

Bourton on the Water Parish Council

Grievance Policy

1.0 Context

- 1.1 The Council should have in place a number of procedures to develop good working relationships between employees and the Council. Central to this relationship are occasional Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings to discuss and resolve work related issues. Other mechanisms, such as the annual appraisal, exist to help ensure that problems are raised openly and resolved to mutual satisfaction. The purpose of this document is to provide a mechanism to enable employees to seek a resolution to an issue of concern or grievance which cannot otherwise be resolved.
- 1.2 Wherever possible grievances should be resolved by discussion with the member of staff concerned. The resolution of grievances at this stage may recognise that the best recourse could be to make use of more effective management, conciliation, mediation or counselling skills. Central to this guidance is the long accepted practice that, despite any desired intention to resolve any issues informally, the Council recognises that, from time to time, difficulties may arise in working relationships between employees that may be difficult to resolve without recourse to a third party. Mediation and/or conciliation should always be considered as a mechanism to help resolve disputes.

2.0 Pre formal stages

- 2.1 Every effort should be made to resolve the grievance through discussion, explanation, conciliation or mediation.

3.0 First formal stage – the Clerk

- 3.1 Where the grievance is held by a member of staff, the first stage is for the matter to be raised in writing to the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. If the matter requires some further investigation the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee must advise the employee and give an undertaking to complete investigations within seven days.
- 3.2 The Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee should consider the grievance and set out in writing the reasons for any decision.
- 3.4 If the employee is unhappy about the outcome or, if the matter is not resolved within a reasonable time or if there are further investigations to be carried out, the employee has the right to move to the Appeal stage.

4.0 Second formal stage - The Finance & General Purposes Committee

- 4.1 Where the matter cannot be resolved by the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee the matter should be dealt with by the full Finance & General Purposes Committee. The second formal stage is a complaint to the committee in writing setting out the reasons for the complaint. The committee must set out in writing the reasons for any decision. If the matter requires some further investigation the committee must advise the employee and give an undertaking to complete investigations within seven days.

5.0 Third formal stage – Appeal to the Council

5.1 The Council will appoint an Appeal Panel which may hear an appeal if:

- the length of time that the appointed committee has taken to arrive at a decision is unreasonable
- there has been a failure to consider new evidence or evidence of witnesses
- there has been a fundamental flaw in the procedure
- the decision cannot be regarded as fair and reasonable in the light of the evidence available
- there was not a proper investigation of the facts

5.2 The Council will be provided with all the papers concerning the complaint and will notify the employee of whether the appeal will be heard, the likely timescale for considering the appeal and will make a decision about the complaint within a reasonable timescale. The outcome of an appeal to the Council shall be final.

6.0 Putting the case

6.1 An employee should provide as much information as possible at the initial stage of a grievance, and set out clearly the details of the events, times, other persons involved and the reasons for the complaint. A failure to provide full information at the outset is likely to lead to the need for further investigations and a less speedy resolution to a grievance which is not in anyone's best interests.

7.0 Right to be accompanied

7.1 Employees shall have the right to be accompanied at any Hearing by third party of their choice who will be accepted on advice to the Parish Council by GAPTC.

7.2 The person who accompanies the member of staff may address the hearing and put, and sum up, the employee's case; respond on behalf of the employee and confer with the employee at any time during the hearing. The companion does not have the right to answer questions on the employee's behalf; address the hearing if the employee does not wish it or prevent the council from explaining their case.

8.0 Advice and guidance

8.1 Employees seeking advice and guidance on the scope and use of the Grievance Procedure should contact the Clerk.

9.0 Miscellaneous

9.1 This procedure will be reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to meet organisational objectives, reflects statutory requirements, best practice and our quality standards.

9.3 At all meetings a record will be made and a copy sent to the employee.

Adopted 6th May 2020