

EXMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL GRIEVANCE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of the council to give employees the opportunity to air and seek redress for any individual employment grievance which they may have. Grievances may be any concerns, problems or complaints employees wish to raise with the Council. This document describes the procedure which aims to facilitate a speedy, fair and consistent solution to an individual employee's employment grievance. This procedure is produced in line with the ACAS Code of Practice 2015 as set out in the Employment Act 2008. This procedure applies to all employees of the Council.

Excluded from this procedure are as follows:

- appeals against disciplinary actions
- income tax, national insurance matters, rates of pay collectively agreed at the national or local level rules of pension schemes
- a grievance about a matter over which the council has no control

2. INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In the interests of maintaining good working relations the employee is encouraged to first discuss any grievance with the Chair (or Vice-Chair) of the Council with a view to resolving the matter informally if appropriate. If the employee feels that this is not appropriate, or s/he wishes to pursue a formal grievance they should follow the procedure detailed below. The Chair will be excluded from the process at 2 and 3, if the grievance is about the Chair.

3. STANDARD COUNCIL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- a) The employee should ideally set out his/her grievance in writing (Statement of Grievance) and provide a copy to the Chairman of the Council.
- b) Once the Chairman has had a reasonable opportunity to consider its response to the information provided in the Statement of Grievance the employee will be invited to attend a grievance meeting to discuss the matter. The panel will consist of two Councillors and may or may not include the Chair.
- c) The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting
- d) The meeting will normally be convened within 14 days of the Council receiving the Statement of Grievance
- e) The employee has the right to be accompanied by another employee or a trade union representative or an appropriately accredited official employed by a trade union.
- f) If the meeting is inconvenient for either the employee or his/her companion, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- g) A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to allow the Council to consider the decision.

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- h) After the meeting, the employee will be informed of the decision within five working days. The decision will be confirmed in writing.
- i) If the employee wishes to appeal against the council's decision, s/he must inform the Council within five working days of receiving the decision.
- j) If the employee notifies the council that they wish to appeal, the employee will be invited to attend an appeal meeting with two other members of the Council, not previously involved in the first meeting. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that meeting and has the right to be accompanied by a companion.
- k) An appeal meeting will normally be convened within 7 working days of the Council receiving notice that the employee wishes to appeal. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the employee or his/her companion, the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to five working days.
- l) After the appeal meeting, the employee will be informed of the Council's final decision within five working days. The decision will be confirmed in writing.

4. GENERAL PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

A copy of the statement of grievance, a note of the decision taken, and any notice of appeal will be placed on the employee's personnel file, together with any notes or evidence taken or compiled during the course of the procedure.

All staffing disciplinary and grievance issues should be discussed in private session.

In the first instance, only the Councillors who should have knowledge of a possible problem with a member of staff should be members of the Council attending the grievance meeting. All other Councillors should be told that there is a problem looming and that they should avoid becoming involved at this stage as they may be needed in the case of an appeal.

This Policy has been reviewed by Belinda Newton, HR specialist.