



## Sexual Harassment Policy

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# Sexual Harassment Policy

## 1. Policy statement

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Cleveland Police is committed to providing a working environment free from harassment, bullying and victimisation. Cleveland Police want to ensure that all staff and officers are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect, and that any concerns can be confidentially reported without fear or intimidation.

This policy will provide clear guidance in relation to the reporting and investigation of allegations of Sexual Harassment. It will also provide guidance on the support available if you are a victim of Sexual Harassment.

## 2. Purpose

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This policy is designed both to help prevent any Sexual Harassment and to offer you support if you feel you are subject to such behaviour. Cleveland Police are committed to having a culture of zero tolerance towards Sexual Harassment. This means that Cleveland Police will not tolerate harassment, all allegations will be investigated as quickly as possible, proportionately and effectively and appropriate action will always be taken. It is important to recognise that this does not mean that all allegations of harassment will bring the same level of discipline.

Every instance of Sexual Harassment should be addressed by management as appropriate in the circumstances. Not only is this necessary to inform the individual that their behaviour is unwanted, but also to prevent further inappropriate conduct against you or other colleagues, or potential escalation into more serious conduct.

It may be necessary to refer instances of Sexual Harassment to the Directorate of Standards and Ethics (DSE) to determine whether misconduct has taken place. This will be managed by the Human Resources Department and DSE and will be subject to ongoing assessment.

Whilst reporting Sexual Harassment may be difficult, the Code of Ethics places a positive obligation on everyone working within policing, that they **'will report, challenge or take action against the conduct of colleagues which has fallen below the standards of professional behaviour.'** If the conduct you are experiencing, witnessing, or are aware of in any way, is improper behaviour, including Sexual Harassment, you should report it, irrespective of the person's rank, grade or role. Colleagues who are witnesses of inappropriate behaviour and fail to report it may be asked to account for their failure to uphold this standard. This guidance therefore explains what is meant by Sexual Harassment and the processes in place for reporting incidents of Sexual Harassment.

Please see appendix 2 for frequently asked questions on processes and support.

This guidance covers Sexual Harassment by staff (which may include partners, consultants, contractors and agency workers) and also by third parties such as customers, suppliers or visitors to Cleveland Police premises.

### 3. Underpinning Procedures

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#### 3.1 Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

The law defines Sexual Harassment as unwanted conduct which is of a sexual nature which had the purpose or effect of:

- Violating your dignity;
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

To determine if the behaviour was intended to, or has had the effect of violating your dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment, the following factors must be considered:

- How you perceived the behaviour
- Other circumstances of the case
- Whether it is reasonable for the behaviour to have that effect on you

Sexual Harassment occurs in the workplace, but also out of the workplace, such as on business trips, work-related events, social functions, or off duty communication.

Sexual Harassment can also be committed via telephone conversations, over social media and through electronic communications. Professional standards of behaviour are required no matter the method of communication.

Sexual harassment can be a one-off event and does not need to be directed at a person. It can be witnessed or overhead.

Sexual conduct that has been welcomed in the past may become unwanted, and thus, becomes harassment. In addition, you do not need to have previously objected to someone's behaviour for it to be considered unwanted.

More broadly, conduct 'of a sexual nature' can include:

- Sexual comments or jokes
- Displaying sexually graphic pictures, posters or photos
- Suggestive looks, staring or leering
- Propositions and sexual advances
- Making promises in return for sexual favours

- Sexual gestures
- Intrusive questions about a person's private or sex life or a person discussing their own sex life
- Sexual posts or contact on social media
- Spreading sexual rumours about a person
- Sending sexually explicit emails or text messages
- Unwelcome touching, hugging, massaging or kissing
- Predatory behaviour
- Criminal behaviour, including sexual assault, stalking, grooming, indecent exposure and sending offensive communications
- Coercion

This list is not exhaustive, and these are just examples.

Sexual harassment can be directed at an individual or a group, but this is not always the case. It may be perpetrated by one individual, a pair, a small group, a large group, or permeate through a whole section of the force.

The law also protects you if you are treated badly because you complain of Sexual Harassment or help someone else who has complained of Sexual Harassment.

