

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL



Chairman – Mr F Smethers

Clerk – S Willis

<http://www.harpole-pc.gov.uk>

E-mail: clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk

Members of the committee (Cllrs Smethers, Roberts, Gardner, Hancy, Madle, Starmer, Wallace) are summoned to attend a Meeting of the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee to be held at the Methodist Chapel, School Lane Harpole on **Monday 1st September 2025 at 7.00 pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Signed: *S Willis*

Clerk & Proper Officer to Harpole Parish Council

Date: 26th August 2025

Members of the press and public are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

110/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence.

111/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

To receive Declarations of Interest from Councillors

112/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public are invited to address the Committee.

113/25 MINUTES

To receive and approve the minutes of the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee 2nd June 2025

114/25 PRESENTATION FROM ROSCONN GROUP

To receive presentation from Rosconn Group with regards to potential planning application at top of Road Hill

115/25 NORTHAMPTON WEST SUSTAINABLE EXTENSION

- a) To consider transfer of open space and if the council would consider taking it early
- b) To consider and approve response to planning application [2025/2863/FPATH](#) – Diversion of Bridleway PROW KP01 – Land North of Harpole off Roman Road
- c) To consider updates to [2024/0672/MAO](#) Land North West Of, Upper High Street
- d) To receive updates for information only

116/25 NORWOOD FARM SUSTAINABLE EXTENSION

- a) To consider and approve dimming profile for lighting on phases 1 and 2b
- b) To consider and approve Street names for Phases 2 and 1b
- c) To receive updates for information only

117/25 SPORTS PROVISION

- a) To receive updates for information only

118/25 CIL

- a) To consider listing and any projects to investigate further

119/25 FINANCE

- a) To consider grant application for Scarecrow Festival to cover insurance
- b) To consider request from Northampton Town Football Club Community Trust regarding Grants
- c) To consider request from Harpole Football Club for help with renovations to pavilion changing rooms

120/25 POLICIES

To consider and approve policies:

- a) Publication Scheme
- b) Complaints Procedure
- c) Disciplinary Procedure
- d) Grievance Procedure
- e) IT Policy

121/25 BOWLS CLUB LEASE

- a) To consider questions asked by Bowls Club solicitors and approve delegation to respond

122/25 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

To consider items to be added to the next agenda

DATE OF NEXT MEETING. - The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 3rd November 2025.



Chairman – Mr F Smethers

Clerk – Mrs S Willis

www.harpole-pc.gov.uk

E-mail: clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on 2nd June 2025, in the Methodist Chapel, School Lane at 7.00pm.

Present – Cllrs S Roberts (Chair), K Gardner, B Hancy, G Madle, F Smethers, D Starmer,
Also present – S Willis (Clerk), Cllr M Callaghan, Paul Thomas (Clerk to Harlestone PC and Harlestone Manor PC), Caroline Holgate (Cllr at Harlestone Manor PC) and Clement Nnadozie

Meeting Start: 7pm

39/25 TO ELECT CHAIRMAN FOR 2025/26

Cllrs Smethers and Roberts both received nominations. It was resolved that Cllr Roberts take the chair.

40/25 TO ELECT VICE CHAIRMAN FOR 2025/26

It was resolved that Cllr Smethers is Vice Chairman.

41/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Wallace.

42/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Cllrs Smethers and Starmer declared an interest as trustees of the playing field.

Cllr Smethers is on the payments list.

Cllr Hancy's daughter is Deputy manager at nursery for planning application in 46/25.

43/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No comments from the public.

44/25 MINUTES

Councillors **APPROVED** the minutes of the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee of 7th April 2025.

45/25 CO-OPTION OF NON-COUNCILLOR MEMBER

Clement Nnadozie had expressed an interest in joining the committee as an advisory member. It was resolved that he join as a non councillor, non voting member.

46/25 PLANNING

Planning application 2025/1914/FULL – Demolition of dilapidated garage. Siting of a new modular building to provide additional classroom space at the rear of Harpole Day Nursery, 47 Carrs Way was considered. There were no objections to the application but there was concern that increased capacity would increase parking issues which are already considered an issue at drop off and pick up times.

47/25 NORTHAMPTON WEST SUSTAINABLE EXTENSION

Next meeting with Bloor likely to be in July with a site visit. Many Harpole Councillors would like to attend but later in the day to make it easier for those that work. If this cannot be with main contact maybe this can be with someone else.

