

Walberswick Parish Council

DRAFT ONLY - Grievance Policy & Procedure

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 It is our policy to ensure that all employees have access to a procedure to help deal with any grievances relating to their employment fairly and without unreasonable delay. We aim to investigate any formal grievance, hold a meeting to discuss it, inform in writing of the outcome, and give a right of appeal if not satisfied.

1.2 Issues that may cause grievances include:

- (a) terms and conditions of employment;
- (b) health and safety;
- (c) work relations;
- (d) bullying and harassment;
- (e) new working practices;
- (f) working environment;
- (g) organisational change; and
- (h) discrimination.

1.3 This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It may be amended at any time and we may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case.

2. WHO IS COVERED BY THE PROCEDURE?

This procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service.

3. USING THIS PROCEDURE

3.1 If there is any difficulty at any stage of the Grievance Procedure because of a disability or because English is not your first language, the situation should be discussed with the Chairman as soon as possible.

3.2 This Grievance Procedure should not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action.

3.3 The Grievance Procedure should not be used for "Whistleblowing". However, where you are directly affected by the matter in question, or where you feel you have been victimised for an act of whistleblowing, you may raise the matter under this Grievance Procedure.

- 3.4 Written grievances will be placed on file along with a record of any decisions taken and any notes or other documents compiled during the grievance process. These will be processed in accordance with our Data Protection and Information Security Policy

4. RAISING GRIEVANCES INFORMALLY

Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with the Chairman. If the complaint concerns the Chairman, then you should speak informally to another member of the Employment Working Party. If this does not resolve the issue, you should follow the formal procedure below.

5. FORMAL WRITTEN GRIEVANCES

- 5.1 If your grievance cannot be resolved informally you should put it in writing and submit it to the Chairman, indicating that it is a formal grievance. If the grievance concerns the Chairman, you may submit it instead to the Employment Working Party

- 5.2 The written grievance should contain a brief description of the nature of your complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved. In some situations we may need provision of further information.

6. INVESTIGATIONS

- 6.1 In some cases it may be necessary for us to carry out an investigation into the grievance. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The investigation will be carried out by members of the Employment Working Party

- 6.2 Anyone raising a grievance must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing us of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending interviews, as part of our investigation.

- 6.3 We may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting where we consider this appropriate. In other cases we may hold a grievance meeting before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out. In those cases we will hold a further grievance meeting after our investigation and before we reach a decision.

7. RIGHT TO BE ACCOMPANIED

- 7.1 Someone raising a grievance may bring a companion to any grievance meeting or appeal meeting under this procedure. The companion may be either a trade union representative or a colleague. If this is the case, the person holding the grievance meeting must be told who the chosen companion is, in good time before the meeting.
- 7.2 At the meeting, the companion may make representations to us and ask questions, but should not answer questions on behalf of someone raising a grievance. You may confer privately with the companion at any time during the meeting.
- 7.3 Acting as a companion is voluntary and colleagues are under no obligation to do so.
- 7.4 If the choice of companion is unreasonable we may ask you to choose someone else, for example:
- (a) if in our opinion the companion may have a conflict of interest or may prejudice the meeting; or
 - (b) if the companion works at another site and someone reasonably suitable is available on site; or
 - (c) if the companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards.

8. GRIEVANCE MEETINGS

- 8.1 We will arrange a grievance meeting, normally within one week of receiving your written grievance.
- 8.2 Every effort should be made to attend grievance meetings. If someone cannot attend at the time specified, we must be informed immediately and we will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.
- 8.3 The purpose of a grievance meeting is to enable an explanation of the grievance and how it should be resolved, and to assist us to reach a decision based on the available evidence and the representations made.
- 8.4 After an initial grievance meeting we may carry out further investigations and hold further grievance meetings as we consider appropriate. Such meetings will be arranged without unreasonable delay.
- 8.5 We will write, usually within one week of the final grievance meeting, to inform you of the outcome of the grievance and any further action that we intend to

take to resolve the grievance. Where appropriate we may hold a meeting to give this information in person.

9. APPEALS

- 9.1 If the grievance has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may appeal in writing to the Employment Working Party stating your full grounds of appeal, within one week of the date on which the decision was sent.
- 9.2 We will hold an appeal meeting. This will be dealt with impartially by members of the Employment Working Party who have not previously been involved in the case (although they may ask anyone previously involved to be present). A companion may be brought to the meeting (see paragraph 7).
- 9.3 We will confirm our final decision in writing, usually within one week of the appeal hearing. This is the end of the procedure and there is no further appeal.