Please note there is a separate policy in relation to Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation, which can be located via the link [here](#).

If you are not certain whether an incident or series of incidents amounts to Sexual Harassment, you should initially contact your line manager or the Human Resources Department informally for confidential advice. You also may consider speaking to DSE, the Police Federation or Police staff associations for advice.

Please also see appendix 1 for some common myths that surround Sexual Harassment.

### **3.2 Taking Action**

Cleveland Police wants to provide a safe working environment for its officers, staff and volunteers and has a 'duty of care' to do so.

Cleveland Police will ensure action is taken to prevent Sexual Harassment in the workplace and ensure there is support available for anyone who feels they have had their dignity violated or where an individual(s) have created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, whether intended or not.

Action includes:

- Setting standards and a culture so all are made aware that such behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Providing opportunities for teams to discuss Sexual Harassment and the importance of tackling unlawful and discriminatory practices.

- Ensuring there is a clear reporting process in place.
- Ensuring accusations are fully investigated and appropriate action taken.
- Ensuring support is available to individuals affected by sexual harassment.

### **3.3 Training**

Training and sharing information are crucial to the success of policies on Sexual Harassment and in changing the workplace environment. Cleveland Police are committed to embedding its zero tolerance policy on Sexual Harassment, through dedicated training for all staff and officers.

Records will be kept ensuring that everyone is trained and that they regularly receive refresher training.

### **3.4 Support**

Cleveland Police recognises the impact that Sexual Harassment can have on victims and witnesses and that support should always be available. Cleveland Police also recognises that reporting Sexual Harassment can be a stressful and daunting experience. We are committed to a victim centred approach, where victims have a 'voice and a choice' in the outcomes available to them.

Getting victims and witnesses of Sexual Harassment the right support is Cleveland Police's key priority. We offer a variety of support options including: staff networks, staff associations, the police federation, or the Wellbeing team (please see appendix 3 for contact details).

#### 3.4.1 External Support – ARCH *tell me*

Cleveland Police are working in partnership with ARCH Teesside to deliver a confidential and anonymous emotional support service ('tell me'), to Cleveland Police personnel who have been affected by sexual harassment or sexually harmful behaviours within the workplace at any time. The support is delivered by specialist sexual violence counsellors at ARCH who are independent of the police service.

ARCH can be contacted via the secure and anonymous email platform with the protection of your identity being a priority. A counsellor will pick up your message in a timely manner, listen, understand, and offer emotional support and a safe place to discuss what you have experienced; you will be heard and believed.

Services are provided by specialist sexual violence counsellors. The service is completely independent of the police service.

The counselling team members work in a person-centred and trauma informed manner to deliver a victim focused, holistic approach.

The ARCH counselling team understand the potential impacts of sexual harassment and sexual abuse, alongside the implications and barriers that can arise in relation to sharing experiences or reporting sexual harm internally. If reporting is something you wish to explore, the counsellor can help you to

understand your options for reporting, without offering advice or telling you what you 'should' do. The counsellor may also inform you about available services which may be suitable for further support, either at ARCH, or in your local area if you live outside of the Middlesbrough region.

The intention is that the majority of the emails received will remain confidential as a key aim of the partnership is to deliver a safe space to talk about experiences of sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the workplace. However, duty of care processes are in place and if there is reason for ARCH personnel to believe someone's behaviours may compromise your safety or the safety of others, it may be necessary to share information appropriately with the Cleveland Police Counter Corruption Unit, or with other agencies.

Information may also be shared lawfully if a court of law instructs ARCH services to do so. If this is the case, ARCH will try to obtain your consent to share this information as far as it is deemed safe to do so. In such situations, ARCH may ask for your identifiable information, such as your name, position in the force, location or contact details. IP addresses may also be used if necessary.

### **3.5 Options to report Sexual Harassment and potential outcomes**

A range of options are available to report a Sexual Harassment complaint depending on who you feel most comfortable telling. These include:

- Informing your line manager.
- Informing a more senior manager.
- Informing your police federation or union representative.
- Raising an informal complaint (details below).
- Raising a formal complaint (details below).

Cleveland Police is committed to allowing victims a clear voice and a choice in the outcomes available if they do report Sexual Harassment.

