

Civility & Respect Pledge

[Civility and Respect Project \(nalc.gov.uk\)](http://nalc.gov.uk)

The Civility and Respect Project Working Group set out a mission statement summarising the core aims and values for securing permanent change in the sector:

'Civility and respect should be at the heart of public life and good governance is fundamental to ensuring an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels.

The intimidation, abuse, bullying and harassment of councillors, professional officers and staff, in person or online, is totally unacceptable; whether that is by councillors, professional officers, staff or members of the public.

This can prevent councils from functioning effectively, councillors from representing local people, discourage people from getting involved including standing for election, and undermine public confidence and trust in local democracy.

National Association of Local Councils (NALC), county associations of local councils and One Voice Wales (OVW), as the membership organisations representing the first tier of local government in England and Wales, and Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) as the professional body for clerks, are committed to working together to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the well-being of councillors, professional officers and staff.

Introducing the Civility and Respect Pledge

SLCC, NALC, and OVW believe now is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

There is no place for bullying, harassment, and intimidation within our sector and signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge is one of the ways a council can demonstrate that it is committed to standing up to poor behaviour across our sector, and to demonstrating positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

As at 6th January 861 councils have signed up to the pledge.

Definition of Civility and Respect

Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word.

Examples of ways in which you can show respect are by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and One Voice Wales (OVW), believe now is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

By our council signing up to the civility and respect pledge we are demonstrating that our council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.

Signing up is a simple process, which requires councils to register and agree to the following statements:

Statement	Tick to agree
Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.	
Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff	
Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors	
Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.	
Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.	
Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it and when it happens.	
Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme	
Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.	