

Grievance Procedure

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. Why have a Grievance Procedure?

Employees may have problems or concerns about their personal terms and conditions of service, their work, working environment or working relationships that they wish to raise and have addressed. A grievance procedure provides a mechanism for these to be dealt with fairly and speedily, before they develop into major disputes.

Grievance procedures enable individuals to raise issues with management about their work, or about their employers, or fellow workers' actions that affect them. Whilst it is impossible to provide a comprehensive list of all of the issues that might give rise to grievance, some of the more common include: -

• terms and conditions of employment	• health and safety
• relationships at work	• new working practices
• organisational change	• equal opportunities

2. The Procedure in Operation

Any grievances will be dealt with quickly and fairly and at the lowest level possible at which the matter can be resolved. Most routine complaints and grievances are resolved informally in discussion with the Town Clerk. Dealing with grievances in this way can often lead to speedy resolution of problems. It may be helpful to keep a note of such an informal meeting.

You are entitled to be accompanied at a grievance hearing by a 'companion' (either a fellow worker or trade union official).

Where the grievance cannot be resolved informally it will be dealt with under the formal grievance procedure.

STAGES OF THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. First Stage:

You must put your grievance, in writing, to the Town Clerk.

Where the grievance is against the Parish Clerk the matter should be raised with the Town Council Chairman.

If the grievance is against any member of the Town Council, that member is excluded from having any dealings with the matter and the issue will be dealt with by the other remaining members of the Town Council.

If the grievance is contested you will be invited to attend a hearing within 28 days in order to discuss the grievance. You will be informed of your statutory right to be accompanied depending on the nature of the grievance. The person dealing with the

grievance will respond in writing to the grievance within five working days of the hearing or, where no hearing has taken place, within five working days of receiving written notice of the grievance. If it is not possible to respond within the specified time period the employee shall be given an explanation for the delay and told when a response can be expected.

2. Second Stage:

If the matter is not resolved at the "first stage" you may raise the matter in writing with the chairman of the Town Council who will arrange for the Disciplinary and Grievance Panel to hear the grievance within five working days. You will be informed of the statutory right to be accompanied at this hearing.

Following the hearing, the chairman of the Town Council will respond to the grievance in writing within five working days. If this is not possible, you will be given an explanation for the delay and told when a response can be expected.

3. A grievance initiated by the Town Clerk

Where the grievance is initiated by the Town Clerk, the grievance must be submitted to the chairman of the Town Council, who will make the necessary arrangements to forward details of the grievance to the constituted Disciplinary and Grievance Appeal Panel with whom a meeting will take place within 28 days.

If the grievance is against any member of the Town Council, that member is excluded from having any dealings with the matter and the other remaining members of that Panel will make the necessary arrangements to forward details of the grievance to the full Town Council

You will be informed of your statutory right to be accompanied depending on the nature of the grievance. The Panel dealing with the grievance will respond in writing to the grievance within five working days of the hearing or, where no hearing has taken place, within five working days of receiving written notice of the grievance. If it is not possible to respond within the specified time period then you will be given an explanation for the delay and told when a response can be expected.

4. Constitution of the Disciplinary and Grievance Panel

The Disciplinary and Grievance Panel will consist of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Town Council and the Chairs of the Committees of the Town Council. If any of these are unable to be present then the Chairman of the Town Council will arrange for the attendance of other elected Town Councillors and ensuring that not less than 3 and not more than 5 members are present.

RECORDS FOR THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Records will be kept detailing the nature of the grievance raised and the response issued, any action taken and the reasons for it. These records will be kept confidential and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, which requires the release of certain data to individuals on their request. Copies of any meeting records will be given to the individual concerned, although in certain circumstances some information may be withheld, for example to protect a witness.