Any reports of Sexual Harassment received in DSE will be reviewed, recorded, and assessed in order to determine the seriousness of the alleged behaviour and how this should be handled.

The most appropriate course of action will be determined based on the circumstances and/or nature of the complaint, including the severity of the behaviour and your wishes. Each case will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Assessing the most appropriate course of action will be a matter for professional judgement, supported by guidance provided by the Sexual Harassment policy and by the principles set out within the Code of Ethics and Force Values.

We will always consider your views and wishes and whether informal action is appropriate in the circumstances.

However, where serious allegations of harassment are raised, or upon review there is intelligence to raise concerns, and/or the outcome of a Grievance

investigation is that allegation(s) of harassment are founded, a conduct assessment will be undertaken and consideration will be given as to whether the conduct amounts to misconduct or gross misconduct, or whether potential criminal offences are disclosed.

If you become aware of, or are a witness to, Sexual Harassment you are encouraged to raise the issue using one of the reporting options detailed within this section.

### 3.5.1 Informal

If possible, and you feel confident to do so, you should raise the issue informally with the person who is creating the problem, pointing out that their conduct is unwelcome, offensive or interfering with work. The advantage to this approach is that it is likely to produce solutions that are speedy, effective and can minimise embarrassment and assist with the continuance of working relationships. Setting clear boundaries may resolve the issue.

However, it is recognised that this first step can be difficult, particularly where the person harassing you works on the same team, or is a supervisor; equally, if the behaviour is more serious, or has been on-going for some time, then this may not be appropriate.

If challenging is too difficult, you can contact your line manager or the Human Resources Department informally for confidential advice. You also may consider speaking to DSE, the Police Federation or Police staff associations for advice.

An informal solution may encourage you to take that initial step to discuss the problem and receive confidential support and advice, free from the worry of 'getting someone into trouble' or of being caught up in actions which are not in your control.

Despite the advantages of informal solutions, access to formal procedures are always available to you. It must however be clear to all parties that disciplinary procedures will only be invoked when an assessment/ investigation finds this to be the appropriate course of action.

Furthermore, whilst the decision whether to progress is up to you, Cleveland Police has a duty to protect all staff and officers and may pursue the matter independently if, in all the circumstances, the organisation considers it appropriate to do so.

### 3.5.2 Mediation

Mediation is a more structured resolution process where Cleveland Police trained mediators are involved. Both parties need to agree to mediation for it to go ahead.

It is a confidential and voluntary process where a mediator facilitates communication between two individuals in dispute.

At the mediation meeting both parties will be given the opportunity to discuss the situation in a safe and supportive environment with the aim of resolving the matter through informal discussion and reaching agreement about future behaviour.

If informal steps are not appropriate, or have been unsuccessful, you should pursue the formal procedures.

### 3.5.3 Formal Procedures

#### **HR Grievance Procedure**

The Grievance Resolution Procedure provides a mechanism by which an individual's concerns about their work, working environment, or working relationships can be raised and addressed fairly and as swiftly as possible.

'Low level' cases not assessed by an Appropriate Authority as misconduct can in appropriate circumstances be managed by way of grievance if the aggrieved party so wishes. However, should examples of poor performance and/or conduct be identified throughout the grievance process then steps will be taken to proactively progress these concerns by way of appropriate measures or approved policies i.e., Action Plans, Management Action, Capability, UPP and the Disciplinary Process.

So as to not duplicate policy statements, the current force Grievance Resolution policy can be accessed via the force intranet portal or the inserted link [here](#).

#### **DSE Misconduct Investigation**

You can report directly to the DSE Counter Corruption Unit. Options to report to the unit include via:

- Email: [counter.corruption@cleveland.police.uk](mailto:counter.corruption@cleveland.police.uk)
- Telephone: 01642 306755
- CCU Referral form (located on the Intranet Page and available through the link [here](#)).
- Break the Silence (anonymous reporting system linked [here](#)).

If after a review of the issues raised the matter is assessed as Misconduct, an investigation will be conducted.