Plans for open space will be forwarded soon.

It was noted that travellers had accessed the site but the Police were quick to move on and Bloors have added a fence to prevent in future.

North Relief Road should be open June.

Barwoods proposal may go to committee in autumn. There is lots of reaction to comments made at first consultation.

48/25 NORWOOD FARM SUSTAINABLE EXTENSION

a) Lighting scheme for phases 1 and 2b were considered. It was thought that the scheme looked OK and would be adopted. Clerk to check specification matches current lights in Harpole and that they can be dimmed in early hours.

b) Vistry's third phase was approved at WNC planning committee last week.

49/25 DEVELOPMENT RELATED ROADWORKS

a) Sandy Lane is almost complete and safety checks have started. It is expected to be open mid June.

b) Davidsons have advised they will start work on the roundabout at the top of Road Hill. As this is largely offset works will be mostly within site without disruption to Nobottle Road until the autumn. Timings of this to be agreed with Highways.
S278 works for Sandy Lane now likely in September due to other highways works.

50/25 SPORTS PROVISION

a) Vistry had provided a specification of the proposed pavilion with technical details. An EGM is to be held to discuss council's options moving forward.

b) A valuation of the playing field is needed for the proposed transfer. It was proposed to accept the quotation of £2250 +VAT for a charity commission compliant survey.

c) Cllr Wallace recommended being a member of the Facilities scheme. This is part of due diligence to show to Charity commission. It was agreed to the years membership at £48.

d) No further updates.

51/25 CIL

List was reviewed and some amendments made. All councillors to give the items on the list a priority to help focus which projects to work on.

52/25 COMMUNICATIONS

It was proposed that the council hold councillor surgeries. Pros and cons were discussed.

There are various forms of communications that we use and these should be used better.

Councillors did not feel a surgery was needed.

It was agreed to have an introduction to the councillors in the next newsletter with councillors providing a photo and short biography so that members of the public know who they are.

Caroline Holgate and Cllr Callaghan leave.

53/25 COUNCIL DIRECTION

1 year work plan and 4 year business plan had been tabled. Some amendments were made. Councillors were offered to give other amendments before the next meeting.

54/25 CONTRACTS

Electric contract for the office is due to expire in July. Council had previously agreed to move to Tomato, however they are not taking on new accounts. It is now proposed to stay with British Gas on a new 3 year contract. This was agreed.

55/25 FINANCE

a) To approve payments for May and June

Supplier	Activity	Amount	VAT
Unity Bank	Bank Fees	9.90	-
Paul Thomas	Parish Maintenance	528.07	-
R&G Groundworks	Grass Cutting	1,694.40	252.40
Nickolls Landscaping	Flagpole maintenance	100.00	-
Northants CALC	Subscription & Internal Audit	1,335.65	90.60
Shield Maintenance	Bin emptying	91.00	15.17
Scribe	Account set up	658.80	109.80
Old School Hall	Room hire	120.00	-
Benn Security	Allotment Keys	127.80	21.30
British Gas	Office Electric	68.43	3.26
Parish Online	Website hosting	396.00	77.00
Northants CALC	Training	117.60	19.60
Resident	Key deposit return	12.00	-
Gigaclear	Broadband	36.00	6.00
Scribe	Subscription	118.80	19.80
Tomato Energy	Street light electric	412.55	68.76
Staff Costs	May Costs	4,017.05	-
Metrobank	Credit card payment	310.98	-
ID mobile	Phone	6.00	1.00
Tomato Energy	Street light electric	7.90	0.38
R&G Groundworks	Grass Cutting	973.20	162.20
Rialtas	Subscription	30.49	5.08
Rialtas	Subscription	33.83	5.64
Viking	Stationery	30.43	5.07
Wave	Water	241.45	-
British Gas	Office Electric	68.43	3.73
Old School Hall	Room hire	80.00	-
Harpole Bowls Club	Room hire	50.00	-
Nickolls Landscaping	Flagpole maintenance	100.00	-
Frank Smethers	Microsoft subscription	286.56	-
zephyr	Flagpole and installation	1,583.94	263.99
Northants CALC	Training	60.00	10.00
All Saints Church	Scaffolding and Security	2,470.80	-
Paul Thomas	Parish Maintenance	483.82	-

Scribe	Subscription	118.80	19.80
Shield Maintenance	Bin emptying	91.00	15.17
Methodist Chapel	Room hire	67.50	-
Staff Costs June	June Costs	TBA	

Income

Supplier	Activity	Amount
West Northants Council	CIL	122,026.09
Various	Allotment rent	94.00
Metrobank	interest	1.42
CCLA	interest	3,276.84

Payments approved.

