

Tackling Harassment and Abuse in Public Life both for Members and Officers.

Proposed by Cllr S Butikofer, seconded by Cllr J Rest.

This council acknowledges the announcement in the last Queens Speech that “Ministers will develop legislation to improve internet safety for all” and note the many ongoing reports of online harassment and abuse of those in public life.

This council also notes representations made by the cross party Local Government Association which represents members and officers where they state; “Harassment, threats and intimidation of local elected representatives are completely unacceptable, and must be dealt with robustly at all levels. This includes the Government, by councils, private sector; by the police and, where relevant, by the social media companies which provide platforms for specific forms of abuse.”

This council believes in the right of those democratically elected by the residents of North Norfolk, and those working as officers for them should be able to carry out their duties without the fear of harassment and abuse.

We therefore support any efforts by government and those of the Local Government Association in ensuring the protection of our democracy, while recognising the importance of free speech and expression.

This Council resolves:

- To write to the Districts MPs to seek their support in tackling harassment and abuse in public life.
- To write to the Minister for the Cabinet Office to seek a cross government response in tackling harassment and abuse in public life.
- To write to the Chair and Chief Executive of the Local Government Association to thank them for representations made to date on the issue.
- To arrange mandatory training on the Nolan principles for all Councillors that we are all acting as ambassadors of best practice.