The Head of DSE, or their decision maker, will review the issue subject to complaint/misconduct notification and if the matter is deemed a recordable conduct matter:

- DSE will implement the procedures as detailed in the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2012 (pre-1st February 2020), or Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 for matters that have occurred after 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2020.
- These Regulations apply where an allegation comes to the attention of an Appropriate Authority (a senior leader with responsibility for organisational



conduct) which indicates that the conduct of a police officer may amount to misconduct, gross misconduct or practice requiring improvement.

- Where the Appropriate Authority assesses that the conduct, if proved, would amount to misconduct or gross misconduct:
  - (a) The matter must be investigated, and
  - (b) The appropriate authority must assess whether, if the matter were to be referred to misconduct proceedings under Regulation 23, (PCR 2020) those would be likely to be a misconduct meeting or a misconduct hearing.
- Disciplinary proceedings and performance processes for members of police staff and designated policing volunteers are set out in the Police Staff Discipline Policy, available through the link [here](#).

### **3.6 Further information on investigations**

What you can expect from a DSE investigation:

- As a result of your reporting, you will be supported throughout any subsequent investigation. The support that you need will be discussed with you at the beginning and may be informal or formal, dependent upon your needs. It may be arranged by the Appropriate Authority, your department/unit, the DSE investigator or a HR advisor.
- The support could include a referral to Occupational Health, or an external organisation, or if needed, you may be allocated a welfare officer. Your needs will be considered throughout the investigation and you can ask for these to be reviewed.
- Cleveland Police recognises that reporting sexual harassment is a daunting process. We are committed to supporting those who come forward. Thus, if somebody makes a report into CCU and requests the investigating officer be of the same gender, for example, a female, this request will be honoured by the unit.
- Your safety and wellbeing will be paramount and appropriate action will be taken to ensure, where necessary, the perpetrator does not continue to have contact with you or witnesses.
- Once you make a report, you will be contacted by trained investigators, and your wishes ascertained. The options available to you will be explained. You will be given the opportunity to explain what action you would like to be taken, and this will be talked through with you.
- If you choose to remain anonymous, your concerns will still be investigated as thoroughly as possible for the reasons identified above. By using Cleveland Police's two-way 'Break the Silence' reporting system, you can continue to provide information to the Counter Corruption Unit (CCU) in order to support the investigation. (For more information about 'Break the Silence, including FAQs, visit the CCU Intranet page [here](#)). Where possible you are encouraged to engage openly with CCU as you may have important additional information that CCU can only ask about as matters progress, which they may not be able to obtain from any other source.
- During the investigation, you will be asked to provide an account. You should be as honest as you can, even if disclosing some information

makes you feel uncomfortable. All information needs to be considered; even if you think something undermines your account you should tell the Investigating Officer as early as possible.

- It may be necessary to speak with other colleagues in order to get information to corroborate your account and ensure that the investigation is fair and transparent. If this is necessary, it will be explained to you. At all times, your dignity and privacy will be considered, and the matter will be investigated with tact and discretion.
- You will be provided with a specific point of contact within DSE and a personal contact plan will be agreed with you, in order to keep you updated on the progress of the investigation.
- As the investigation progresses, it is important to remember that you may not be provided with all the details of the investigation as this may be prejudicial. This may be frustrating for you, but we have a duty to ensure that any investigation is procedurally correct to ensure that we maximise the opportunity for a fair and just outcome.
- Sometimes, depending on the circumstances, regardless of your wishes, the DSE may have to investigate the report in order to protect other members of staff and/or members of the public. An investigation may also encourage other persons to report their concerns. This will be fully explained to you, and you will still be offered support.
- In cases of serious allegations, it may be necessary to refer details of the investigation to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). Dependent on the severity of the conduct, they may be involved in the investigation, or even conduct it themselves. This will be fully explained to you. If this is the case, you will still have a contact in DSE throughout the investigation.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

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##### **All staff and officers:**

- To be aware of how their behaviour may affect others.
- To treat colleagues with dignity and respect.
- To take a stand if inappropriate jokes, comments, or gestures are being made.
- To make it clear to others when their behaviour is unacceptable.
- To intervene, if possible, to stop sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour and give support to anyone who may have been harassed.
- To report harassment to a manager or DSE and co-operate as required in investigations.
- If a complaint of harassment is made, to not prejudge or victimise the complainant or harasser.

