

**ALKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy applies to all employees of Alkham Parish Council (“APC”).
- 1.2. The objectives of this policy are: -
 - 1.2.1. to foster good relationships between APC and its employees by discouraging the harbouring of grievances;
 - 1.2.2. to settle grievances as near as possible to their point of origin;
 - 1.2.3. to ensure APC treats grievances seriously and resolves them as quickly as possible; and
 - 1.2.4. to ensure that employees are treated fairly and consistently throughout APC.
- 1.3. Matters excluded from this policy are as follows: -
 - 1.3.1. appeals against disciplinary actions;
 - 1.3.2. income tax, national insurance matters, rates of pay collectively agreed at the national or local level;
 - 1.3.3. rules of pension schemes; and
 - 1.3.4. a grievance about a matter over which APC has no control.

2. INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- 2.1. In the interests of maintaining good working relations the employee is encouraged to first discuss any grievance with their manager with a view to resolving the matter informally if appropriate. If the employee feels that this is not appropriate or wishes to pursue a formal grievance they should follow the procedure detailed below.

3. FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- 3.1. The employee must set out their grievance in writing to the Clerk. If their grievance concerns the Clerk then the grievance should be addressed to the Chairman.
- 3.2. Once APC has considered its response to the information provided, the employee will be invited to attend a grievance meeting to discuss the matter:-
 - 3.2.1. Grievance meetings will normally be convened within 14 days of APC receiving the grievance.
 - 3.2.2. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.
 - 3.2.3. The employee has the right to be accompanied to and/or represented at a grievance meeting by a fellow employee or by a Trade Union representative who is permitted to address such meeting to put the employee’s case and confer with the employee but is not permitted to answer questions put to the employee or prevent the employee from explaining their case.
 - 3.2.4. If the meeting is inconvenient for either the employee or their companion, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- 3.3. A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated.
- 3.4. After the meeting the employee will be informed in writing of APC’s decision within 5 working days and shall be provided with a copy of the minutes of the grievance meeting with the decision letter.
- 3.5. If the employee wishes to appeal against APC’s decision they must inform APC within 5 working days of receiving the decision.
- 3.6. If the employee notifies APC that they wish to appeal, the employee will be invited to attend a grievance appeal meeting. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that

meeting. The employee has the right to be accompanied to and/or represented at a grievance appeal meeting by a fellow employee or by a Trade Union representative who is permitted to address such meeting to put the employee's case and confer with the employee but is not permitted to answer questions put to the employee or prevent the employee from explaining their case.

- 3.7. A grievance appeal meeting will normally be convened within 7 working days of APC receiving notice that the employee wishes to appeal. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the employee or their companion, the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- 3.8. After the grievance appeal meeting the employee will be informed in writing of APC's final decision within 5 working days and shall be provided with a copy of the minutes of the grievance appeal meeting with the decision letter.

4. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

- 4.1. Information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process and members of the APC Staff Committee. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee and the employee's grievance records will be held by APC in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988.the relevant data protection legislation.
- 4.2. Recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited unless agreed as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition.
- 4.3. If an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the disciplinary procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. If the issue relates to both then the procedures may be dealt with concurrently. If the grievance is unrelated to the subject of the disciplinary procedure then the grievance will be dealt with after the completion of the disciplinary procedure.
- 4.4. APC may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegation of bullying or harassment. Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires APC's and the employee's consent.
- 4.5. Any changes to specified time limits in this procedure must be agreed by the employee and APC
- 4.6. This document does not form part of the contract of employment.
- 4.7. APC will comply with the Procedure for Dealing with Staff Grievances as set out in the Appendix hereto.

Adopted September 2023

APPENDIX

Special procedures for grievances against the Clerk or a Councillor or grievances raised by the Clerk

1. Where a grievance is raised by the Clerk this should be addressed to either the Chairman of the Council or the Vice Chairman of the Council.
2. If an employee's grievance is about the Clerk or a Councillor then the Chairman of the Staff Committee or Vice Chairman of the Staff Committee shall appoint a Councillor on the Staff Committee or the Clerk to investigate the grievance as appropriate.
3. The Chairman/Vice Chairman of the Staff Committee will normally act as Chairman of the grievance meeting and shall appoint one other Councillor to attend the grievance meeting. If a Councillor has been asked to investigate the grievance they will normally be the second Councillor at the grievance meeting. The Chairman/Vice Chairman shall arrange for an appropriate minute taker for the meeting.
4. The Council's decision on the grievance shall be determined by the Chairman of the meeting after consultation with the other appointed Councillor. The Chairman may require further investigations to be made before a decision is reached.
5. If the employee wishes to appeal the decision the Chairman / Vice Chairman of the Staff Committee shall appoint three Council members who have not previously been involved in the grievance to hear the appeal. The appeal meeting will normally be chaired by the Chairman of the Council or if this is not appropriate then by the Vice Chairman of the Council.