



# LINCOLN CHORAL SOCIETY

## BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

Registered charity no 505023

### 1 Purpose of this document

This policy applies to all members and volunteers of Lincoln Choral Society (hereafter “the Society”) and is intended to provide:

- A supportive environment to seek early resolution of bullying or harassment concerns, or both.
- A formal mechanism to address unresolved or significant and/or persistent bullying and/or harassment.

### 2 Definitions

**Bullying** may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

**Harassment** is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic (see below) It has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Bullying and harassment may be carried out by, but is not limited to, face-to-face, verbal, written or electronic methods, including cyber-bullying and cyber-harassment.

The Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

It may also relate to other personal characteristics such as weight, social status, or trans identities, including non-binary.

### **3 Roles and responsibilities**

The committee should:

- Create an environment where members and volunteers are clear that bullying or harassment, or both is unacceptable.
- Respond constructively and supportively where a member or volunteer raises a concern regarding bullying and harassing behaviours or is accused of such behaviours.
- Assess the seriousness of the complaint and determine how the matter should be addressed.

Members and volunteers should:

- Contribute to a dignified environment in which bullying and harassment are unacceptable and consider personal behaviours that might be seen as such.
- Take time to consider whether the behaviours they have experienced are bullying and/or harassing in nature and if so, what outcome they would seek to achieve.
- Raise awareness of issues at the earliest opportunity.
- Respond constructively where they are accused of bullying and harassing behaviours.
- Where a member or volunteer is subject to, witnesses, or demonstrates problematic behaviours that they are unable to manage on their own, they should raise the issue with their section representative in the first instance, who should escalate the issue to the Chairman or Secretary if it cannot be resolved.
- Actively participate in the process in an attempt to manage the issue without delay.
- Consider accessing any support mechanisms to maintain health and wellbeing during the process.

Anyone involved in the process is required to maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

### **4 Ways of addressing bullying and harassment**

Addressing bullying and/or harassing behaviours is challenging. The best way to resolve the issue at the earliest opportunity is by ensuring the other party is aware of the impact of their behaviour. The following approaches are recognised ways of achieving Early Resolution.

Speaking to the other party directly – the complainant approaches the other party to tell them that they find their behaviour offensive, why this is the case, and to ask them to stop.

Writing to the other party – the complainant writes to the other party to tell them that they find their behaviour offensive, why this is the case, and to ask them to stop.

Supported approach – if the complainant finds speaking to the other party too difficult but still wishes to seek Early Resolution, they can ask a committee member to relay their concerns to the individual.

If both parties agree, a conversation can be facilitated by a committee member to resolve the issue. In this case, the committee member will take notes and distribute them to both parties. If this is not sufficient, or the other party does not wish to participate in the process, the committee will investigate the matter and consider whether the membership of one or other party should be terminated in accordance with the Constitution. This would be a last resort if all attempts to resolve the issue have failed.

Document control

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