**All managers:**

- To implement Cleveland Police's zero-tolerance policy on Sexual Harassment.
- To set a good example by their own behaviour.
- To ensure that there is a proactive and supportive working environment.
- To ensure that staff know what standards of behaviour are expected of them.
- To intervene to stop bullying or harassment.
- To report promptly to DSE any complaint harassment, or any incident of harassment witnessed by them and ensure that appropriate steps are taken.

**Human Resources:**

- Provide advice on the options available to all individuals
- If the grievance process is utilised, to attend Stage 1 and Stage 2 meetings as an advisor to the manager on process.
  - To ensure the grievance process is followed correctly.
  - To facilitate the retention of appropriate documents.
- To liaise with the DSE where necessary.

**Directorate of Standards and Ethics:**

- To review all reports to the department, via any route, for any misconduct.
- To ensure the misconduct process is followed correctly.
- To conduct a proportionate investigation .
- To liaise with the Human Resources where necessary.
- To liaise with the Police Federation and Staff associations where necessary.

**Police Federation**

- To provide support or guidance to members affected or impacted.

**Staff Associations**

- To provide support or guidance to members affected or impacted.

**Staff Networks**

- To provide support or guidance to any individual affected or impacted.

## 5. Appendices

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Appendix	Description
1.	Myth Busting
2.	Frequently Asked Questions
3.	Support and Resources

## 6. Compliance and monitoring

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The VAWG lead is responsible for the accuracy and integrity of this document. This policy will be continuously monitored, and updated when appropriate, to ensure full compliance with legislation.

The VAWG lead will review this process to ensure that all aspects are being adhered to in accordance with the framework of this policy.

## 7. Version control

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This policy will be reviewed and updated at least every three years by the owner, and more frequently if necessary.

The Corporate Services Department will ensure this document is available on the Force intranet, including any interim updates.

The following identifies all version changes.

Version	Date	Reason for update	Author
1.0	Sept 2022	Final document for publication post EMB	██████████ ████████████████████ ██████████

## **Myth Busting**

Myth busting around Sexual Harassment is a key way to stop the normalisation of unacceptable behaviour.

Furthermore, research by So Yun Lee et al (2019) found that an acceptance of Sexual Harassment myths may lead observers to fail to recognise a situation as high risk, because the ambiguity of the situation is increased. We want to dispel any myths around Sexual Harassment, to encourage everyone to clearly recognise it, and appropriately challenge/report it.

Here are some common myths that surround Sexual Harassment:

### ***'It is the victim's fault' –***

Sexual Harassment is never the fault of the victim. Victim blaming or victimisation is never an acceptable response to someone disclosing they have experienced Sexual Harassment.

Within society we do still see a lot of victim blaming. This can include things like:

- 'It was because of what they were wearing'
- 'It was because they had been drinking'
- 'It was because they were walking alone at night'

If a person is the victim of Sexual Harassment – it is **never** their fault, it is the fault of the offender(s).

### ***'Most cases of Sexual Harassment are false accusations' –***

Research conducted by the Home Office found that only 4% of cases of sexual violence reported to the UK police are found to be, or suspected of being, false.

'What is also infrequently talked about is that the rates for false allegations of sexual violence are no higher than those reported in other categories of crime. Even so, it's fair to say that victims of other crimes (such as theft or burglary) are not so routinely treated with suspicion as are the victims of sexual violence.' ([Here's the truth about false accusations of sexual violence | The Open University](#)).

Unfortunately, within the media and society, this small number of false reports tends to get widely reported. This means that people often overestimate the number of false accusations that occur, and thus become hostile to all reports of Sexual Harassment. It is important to keep in mind that only a very small minority of cases are false.

### ***'Men cannot be sexually harassed' –***

People of any gender identity can be victims of Sexual Harassment. A Government survey published in 2020 found:

Although women did experience higher levels of Sexual Harassment, when respondents were asked the question: '*Of the behaviours experienced in your lifetime, which of these have you experienced in the last 12 months?*' Men were more likely to experience displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials (14% men vs 10%

women) and someone taking and / or sharing of sexual pictures or videos of them without permission (4% men vs 3% women).

