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POLICE PAGAN ASSOCIATION

Bullying & Harassment Policy

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SECTION 1

1.1 Policy Objective

- a) To provide a clear understanding of what bullying and harassment are and that such behaviour is not tolerated by the Police Pagan Association (PPA).
- b) To provide structure and guidance to PPA First Point of Contact (FPOC) officers and individuals who may feel they have suffered bullying and/or harassment in the workplace.
- c) To outline the support that the PPA can provide to individuals.

1.2 Policy Statement

- 1.2.1** The PPA aims to assist the police service in providing a working environment that respects the right of every individual employee where colleagues treat each other with respect. This policy will not diminish the policies set down by individual organisations or the responsibility of management to manage performance in a structured framework.
- 1.2.2** This policy aims to create a safe working environment where individuals can raise allegations of bullying and harassment and have the confidence that the PPA will support them to take appropriate, timely action in order to resolve the situation, in line with the relevant grievance or fairness at work policies set down by their organisation.

SECTION 2

2.1 Principles and Procedure

- 2.1.1** The procedures set down in this policy are designed to complement local policies which inform officers and staff about the type of behaviour that is unacceptable, and provides officers and staff who are the victims of harassment and/or bullying with a means of redress.
- 2.1.2** This policy also applies to work-related functions held outside of normal working hours, whether on or off premises, such as parties, leaving celebrations and working lunches.

2.2 Harassment

2.2.1 The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) define harassment as *'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.'* (1).

2.2.2 Each person has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable to them; if an individual finds certain behaviour unacceptable, then that individual has every right to say so, and their right to do so, respected.

2.2.3 An individual can be subjected to harassment for a wide variety of reasons:

- Sexual orientation
- Gender orientation
- Marital status
- Race
- Nationality
- Disability
- Age
- Employment status
- Religious beliefs
- Political beliefs
- Health
- Physical characteristics

This list is by no means exhaustive. Whilst the PPA is primarily a faith-based Diversity Staff Support Association (DSSA) the PPA recognises that Pagan officers and staff may suffer bullying and harassment for a variety of reasons, and will support them regardless.

2.2.4 Harassment is usually characterised by more than one incident of unacceptable behaviour, particularly if it recurs once it has been made clear by the affected individual as such. However, one incident may constitute harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

2.2.5 Harassment of Pagan officers and staff on any grounds will not be tolerated by the PPA.

(1) Page 2, Bullying and Harassment at Work – ACAS document (2010)

2.2.6 UK Employment Legislation also offers individuals protection from harassment:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

2.2.7 The relevant organisation, together with any managers or supervisors who fail to take steps to prevent harassment or investigate complaints, may be held liable for their unlawful actions and be required to pay damages to the victim, as will the employee who has committed the act of harassment.

2.2.8 There is no limit to the compensation that can be awarded in employment tribunals for acts of harassment.

2.3 Examples of Harassment

2.3.1 Harassment can take many forms, from relatively mild banter to actual physical violence. Officers and staff may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment, but they must recognise that what is acceptable to one employee may not be acceptable to another.

2.3.2 Examples of harassment include, but are not restricted to:

- Verbal harassment – examples include crude language, open hostility, offensive jokes, suggestive remarks, innuendoes, rude or vulgar comments, malicious gossip and offensive songs.
- Non-verbal harassment – examples include wolf-whistles, obscene gestures, sexually suggestive posters/calendars, pornographic material, graffiti, offensive letters, offensive emails, offensive text messages and offensive objects.
- Physical harassment – examples include unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, intimidating behaviour, assault and physical coercion.
- Coercion – examples include pressure for sexual favours, pressure to participate in political, religious or trade union groups.
- Isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion from social activities.
- Intrusion – examples include stalking, pestering and spying.

2.4 Bullying

2.4.1 The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) define bullying as ‘offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.’ **(2)**.

2.5 Examples of Bullying

2.5.1 Bullying in the workplace can range from extreme forms such as violence and intimidation to less obvious actions like deliberately ignoring someone at work.

