



Longburrow Hall, Park Lane
Stokenchurch, High Wycombe
Bucks HP14 3TQ

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

1. Objective

Stokenchurch Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as “**the council**”) is committed to providing a fair, consistent and effective approach to the handling of employee grievances and disciplinary matters. Employment law requires employers to have clear procedures in place to facilitate the prompt and fair resolution of such matters.

These procedures are intended to:

- Encourage resolution at the earliest possible stage
- Ensure employees are treated fairly and consistently
- Comply with the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

Failure to follow these procedures may result in decisions being challenged at an employment tribunal.

2. Scope

2.1 These procedures apply to all employees of Stokenchurch Parish Council.

2.2 These procedures do not apply to councillors, who are not employees of the Council.

2.3 The Council, acting as employer, may delegate elements of these procedures to a panel of councillors where appropriate.

3. General Principles

3.1 Matters will be dealt with promptly and, wherever possible, informally.

3.2 No disciplinary action will be taken without a full and fair investigation.

3.3 Employees will be:

- Informed of the issues being considered
- Given the opportunity to present their case
- Allowed to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague at any formal meeting or hearing

3.4 At all formal stages, employees will have the right of appeal.

3.5 Mediation may be offered at any stage where appropriate and agreed by both parties.

3.6 Hearings and appeals will be conducted by councillors who have had no prior involvement in the matter.

A. Grievance Procedure

A.1 Informal Resolution

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns informally, either verbally or in writing, with the Clerk or appropriate line manager at the earliest opportunity. Most grievances are expected to be resolved at this stage.

A.2 Formal Grievance

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the employee may submit a formal grievance in writing to the Clerk (or to the Chair of the Council where the grievance relates to the Clerk).

The Council will:

- Invite the employee to a grievance meeting without unreasonable delay
- Allow the employee to be accompanied
- Confirm the outcome in writing following the meeting

A.3 Appeal

If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal in writing within five working days of receiving the decision.

The appeal will be heard by councillors who were not involved in the original grievance, and the outcome will be confirmed in writing.

B. Disciplinary Procedure

B.1 Principles

The purpose of this procedure is to encourage improvement in conduct or performance. Disciplinary action will be proportionate to the seriousness of the issue.

No employee will normally be dismissed for a first breach of discipline, except in cases of gross misconduct.

B.2 Informal Action

Where appropriate, issues of minor misconduct or performance may be addressed informally. Formal disciplinary action will only be taken where informal measures have failed or the matter is sufficiently serious.

B.3 Investigation

Before any disciplinary hearing:

An investigation will be carried out

The employee may be suspended on full pay where necessary (this is not a disciplinary sanction)

Suspension will be kept under review and as brief as possible

B.4 Written Warning

Where conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, a written warning may be issued. This will:

State the nature of the issue

Set out expected improvements

Remain on file for six months, subject to satisfactory improvement

B.5 Final Written Warning

If the issue is serious or there is no sustained improvement, a final written warning may be issued. This will confirm that failure to improve may result in dismissal. The warning will normally remain on file for six months.

B.6 Dismissal or Sanctions Short of Dismissal

If dismissal or other serious sanction is being considered:

The employee will receive written notice of the allegations

A disciplinary hearing will be held

The employee will have the right to be accompanied

The decision will be confirmed in writing, including the right of appeal

B.7 Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct is conduct serious enough to fundamentally breach the employment relationship and may result in summary dismissal without notice.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Theft or fraud
- Serious damage to property
- Physical violence or bullying
- Gross insubordination
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at work

Any dismissal for gross misconduct will only occur following a full investigation and hearing.

B.8 Appeals

An employee wishing to appeal any disciplinary decision must do so in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated.

The appeal will be heard by councillors not previously involved, and the outcome confirmed in writing.

4. General

4.1 Complaints relating to this policy should be referred to the Clerk in accordance with the Council's Complaints Policy.

4.2 This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated in line with changes to legislation and NALC guidance.

Date of policy: 11/03/26

Approving committee:SPC

Policy effective from:11/03/26

Date for next review:11/03/29

— policy ends here —