The research also found significantly more women than men have experienced Sexual Harassment in their lifetime (84% of women vs. 60% of men) and in the last 12 months (51% of women vs. 34% of men). But this shows that men are experiencing Sexual Harassment at high rates.

***‘Harassment always occurs between a man and a woman’ –***

Women are more likely to be victims of Sexual Harassment, and men are more likely to be perpetrators of Sexual Harassment.

However, this does not mean that this is the only way it can happen. Anyone of any gender identity can be the victim of Sexual Harassment, and anyone of any gender identity can a perpetrator.

***‘Harassment is always verbal’ –***

Sexual Harassment can be placed into four different behavioural groups – verbal, non-verbal, physical, and cyber. **Remember:** Even if someone did not mean to harass an individual, their behaviour or conduct is unacceptable if the recipient, or someone who sees/overhears it, thinks it is unwanted, unreasonable or offensive.

***‘It can’t be harassment – they were only joking’ –***

The key thing to remember about Sexual Harassment is that it is based on **how it is received, not what was intended**. If you are uncomfortable with a joke made to you or another, or one you overheard, it can be Sexual Harassment. If you are made to feel uncomfortable, humiliated, intimidated or offended, please report it.

***‘The behaviour must be repeated to be sexual harassment’ –***

Sexual Harassment often does happen over a series of incidents. However, it does not have to. If you experience a single incident of Sexual Harassment, or a pattern of incidents, please report it.

***‘Sexual Harassment can only happen in person’ –***

A survey conducted by a women’s charity, Rights of Women, found that ‘45% of women experiencing Sexual Harassment, reported experiencing the harassment remotely. Remote Sexual Harassment refers to the following: sexual messages (e.g. email, texts, social media, group messaging); cyber harassment (e.g. via Zoom, Teams, Slack etc); and sexual calls. Sexual Harassment can occur in person or online. Sexual harassment is always dependent on how something is received, not how it is intended. You can be subject to sexual harassment directly, or indirectly, for example overhearing or being witness to something.

Rights of Women found that examples of online Sexual Harassment included:

- A manager using a WhatsApp group set up for work purposes to obtain personal contact details, and then using that number to harass the individual privately.

- Taking screenshots during online meetings, sharing these with colleagues and making inappropriate comments.
- Using phallic emojis.
- Offering to send, or asking for, inappropriate pictures.

Due to the COVID global pandemic, the workplace has become a shifting concept. As this document stresses, everyone has the right to feel safe in their workplace, but this goes further. Working remotely means many workplaces are now within people's homes. Everyone has the right to feel safe in their home. Online Sexual Harassment is no less traumatising or upsetting. It is completely unacceptable and will be dealt with in the same manner as Sexual Harassment that occurs in person.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***Is the ARCH 'tell me' service really confidential?***

The intention is that the majority of the emails received will remain confidential as a key aim of the partnership is to deliver a safe space to talk about experiences of sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the workplace. However, duty of care processes are in place and if there is reason for ARCH personnel to believe someone's behaviours may compromise your safety or the safety of others, it may be necessary to share information appropriately with the Cleveland Police Counter Corruption Unit, or with other agencies.

Information may also be shared lawfully if a court of law instructs ARCH services to do so. If this is the case, ARCH will try to obtain your consent to share this information as far as it is deemed safe to do so. In such situations, ARCH may ask for your identifiable information, such as your name, position in the force, location or contact details. IP addresses may also be used if necessary.

### ***What are the possible outcomes if I do report Sexual Harassment?***

There are different options available regarding resolving a Sexual Harassment complaint. These are highlighted in more detail within the above sections, but include:

- Informal resolutions,
- Mediation,
- Resolution through the force grievance procedure,
- If the conduct warrants consideration under misconduct regulations, this opens up further options, such as: reflective practice, written warnings, dismissal.

We will work with you to discuss the options available and consider your opinion in identifying the most suitable way forward.

### ***I have witnessed Sexual Harassment/someone has told me they have experienced Sexual Harassment, what do I do?***

You have a responsibility under the Code of Ethics to “**challenge, report or take action against the conduct of colleagues which has fallen below the standards of professional behaviour**”.

