

## **Ferndown Town Council Grievance Procedures**

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### 1. Introduction

1.1 This procedure applies to all employees of Ferndown Town Council (Council).

1.2 The objectives of the procedure are: -

- to foster good relationships between Council and its employees by discouraging the harbouring of grievances;
- to settle grievances as near as possible to their point of origin;
- to ensure the council treats grievances seriously and resolves them as quickly as possible, and
- to ensure that employees are treated fairly and consistently throughout the Council.

1.3 Matters excluded from this procedure are as follows: -

- appeals against salary or gradings;
- appeals against disciplinary actions;
- income tax, national insurance matters, rates of pay collectively agreed at the national or local level;
- rules of pension schemes; and
- a grievance about a matter over which Council has no control.

### 2. Informal grievance procedure

2.1 In the interests of maintaining good working relations the employee is encouraged to first discuss any grievance with the Town Clerk with a view to resolving the matter informally if appropriate. If the employee feels that this is not appropriate or he or she wishes to pursue a formal grievance they should follow the procedure detailed below.

### 3. Formal grievance procedure

3.1 The employee must set out his/her grievance to the Town Clerk.

3.2 Once the Personnel Committee has had a reasonable opportunity to consider its response to the information provided in the Statement of Grievance the employee will be invited to attend a grievance meeting to discuss the matter.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.

Grievance meetings will normally be convened with 14 days of the Personnel Committee receiving the Statement of Grievance.

The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance meeting by a fellow employee or by a Trade Union representative.

If the meeting is inconvenient for either the employee or his or her companion, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

3.3 A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to afford the employee/Town Clerk time to consider the decision.

3.4 After the meeting the employee will be informed of the Personnel Committee's decision within 5 working days. The meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The Personnel Committee's decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

3.5 If the employee wishes to appeal against the Personnel Committee's decision he or she must inform the Committee within 5 working days of receiving the decision.

3.6 If the employee notifies the Committee that they wish to appeal, the employee will be invited to attend a grievance appeal meeting before the Committee. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that meeting. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance appeal meeting by a fellow employee or by a Trade Union representative.

3.7 A grievance appeal meeting will normally be convened within 7 working days of the Committee receiving notice that the employee wishes to appeal pursuant to 3.5. above. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the employee or his or her companion, the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

3.8 After the grievance appeal meeting the employee will be informed of the Committee's final decision within 5 working days. The meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The Committee's decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

#### 4. Grievance procedure for ex-employees

4.1 If an ex-employee wishes to raise a grievance, he or she must set out their grievance and the basis for that grievance in writing and provide a copy to the Chairman of the Personnel Committee.

4.2 Following receipt of a statement of grievance pursuant to 4.1. above, the Committee will either write to the ex-employee inviting him or her to attend a meeting to discuss the

grievance, or to ask for the ex-employee's agreement to the Committee responding to the grievance in writing.

4.2.1 If the ex-employee does not agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence within 7 working days of the Committee writing to them pursuant to 4.2. above steps 3.1. to 3.4. of the standard council grievance procedure will be followed. The meeting will be conducted by the Committee.

4.2.2 If the ex-employee does agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence, the Committee will consider his or her grievance and will respond to the ex-employee in writing within 14 days of the receipt of such confirmation setting out the basis for the Committee's decision.

## 5. General procedure information

5.1 Grievances raised under the standard council grievance procedure will normally be investigated, and any meetings to discuss the grievance conducted the Town Clerk.

5.2 If an employee's grievance cannot be resolved by the Council's Personnel Committee. The said Personnel Committee and any grievance appeal meeting will be conducted by 3 members of the council who do not sit on the Personnel Committee.

5.3 Where a grievance is raised by the Town Clerk or all employee relations matters are dealt with by the Council's Personnel Committee all investigations and any grievance meeting will be conducted by the said Committee. Any grievance appeal meeting will be conducted by 3 members of the council who do not sit on the Personnel Committee.

5.4 A copy of the Statement of Grievance, a note of the decision taken at the first stage of the procedure, any notice of appeal and appeal decision will be placed on the employee's/ex-employees personnel file, together with any notes or evidence taken or compiled during the course of the procedure.

5.5 Note - complaints about the conduct of councillors are handled by Dorset Council (case law R (Harvey) v Ledbury Town Council 2018, under the standards procedures).

## **CURRENT POLICY (only in Employees Handbook)**

The Town Council / Charity recognise that from time to time employees may wish to seek redress for grievances relating to their employment. In this respect, the Council's / Charity's policy is to encourage free communication between employees and their managers to

ensure that questions and problems arising during the course of employment can be aired and , where possible, resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

## PROCEDURE.

1. The following procedure does not apply to matters appropriately dealt with under the disciplinary policies which are outlined elsewhere in the Councils/ Charity's Policies and Procedures documentation.
2. Where an officer is aggrieved on any matter, including grading issues, he should discuss the issue initially with his / her appropriate Line Manager.
3. The Line Manager should reply orally to the grievance as soon as possible, normally within 10 working days.
4. If the officer is not satisfied with the reply the grievance should be set down in writing and sent to the Town Clerk / Administrator, who shall arrange a meeting within 10 working days at which the officer may, if he / she wishes, be accompanied by a trade union representative or some other person of his / her choice.
5. The Town Clerk / Administrator shall notify the officer of his decision in writing as soon as possible and in any event within 5 working days.
6. The matter shall end at the Town Clerk / Administrator level except where paragraphs 7 to 8 below apply.
7. If either of the parties believes that an important issue of principle arises and the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved by stage 6, the officer has the right to take his/her grievance either directly or through his / her representative organisation to the Council / Charity.
8. The Town Council / Charity will appoint a separate Committee to investigate the matter and make such recommendations as they consider appropriate to deal with the grievance.

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