2.5.2 Bullying can be split into two categories; obvious bullying, eg:

- Shouting or swearing
- Persistent criticism
- Ignoring or deliberately excluding people
- Persecution through threats
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Dispensing unjustified disciplinary action
- Spontaneous rages

And less obvious bullying; examples include:

- Withholding information or supplying incorrect information
- Deliberately sabotaging or impeding work performance
- Unreasonably changing targets
- Imposing impossible deadlines
- Removing areas of responsibility
- Imposing menial tasks
- Blocking applications for holiday, promotion or training

The examples listed are not exhaustive. The actions listed must be viewed in terms of the distress they cause to the individual.

2.6 The Impact of Bullying and Harassment

2.6.1 Officers and staff can be subject to fear, stress and anxiety, which can put great strains on personal and family life. Harassment and bullying can lead to illness, absenteeism, an apparent lack of commitment, poor performance and resignation.

2.6.2 The damage, tension and conflict that harassment and bullying creates should not be underestimated. The result is not just poor morale, but higher staff turnover, reduced productivity, divided teams and poor service.

2.6.3 The public image of the police service can be badly damaged when incidents of harassment and bullying occur, particularly when they attract media attention. This can result in loss of public confidence and promote negative views of the service.

2.7 Enforcement

2.7.1 The PPA will work with individual constabularies in line with available local policies including Fairness at Work policies, Police Staff Disciplinary Procedures and the Police Officers Code of Conduct. Enforcement resulting in disciplinary action or dismissal will remain the duty of the relevant organisation, with assistance and direction from the PPA where relevant and appropriate.

2.7.2 All PPA FPOC officers will familiarise themselves with the PPA Bullying and Harassment Policy.

2.7.3 The PPA will treat all complaints of bullying and harassment that it receives seriously.

2.7.4 The PPA expects its Executive Committee and FPOC officers to adhere to the PPA Bullying and Harassment Policy at all times and expects its members to respect the dignity of their colleagues. The policy will be regularly monitored by the Executive Committee to ensure that it is achieving its aims and that FPOC officers are confident about its application.

2.7.5 The Executive Committee will be provided with feedback from FPOC officers when the policy is utilised to allow the PPA to analyse and identify any trends in the police service. This feedback, along with staff surveys, will inform the review process.

2.8 Training, Communication and Awareness

2.8.1 The PPA recognises that a written policy, though necessary, is not sufficient to eliminate or effectively deal with harassment and bullying. Regular communication and feedback to raise awareness of the policy is important to ensure that our FPOC officers and members:

- Understand our commitment to prevent harassment and bullying
- Understand their responsibilities and roles in the process
- Know where to seek advice and guidance

- Know how to make complaints
- Are confident that their complaint will be handled effectively

2.9 Advice for Dealing with Bullying and Harassment

2.9.1 The PPA recognises the sensitive nature of bullying and harassment in the workplace. Members who believe that they are being bullied or harassed may wish to discuss their particular situation before deciding what, if any, action to take. Members may be able to fully discuss the matter with their manager on an informal basis, however the PPA recognises that this may not always be appropriate; if this is the case members can contact their FPOC officer or a member of the Executive Committee on the contact number provided. Where possible and appropriate the PPA will always endeavour to work with the relevant organisation in line with their established local policies whilst adhering to the guidelines set in this policy.

2.9.2 If an FPOC officer or a member of the Executive Committee is contacted, they will:

- Ensure the conversation remains confidential as far as possible
- Listen sympathetically
- Help individuals consider objectively what has happened
- Discuss what outcome the individual would wish to see
- Draw attention to the available procedures and options, particularly local policy
- Inform the individual of the legal liabilities involved
- Help weigh up alternatives, without applying pressure to adopt any particular course
- Assist the individual in dealing with the situation (if requested to do so)

2.9.3 The PPA will maintain confidentiality as far as possible. If a member decides not to take any action to deal with a problem and the circumstances are considered very serious, the PPA reserves the right to contact the relevant organisation in order that the situation be investigated in line with its duty of care to ensure the safety of all members who may be adversely affected by bullying or harassment.