If you have witnessed Sexual Harassment, or someone has told you in confidence they have experienced Sexual Harassment, we would encourage you to report this. Please do not keep this information to yourself. Any concerns should be reported.

### ***I am worried about victimisation, what can I do?***

Cleveland Police understand that reporting Sexual Harassment may be difficult for individuals. They may fear that they will be the subject of victimisation because of their complaint.



Firstly, it is important to remember that your confidentiality is very important to us. If you choose to remain anonymous, your complaint will still be investigated as thoroughly as possible.

Secondly, Cleveland Police are dedicated to taking reports of victimisation very seriously. If, because of your Sexual Harassment complaint, you feel you become subject to victimisation, Cleveland Police will take steps to investigate. It is our aim to eradicate a working culture in which victimisation is the response to a complaint of Sexual Harassment.

### ***What if I don't want to make a complaint at this time?***

If you feel safe enough to do so, a first step can be to let the harasser know that you do not like their behaviour and ask them to stop. You may want to be accompanied by a trusted person when you do this; never put yourself in a dangerous or unpredictable situation.

However, confronting the issue directly with the harasser may not feel safe for you, especially if this person is in a position of power or authority.

Importantly, you do not need to have first confronted the harasser in order to make a formal complaint of Sexual Harassment. A formal complaint can be your first step.

If you do not want to make a complaint now, it is a good idea to keep a written record or diary of times, dates and descriptions of what you experienced and how you were made to feel. This evidence can be important if you decide to make a complaint later down the line.

It is worth bearing in mind the Code of Ethics and remember your duty to report unacceptable conduct. We want to encourage you to report Sexual Harassment, but we also understand the difficulties surrounding this.

If you are uneasy about making a complaint, contact your Police Federation or Staff Association representative and discuss options with them. You can also contact staff networks for support. They can help signpost you to more information.

### ***How can I support a victim of Sexual Harassment?***

Reporting Sexual Harassment can be a daunting experience and leave the victim feeling lost and isolated. If you know someone who has experienced Sexual Harassment and made a complaint, reach out and ask how you can help.

If you notice your colleague becoming more isolated, either by force or through their choice, try and include them more in activities and conversations. Challenge your colleagues' behaviour if they are actively isolating the victim or report their behaviour to a supervisor or DSE. One of the most effective ways you can help a victim of Sexual Harassment is through being an Upstander, not a bystander.

Remember the Code of Ethics and your responsibility to take action against inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.

Some helpful phrases you can use to help support victims of Sexual Harassment:

- Are you ok?
- I believe you
- I am here if you want to talk
- I am here if you don't want to talk
- I am so sorry this has happened to you
- This is not your fault
- You are not alone
- How can I help?
- The way you are feeling is normal
- I can help you find a support group

***If I make a complaint, will I have to continue working with the perpetrator?***

If you are concerned about continuing to work with the alleged perpetrator, action will be taken to ensure that they do not continue to have contact with you. It is possible to arrange for them to work elsewhere whilst the investigation is carried out.

You will be kept informed of these arrangements for your reassurance.

## **Support and Resources**

### ***Who to contact:***

Wellbeing Team – 01642 302073/2853 or [wellbeing@cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:wellbeing@cleveland.pnn.police.uk)

Police Federation – 01642 301246 or [office@cleveland.polfed.org](mailto:office@cleveland.polfed.org)

Unison – 01642 301395 or [unison@cleveland.police.uk](mailto:unison@cleveland.police.uk)

Women's Network - [cpwn@cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:cpwn@cleveland.pnn.police.uk)

LGBT+ Network – [lgbt@cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:lgbt@cleveland.pnn.police.uk)

Support Association for Ethnic Minority Staff - [same@cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:same@cleveland.pnn.police.uk)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team - [edi@cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:edi@cleveland.pnn.police.uk)

ARCH – Confidential support – [support@archteesside.org](mailto:support@archteesside.org)

### ***Resources***

[Code of Ethics](#)

[Break the Silence FAQs](#)

[Maintaining Professional Boundaries](#)

[Relationships at work](#)