**North Luffenham Parish**

**Grievance Policy.**

**Introduction and Scope**

The aim of this policy is to ensure a fair, transparent, and consistent approach to the handling of workplace grievances and outlines the informal and formal stages of raising a grievance.

Grievances may be concerned with a wide range of issues, including working environment or conditions, the opportunities that have been given for career development or the way in which an employee has been managed.

Complaints about any disciplinary action taken against an employee should be dealt with as an appeal under the disciplinary procedure.

Grievances raised while an employee is subject to disciplinary proceedings will usually be heard only when the disciplinary process has been completed. A decision will be made as to whether the disciplinary hearing can continue and in some circumstances the grievance hearing may be heard prior to a disciplinary depending on the individual situation. Where a grievance has bearing on the disciplinary proceedings, it can be raised as a relevant issue during those proceedings.

**General Principles**

All issues, grievances and complaints raised under this policy will be treated based on the following principles:

* All grievances should be dealt with promptly, handled sensitively and examined fairly and impartially.
* All grievances should be investigated.
* All parties involved in the grievance process should act in a professional and acceptable manner.
* All parties should endeavour to attend any meeting arranged; however, a written submission may be accepted in cases where this is not possible
* The employee has the right to appeal against the outcome of a grievance.
* The employee has the right to be accompanied by a fellow work colleague or trade union official at any grievance meeting or subsequent appeal.

Any grievance which is raised dishonestly or maliciously may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee raising the grievance, in accordance with the Council’s disciplinary procedure.

**Informal Resolution**

Wherever possible, employees should seek to raise concerns informally with their line manager, who will attempt to resolve the situation on an informal basis. If an employee feels unable to approach their Council Chair directly, they can approach any other member of the Council.

**Formal Grievance**

If the matter cannot be resolved informally or where the concern is of a more serious nature, which is not suitable for informal resolution, a formal grievance should be submitted by the employee in writing, setting out in as much detail as possible the nature of their complaint, what and who it relates to, and the outcome they are seeking. A written grievance should be sent to the employee’s immediate line manager, however, if they feel unable to approach the Council Chair directly then the grievance should be submitted to the next level or a member of the Council.

On receipt of the written grievance a meeting will be arranged with the employee to discuss the grievance. Further investigatory action may be required after this initial meeting takes place. Following the investigation, the Chair/Councillor will carefully consider the evidence and decide whether the grievance is justified and what action should be taken. A letter confirming the outcome and detailing the right of appeal will be provided to the employee.

Where the outcome relates to, or affects another employee, for example, another employee will be subject to disciplinary action, meeting or any resulting sanction information would not be provided in the outcome to the employee who raised the initial grievance.

**Grievance Resolution**

Appeal If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of the grievance meeting, they should submit an appeal in writing clearly stating the grounds of appeal. The appeal should be submitted to the Council within 5 working days of receiving the outcome from the grievance meeting.

A meeting will be arranged to consider the grounds of appeal that have been put forward and to assess whether or not the conclusion reached in the original grievance hearing was appropriate. The appeal is not a rehearing of the original grievance, but rather a consideration of the specific areas with which the employee is dissatisfied in relation to the original grievance. The Councillor conducting the appeal may therefore confine discussion to those specific areas rather than reconsider the whole matter afresh. Following the appeal meeting, a letter confirming the outcome of the hearing will be provided to the employee. The outcome of this meeting will be final.

**Modified Grievance** **Procedure**

Employees who have left the employment of the council may also raise a grievance, this is known as the modified grievance procedure and applies in cases where the employee is no longer employed by the Company and:

* they were not aware of the grievance before the employment ended, or they were aware of the grievance, but the standard grievance procedure was not started or was not completed before the last day of employment The procedure at this stage will take place as follows:
* the employee must put their grievance in writing and send a copy to the Chair or nominated Councillor.
* a thorough investigation will take place
* the Chair/Councillor will set out their response in writing and a copy will be sent to the employee

The length of time which has passed may inevitably affect the Council ability to conduct an investigation into part or all of a grievance, therefore, in any cases where it is no longer reasonably practical to do so the employee will be informed of this in writing. There is no right to appeal under the Modified Procedure.