- b) Defibrillator on Magnus Shoes was initially donated to the village by the Old School Hall. The Parish Council had been asked to purchase a new battery. It was proposed to do this. It was also resolved that the council would take on ongoing costs of the defibrillator.

56/25 GRANTS

Old School Hall had applied for £3000 towards purchase of anti-flood barrier door protection & replacement of close board fencing to eastern boundary. It was resolved to grant the request.

57/25 CORRESPONDENCE

The son of the chair of the former History group had asked the council if they would be interested in taking paperwork collected over the years. It was agreed to take the information and discuss the potential of a parish museum.

58/25 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

None at this time.

Meeting closed 9.05pm

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 1st September at 7pm

Signed


Date

2024/0672/MAO - Northampton West

From Melissa Keegan <melissa.keegan@davidsonsgroup.co.uk>

Date Thu 2025-08-07 10:32

To Sally Willis <clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk>

 2 attachments (5 MB)

7. Masterplan - n1974_005R.pdf; n1974_005T Masterplan.pdf;

Hi Sally,

I hope all is well?

As an update on the above hybrid planning application, we are targeting the September committee. We have had to make a slight adjustment to the masterplan following comments from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and just wanted to make you aware of this because a formal 14-day re-consultation (following submission) should be issued to you on Tuesday next week.

We have moved the SuDS pond in the north-western corner of the site to the south-western corner. We also took this opportunity to move the play area (LEAP) into a more central location. Not only does this mean that the LEAP will be delivered sooner, but it will no longer be in close proximity to the bridleway.

I have attached both the current (Rev R) and new (Rev T) masterplans for your information. The connection points through to Bloor have not changed, nor has the spine road or the 100-plot layout. This new masterplan achieves an increase in biodiversity net gain than was previously proposed.

We have contacted the British Horse Society also making them aware of this and that the proposed route of the bridleway, its width, and surface treatment has not changed as a result of this new pond location.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss anything.

Kind regards,

Mel

Melissa Keegan MRTPI

Senior Planning Manager – South Midlands



DD. 01604 435495

M. 07586 492924

melissa.keegan@davidsonsgroup.co.uk




Davidsons Homes South Midlands
Rickyard Barn, Blisworth Hill Farm,
Stoke Road, Blisworth, Northants.
NN73DB

RE: Norwood phase 1 and 2B

From Ian Shand <Ian.Shand@vistry.co.uk>
Date Fri 2025-07-04 13:16
To Sally Willis <clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk>

Hi Sally

We have already installed the street lighting to the below specification on Norwood Phase 1 and Phase 2B

	<p>Column - 6m Tubular Steel Galvanised with glass flake root protection Lantern - DW Windsor Kirium Pro Mini 16 x 3k LED with CLO enabled LED driver and 10kV surge protection, RAL 7046 Mid-Grey Polyester Powder Coat Finish & 7 pin NEMA socket. Mounting - Post top on 76mm spigot Tilt: 0 degrees Array - A1 CLO 300mA 2.04klm UMSUG Code - 42 0013 0000 100 Wattage = 13W Control - One part photocell 35/18 lux switching</p>
	<p>Column - 6m Tubular Steel Galvanised with glass flake root protection Lantern - DW Windsor Kirium Pro Mini 8 x 3k LED with CLO enabled LED driver and 10kV surge protection, RAL 7046 Mid-Grey Polyester Powder Coat Finish & 7 pin NEMA socket. Mounting - Post top on 76mm spigot Tilt: 0 degrees Array - A1 CLO 400mA 1.43klm UMSUG Code - 42 0009 0000 100 Wattage = 9W Control - One part photocell 35/18 lux switching</p>
	<p>Column - 6m Tubular Steel Galvanised with glass flake root protection Lantern - DW Windsor Kirium Pro Mini 8 x 3k LED with CLO enabled LED driver and 10kV surge protection, RAL 7046 Mid-Grey Polyester Powder Coat Finish & 7 pin NEMA socket. Mounting - Post top on 76mm spigot Tilt: 0 degrees Array - A1 CLO 250mA 0.87klm UMSUG Code - 42 0006 0000 100 Wattage = 6W Control - One part photocell 35/18 lux switching</p>

If you can provide the Dimming profile this can be pre-programmed into the LED driver.

