all the Councils that have signed up so far can be viewed at: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/civility-and-respect-project#see-who-has-taken-the-pledge>
3. The idea behind the pledge is to encourage better standards of behaviour within the sector by council's making a public declaration that they will corporately not tolerate bullying and disrespectful behaviour.

The Pledge

4. *"By signing the Pledge, your council is agreeing that the council will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:*
 - *Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff*
 - *Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors*
 - *Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy*
 - *Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise*
 - *Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens*
 - *Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the [Local Council Award Scheme](#)*
 - *Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate."*
5. Thame Town Council already meets the above requirements, so by signing up to the pledge, the Town Council is simply making a public declaration of that. There are no additional resource implications on the Town Council. There is no requirement to sign up to a specific Code of Conduct, so TTC can make the above pledge regardless of whether the new Oxfordshire Code of Conduct is adopted.

6. The Town Council will receive a certificate to show it has made the pledge which could be used with our publicity.

Resource Appraisal

7. The proposed changes are all within existing defined resources, and / or reflect what the Town Council does already, so there are no additional resource requirements identified.

Risk Assessment

8. The documents support the legal requirement for the Governance of a Town Council.

Legal Powers:

- Localism Act 2011

Recommendation

It is recommended...

- i) That Thame Town Council signs up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.***