



GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

Aldbourn Parish Council is committed to ensuring that any grievances or disciplinary matters are handled in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner. These procedures align with the ACAS Code of Practice and relevant employment laws to promote a just resolution of workplace issues.

These procedures apply to all employees of the Parish Council. The aim is to facilitate a prompt, fair, and effective resolution to employment concerns while ensuring that appropriate actions are taken in cases of misconduct.

All procedures will be handled confidentially and impartially, with employees having the right to representation at all formal stages. If it is not possible for the Parish Clerk, Chair or Vice Chair to deal with the matter, the Council will formally appoint at least three members at a council meeting to consider the matter. Members connected with the grievance or disciplinary matter in any way will not be permitted to be selected.

2. Grievance Procedures

2.1 Informal Resolution

Employees are encouraged to first raise grievances informally with the Parish Clerk, Chair or Vice Chair. Most concerns can be resolved at this stage through open discussion.

2.2 Formal Grievance Procedure

If an informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, employees may submit a formal grievance in writing to the Parish Council. The procedure is as follows:

1. The employee submits a written grievance to the Parish Clerk, Chair or Vice Chair.
2. A meeting is arranged within 10 working days to discuss the issue.
3. The employee may be accompanied by a colleague, family member, or trade union representative.
4. A written decision will be provided within 5 working days.
5. If dissatisfied, the employee may appeal the decision.

2.3 Appeals

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within 5 working days of receiving the grievance outcome.
- The appeal will be reviewed by council members not involved in the original decision.
- A final decision will be communicated in writing within 10 working days.

Mediation may be offered at any stage to facilitate resolution.

3. Disciplinary Procedures

3.1 Purpose

This procedure ensures fair and consistent handling of disciplinary matters, focusing on improving conduct and performance rather than punishment.

3.2 Principles

- Investigations will be thorough before any action is taken.
- Employees will be informed in writing of any allegations.
- Employees will have the opportunity to state their case before a decision is made.
- Employees may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at any meeting.
- No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline unless it constitutes gross misconduct.
- Employees have the right to appeal any disciplinary action.

3.3 Informal Discussions

Before any formal disciplinary action, an informal discussion may be held to address minor concerns and encourage improvement.

3.4 Formal Disciplinary Process

If informal discussions do not resolve the issue or the matter is more serious, the following steps will be taken:

1. Investigation: A fact-finding process will be conducted to establish the details of the alleged misconduct.
2. Hearing Notice: The employee will receive a written notice of the hearing, outlining allegations and evidence.
3. Disciplinary Hearing: A meeting will be held where the employee can present their case.
4. Decision: A written outcome will be provided within 5 working days.
5. Right to Appeal: Employees can appeal against the decision.

3.5 Disciplinary Actions

Depending on the severity of the case, disciplinary actions may include:

- First Written Warning - Issued for minor misconduct, valid for 6 months.
- Final Written Warning - Issued for repeated or more serious misconduct, valid for 12 months.
- Dismissal - Only in cases of gross misconduct or continued failure to improve.

3.6 Gross Misconduct

Serious breaches that may result in summary dismissal (without notice) include, but are not limited to:

- Theft, fraud, or dishonesty.
- Physical violence or abusive behaviour.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances at work.
- Gross insubordination or serious breach of council policies.

3.7 Suspension

If an allegation of gross misconduct is made, an employee may be suspended on full pay while an investigation is carried out. Suspension is not a disciplinary action but a precautionary measure.

3.8 Appeals

- Appeals must be submitted within 5 working days of the disciplinary decision.
- The appeal will be considered by independent council members.
- A final decision will be communicated in writing within 10 working days.

4. Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in response to legislative changes to ensure continued compliance with employment law and best practices.

Adopted on: Wednesday, 5 March 2025 - Item 180/25

Next Review Date: March 2028