

## WEST COKER PARISH COUNCIL GRIEVANCE POLICY

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### Policy Statement

The Council recognises that individual employees or groups of employees may, from time to time, feel aggrieved about an aspect of their employment and accepts that each employee has the right to raise this grievance and to expect that management will consider it and respond.

The purpose of the accompanying procedure is to provide a framework for dealing promptly and fairly with such grievances. The aim is to resolve grievances as near as possible to their point of origin.

Matters appropriately dealt with under the Council's grievance procedure include all questions relating to the individual rights of employees in respect of their employment other than:-

- grievances lodged outside of the time limits set out in the accompanying procedure unless with the agreement of the Parish Clerk;
- grievances which have already been considered in accordance with the procedure;
  - grievances arising from a disciplinary or capability process in which the employee is already involved and where there is an appeals procedure in place;
  - grievances in respect of issues over which the Council has no control e.g. external legislation;
  - grievances which are already the subject of a collective grievance or dispute.

The timescales shown in the accompanying procedure may be altered by mutual agreement.

The nature and number of grievances raised in accordance with the accompanying procedure will be monitored annually by the Parish Clerk.

This policy and the accompanying procedure will be the subject of periodic review.

Responsibility for conducting this review will rest with the Parish Clerk.

## Procedural Guidelines

Where an employee is aggrieved about any matter relating to their employment they should raise the matter informally with the Parish Clerk as soon as possible and other than in exceptional circumstances within **20 working days** of the incident or event. However employees will be permitted to raise as part of a grievance a series of directly related incidents having a cumulative effect.

The Parish Clerk should consider and seek to resolve the grievance within 10 working days. Whether or not this proves possible the line manager should in every case inform the employee of their decision and, if appropriate, any action taken.

Employees may wish to seek the advice of a trade union representative or colleague prior to raising a grievance at this informal level.

If the employee is not satisfied with the result of the informal process they can take the matter up with the Parish Clerk, in writing, stating the nature of the grievance. This should be done within **10 working days**.

The Parish Clerk will arrange a meeting with the employee to discuss the grievance as soon as possible and normally within **10 working days**. If, having listened to the employees submission the Parish Clerk hearing the grievance determines that further investigation is required the meeting will be adjourned for a period not to exceed **10 working days** during which time the Parish Clerk will conduct any necessary research, including, if appropriate, liaising with other parties.

It is not expected that other parties would attend the reconvened hearing. However, if it is determined by the Parish Clerk that their contributions would facilitate consideration of the grievance they will be asked to make themselves available, in order that they may respond to any matters raised by the aggrieved individual during the course of the hearing.

A formal written response to the grievance should be issued within 5 working days of either the initial or subsequent grievance hearing as appropriate.

If the employee is still aggrieved there is a right of appeal to three members of the Staffing Committee. The notice of appeal should be submitted in writing within **10 working days** of receipt of the formal written response issued by the Parish Clerk. The Appeal Panel shall consider the appeal within **20 working days** of receipt of the written appeal.

There is no further right of appeal.

An individual raising a formal grievance may be accompanied throughout the process by a trade union representative or colleague of their choice and reasonable preparation for the hearing will be allowed.

If the grievance relates directly to the action or omission of the Parish Clerk the grievance should be submitted in writing directly to the Chair of the Staffing Committee who will investigate and respond to the grievance as outlined above.