We can provide a different specification on the next phase which will be Phase 2 & 1B which we hope to start on site in August

Any problems, please don't hesitate to contact me

Cheers



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

**Development Management
West Northamptonshire Council**

The Forum Moat Lane Towcester NN12 6AD

Email: streetnamingandnumbering@westnorthants.gov.uk

Web: www.westnorthants.gov.uk

Harpole Parish Office,
Larkhall Lane,
Harpole,
West Northamptonshire,
NN7 4DF

Our Ref: SN/2025/0104
Please ask for: Street Naming and Numbering
Telephone: 01604 526045
Email: streetnamingandnumbering@westnorthants.gov.uk
Date: 22 July 2025

Dear Parish Clerk,

**Street Naming Consultation
Land at Norwood Farm, Sandy Lane, Harpole**

We have received a request to name 13 new streets in Harpole.

We enclose a site layout plan for the above and you will see from our plan the developers have proposed the names shown for your consideration, the names have been subject to our preliminary checks, and we can proceed with the names chosen as they do not interfere with our naming policy. If you and your council are happy for the names chosen by the developer to be used, please advise within 30 days of this letter.

If you wish to proceed with names of your council's choosing, please can we receive your Council's suggestions for suitable street names for the roads shown at your earliest convenience; but no later than 30 days of this letter.

As part of the street naming process your ward councillors should be consulted on the names suggested by your council. To avoid a possible delay with the naming procedure, your council should ascertain the views of your ward councillors regarding the names suggested before advising our Council of the names.

It would be helpful if you could provide the origins of the names suggested.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gibrat".

Stephanie Gibrat
Assistant Director of Planning

STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING STREET NAME CONSULTATION

STREET NAME PLAN



STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING STREET NAME CONSULTATION

DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

Development: Approval of Reserved Matters (RM), appearance means of access, landscaping, layout and scale for Phase 2 and part of Phase 1B pursuant to hybrid planning permission S/2016/1324/EIA
Location: Land at Norwood Farm Sandy Lane Harpole
Planning Reference: 2024/5633/MAR

LOCATION PLAN

Scale: 1:6,500 @ A3





Harpole Parish Council Grants Policy

Harpole Parish Council Application for Grant/Donation for Voluntary Organisations (Local Government Act 1972, Section 137)

Please note that this application will not be considered unless it is accompanied by a copy of the latest set of annual accounts showing the organisations income, expenditure and level of balances. If the organisation does not prepare annual accounts, copies of the bank statements covering the previous six months must be enclosed.

	Description	Details
1.	Name of Organisation	Harpole Scarecrow Committee Charity
2.	Name, Address and Status of Contact	Kayleigh Faulkner 34 Manor Close Chair of Committee
3.	Telephone Number of Contact	01967453976,
4.	Is the Organisation a Registered Charity?	Yes: Please state Registered Charity Number: 1183475 No
5.	Amount of grant/donation requested Should your application be successful please complete your bank details below for electronic payment if appropriate: Bank Sort Code Number Bank Account Name Bank Account Number	£ 1000 . Harpole Scarecrow Committee 65554410 089299 .
6.	For what purpose or project is the grant/donation requested?	Insurance for the weekend event .
	Description	Details
7.	What will be the total cost of the above project?	£ 1000
8.	If the total cost of the project is more than the grant/donation, how will the residue be financed?	



Harpole Parish Council Grants Policy

9.	Have you applied for grant/donation for the same project to another organisation?	No
9.	If so, which organisation and how much?	
10.	Who will benefit from the project?	village charities + organisations
11.	Approximately how many of those who will benefit are parishioners?	

You may use a separate sheet of paper to submit any other information which you feel will support this application.

