



Subject:	Draft Bullying & Harassment Policy and draft Equal Opportunities Policy
Date:	24 April 2026
Reporting Officer:	Christine Sheridan, Director of HR
Contact Officer:	Christine Sheridan, Director of HR

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted? Yes No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To present the draft Bullying & Harassment Policy and draft Equal Opportunities Policy for approval.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of this report; • And agree to adopt the Bullying and Harassment and Equal Opportunities Policies.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	One of the people goals in our People Strategy is to make Belfast City Council ‘a place for everyone’, and we have committed to developing a culture of respect and inclusivity by increasing awareness and understanding of diversity issues and implementing policies and procedures that aim to achieve this.
3.2	<p>The Draft Bullying & Harassment Policy and Draft Equal Opportunities Policy demonstrate our commitment to an inclusive workplace where all employees feel welcome, valued and respected. These policies were developed and consulted on through the IR Framework with management and Trade Unions. The policies were agreed at JNCC on 26 March 2026.</p> <p><u>Draft Bullying & Harassment Policy</u></p>
3.3	<p>The Council is committed to providing a good and harmonious working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation and victimisation and where all employees are treated with dignity and respect and their rights are protected. The purpose of this policy is to ensure a working environment in which bullying and harassment are understood to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to complain about bullying and harassment, should it arise, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with promptly, appropriately and fairly and that they will not be made to feel disadvantaged in any way for having raised or pursued a concern in good faith.</p>
3.4	<p>This policy covers behaviour in any work-related setting both inside and outside the workplace, by and against fellow employees or customers, suppliers or the public during or outside of working hours, for example business trips or work-related social events or by way of electronic communication including email, social media or by phone such as by text message or app.</p>
3.5	<p>This policy applies to all employees of Belfast City Council (the ‘Council’). Casual workers will be treated in accordance with the principles inherent in the policy.</p>

	<u>Draft Equal Opportunities Policy</u>
3.6	The Council is committed to providing equal opportunities and promoting a good and harmonious working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation and victimisation and where all employees are treated with dignity and respect and their rights are protected.
3.7	The purpose of this policy is to ensure equal opportunities for employees and job applicants and a working environment in which all employees and job applicants will be treated on the basis of merit in a fair, consistent and objective manner and where unlawful discrimination and victimisation is understood to be unacceptable and individuals have the confidence to complain about it, should it arise, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with promptly, appropriately and fairly and that they will not be made to feel disadvantaged in any way for having raised or pursued a concern in good faith.
3.8	This policy covers behaviour in any work-related setting both inside and outside the workplace, against fellow employees, job applicants, customers, suppliers and the public and during or outside of working hours, for example business trips or work-related social events or by way of electronic communication including email social media or by phone such as text message or app.
3.9	This policy does not cover alleged incidents of unlawful discrimination or victimisation of Council employees by those who are not Council employees. Such matters will be dealt with in accordance with the Protection of Staff from Workplace Violence and Abuse from the Public – Roles and Responsibilities.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.10	None
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.11	The policies promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 groups by promoting an inclusive workplace and showing our commitment to the creation of a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and no one is treated less favourably than any other person or group of persons on the grounds of their sex, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment status, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership status or any other characteristic.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix One - Draft Bullying & Harassment Policy Appendix Two - Draft Equal Opportunities Policy