A colorful crest with a crown and flowers

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HORNSEA TOWN COUNCIL

Vexatious Person Policy

# Introduction

Hornsea Town Council is committed to providing a fair, transparent, and respectful environment for all members of the community. This policy outlines the approach taken by Hornsea Town Council to address and manage vexatious behaviour exhibited by individuals.

# Definition of Vexatious Behaviour

Vexatious behaviour refers to any conduct that is deemed unreasonable, persistent, and/or abusive, and which interferes with the functioning of the Council. This includes but is not limited to:

* Repeatedly raising the same issue without new evidence or justification.
* Making excessive demands on staff time and resources.
* Submitting unfounded or frivolous complaints.
* Engaging in abusive or offensive language or behaviour.
* Harassing or intimidating Council members or staff.

# Criteria for Identifying Vexatious Behaviour

Hornsea Town Council will identify vexatious behaviour based on the following criteria:

* Frequency: The issue or complaint is raised excessively over a short period.
* Nature: The behaviour includes threats, harassment, or discriminatory language.
* Impact: The behaviour significantly disrupts the operations of the Council.
* Intent: The actions appear to be aimed at causing inconvenience or distress.

# Procedure for Managing Vexatious Behaviour

## Step 1: Initial Assessment

The Council will conduct an initial assessment to ascertain whether the behaviour meets the criteria for being vexatious. This involves reviewing the history and context of the interactions.

## Step 2: Warning

If the behaviour is deemed vexatious, the Council will issue a formal warning to the individual, outlining the nature of the behaviour and the impact it has on Council operations. The warning will also outline the consequences of continued vexatious behaviour.

## Step 3: Restrictions

Should the behaviour persist following the warning, the Council may impose restrictions on the individual's interactions with the Council. This may include:

* Limiting communication to specific channels or persons.
* Restricting the number of interactions per month.
* Setting conditions for future communications.

## Step 4: Review

The Council will regularly review the situation to determine whether the restrictions should be lifted or modified, based on the individual's behaviour and compliance with the set conditions.

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Individuals

Individuals have the right to:

* Be treated with respect and dignity.
* Receive clear and concise information regarding the Council's decisions.
* Raise concerns or complaints without fear of retribution.

However, individuals also have the responsibility to:

* Behave in a manner that is respectful and non-disruptive.
* Provide new and relevant evidence when raising issues.
* Avoid making frivolous or unfounded complaints.

## Council

The Council has the right to:

* Take action to protect its staff and operations from vexatious behaviour.
* Set reasonable limits on interactions with individuals exhibiting vexatious behaviour.

The Council also has the responsibility to:

* Conduct fair and thorough assessments of behaviour.
* Communicate clearly and respectfully with all individuals.
* Review and adjust restrictions based on behaviour changes.

# Appeals Process

Individuals who have been identified as vexatious have the right to appeal the decision. The appeals process includes:

* Submitting a written appeal outlining the reasons for contesting the decision.
* Having the appeal reviewed by a panel of Council members who were not involved in the initial decision.
* Receiving a written response to the appeal within a set timeframe.

# Conclusion

Hornsea Town Council strives to maintain a respectful and productive environment for all community members. By implementing this policy, the Council aims to manage vexatious behaviour effectively while ensuring fairness and transparency in its operations. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

Adopted: Town Council meeting – 28th April 2025

Minutes ref: 11) ii)