2.10 Reporting

2.10.1 When a member believes that they are a victim of bullying or harassment they have a choice of ways to report the incident. The PPA encourages the initial reporting of incidents to the relevant organisation in line with local policies and procedures, however the PPA is committed to implementing this policy robustly and constructively in order to deal with any reported issues, and will support the individual through the process (if requested to do so).

2.10.2 Incidents can be reported directly to the PPA FPOC officer for the relevant organisation or via the secure email address on the PPA website, or the confidential telephone number provided.

2.11 Procedure

2.11.1 Members who believe that they are being bullied or harassed can choose to resolve the situation informally by approaching the person creating the problem and telling them that their behaviour is unwelcome and must cease. Members may choose to seek support from colleagues and staff networks, or contact Human Resources or Occupational Health to explore the possibility of counselling or mediation to assist a resolution.

2.11.2 Where informal solutions fail or cannot be considered, members should initially bring a formal complaint in the form of a Fairness at Work grievance to their organisation. This procedure is designed to be flexible and can be adapted to take account of the sensitivities of such situations.

2.11.3 Each action under the formal Fairness at Work procedure should be made without unreasonable delay, and the complainant updated accordingly. Complaints have to be explored swiftly and confidentially whilst ensuring the rights of the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made.

2.11.3 Members are assured that they will not be ridiculed or victimised for making or assisting in a complaint, even if it is not upheld.

2.11.4 Everyone involved in the case, including the complainant, must maintain confidentiality; a failure to do so may be subject to disciplinary action as directed by local policy.

2.12 Continuing with Work

2.12.1 Whether a complaint is upheld or not, the PPA recognises that it may be difficult for the member concerned to continue working in their current role during the investigation or following the outcome of any subsequent proceedings. The PPA will support the member throughout and, if the member considers a request to transfer to another job, department or location, the PPA will maintain contact with the relevant organisation and assist where possible. However, the PPA is not responsible for the transfer, and cannot provide a guarantee that the request will be successful.

2.13 Monitoring

2.13.1 Where harassment or bullying has been found to have occurred, and the perpetrator remains in employment, the PPA will work with the HR Team for the relevant organisation to follow up and monitor the affected individual to ensure that the harassment or bullying has stopped and that there has been no victim or retaliation against them. The relevant organisation will also ensure that the perpetrator is not victimised in any way, with support from the PPA, where appropriate.

2.14 Malicious Complaints

2.14.1 In the event of an unfounded or malicious allegation of harassment or bullying, the PPA will assist the relevant organisation to investigate the case in a fair and objective manner, in line with local policies and the relevant disciplinary procedure, where appropriate.

2.15 Other Available Support

2.15.1 There is a variety of support available to members within their organisation and individuals are encouraged to contact them initially to ensure that they receive the advice and guidance required.

2.15.2 The PPA acknowledges that those accused of bullying or harassment as well as victims may need support and assistance. The following local associations and staff networks are available to assist:

- Police Federation
- Unison
- Superintendents Association
- Equality and Diversity Manager
- Equality and Diversity Representatives
- Human Resources Team
- Occupational Health Unit

SECTION 3

3.1 Associated Policies and Procedures

3.1.1 Although not applicable at the time of first draft, the PPA intends to produce a Fairness at Work Policy and a Disciplinary Procedure, both of which will compliment local policy and procedure and refer directly to this policy.

3.2 Associated Legislation

3.2.1 Associated legislation includes:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Rights (Dispute Resolution) Act 1998
- Employment Act 2002
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1975
- Employment Equality Regulations 2002

SECTION 4

4.1 Document Control

Compliance	Auditor	Date
Diversity	PS Andrew 1158 Pardy	07/03/14
Health and Safety	PS Andrew 1158 Pardy	07/03/14
Data Protection	PS Andrew 1158 Pardy	07/03/14
Human Rights	PS Andrew 1158 Pardy	07/03/14
Freedom of Information		
Information Management		

Date	Version	Summary of Changes
09/02/12	1.1	Current
30/08/12	1.2	Paragraph 2.1.1 line 1 - insert 'to'
		Document - 'constabulary' to 'organisation'
		Paragraph 2.14.1 line 3 - insert 'were' to 'where'
07/03/14	1.3	Current

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