Signed Lucretia Date 21/6/25

Sally
Clark@Harpole-PC.gov.uk

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. This is the complaints procedure of Harpole Parish Council, hereinafter referred to as “the council”.
2. The council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from the council or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by the council, this complaints procedure sets out how you can complain to the council and how we will try to resolve your complaint.
3. This complaints procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
4. This complaints procedure does not apply to:
 - 4.1. Complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council’s disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 4.2. Complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are made under the Code of Conduct and will be referred to the Monitoring Officer.
5. The Council receives queries, problems and comments as part of its day to day functions and they should not all be regarded as complaints. These are routine and expected and are generally resolved quickly to the customer’s satisfaction. If someone is dissatisfied with the original service or response they receive and wish to take the matter further then the issue should be recognized as a complaint.
6. The appropriate time for influencing council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the council debates and votes on a matter. You can do this by writing to the clerk to the council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of council meetings. If you are unhappy with a council decision, you can raise your concerns with the council, but Standing Orders prevent the council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds and the special process set out in Standing Orders is followed.
7. You can make your complaint about the council’s procedures or administration to the clerk to the council. You must do this in writing and a form is provided below. Please return the form by e-mail if possible. The council’s contact details are set out below.
8. You should indicate in your complaint if you wish your complaint to be treated confidentially.
9. Wherever possible, the clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within seven calendar days.
10. If you do not wish to make your complaint to the clerk, you can make it directly to the chair of the council who will refer your complaint to the Complaints Committee. The Complaints Committee comprises, ex officio, of the chair, the vice chair, and the Internal Controls Councillor.

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

11. The clerk or the Complaints Committee (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the council. You may be invited to a meeting to make verbal representations and may bring someone with you when doing so.
12. The clerk or the chair will notify you within 21 calendar days of the outcome of your complaint and what action (if any) the council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed).
13. If your complaint has been investigated by the clerk and you are dissatisfied with the response, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by the Complaints Committee and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.
14. If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your complaint you may seek judicial review through the High Court (see <https://www.judiciary.uk> for details).
15. Please note that the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) does not extend to parish councils.

Contact details for complaints handling:	
Clerk's name:	Sally Willis
Clerk's telephone number:	07878 192095
Clerk's e-mail address:	clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk
Chair's name:	Frank Smethers
Chair's e-mail address:	Frank.smethers@harpole-pc.gov.uk
Council's correspondence address:	Larkhall Lane Harpole NN7 4DF

Date: 1st September 2025

Date for next review: 1st September 2027

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints Form

Your name:	
Your telephone number(s):	
Your email address:	
Your postal address:	
Do you wish your complaint to be treated confidentially?	
What your complaint is about (please provide as much detail as you can, and attach any supporting evidence or information):	
What harm, disadvantage, or loss have you suffered?	
What remedial action would you like the council to take?	
Any other comments:	

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

Introduction

We are committed to dealing with you fairly and impartially, and to making our service as accessible as possible. We recognise you may be frustrated and upset by what has happened in the past. We are independent and if we decide to investigate your complaint, we will take a fresh, impartial look at what happened. We aim to treat you with fairness and respect. We ask for and expect the same behaviour from you towards us. We wish to enjoy professional, courteous, respectful contact with all complainants, whatever the outcome of our work.

Unreasonable complainant conduct

We will not tolerate racist, sexist, homophobic or other discriminatory language, or offensive, threatening, aggressive or violent behaviour towards us. If you use such language or behaviour, we will ask you to stop doing so and may take other, proportionate action to protect the wellbeing of our staff and make sure we can keep working effectively. If your use of language is because of a medical condition, we will discuss with you any reasonable adjustments we need to make to how we work with you. However, some language and behaviours are always unacceptable, and we will always draw your attention to this and take appropriate action.

Please remember the person dealing with the complaint is using their time to best effect. This is much harder to do well if you make frequent, lengthy contacts and/or keep sending them the same information. This gets in the way of dealing with your complaint. Please note this also applies to contacting us after our decision on your complaint. We will not continue communicating with you on a closed complaint outside our review or service complaint procedures. Continued contact or attempts to make the same complaint again prevent us from carrying out our work effectively. When necessary, we will restrict access to our service if you keep behaving unreasonably.

Warnings

In most instances if we consider your behaviour is unreasonable, we will explain why and ask you to change it. We will also warn you that, if the behaviour continues, we may take action to restrict your contact with us. Where your behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of our staff, we may report the matter to the police or consider taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give you prior warning.

Restricting access to the council

A manager will decide whether the circumstances require any restriction of access. They will record the reason for their decision and explain it to you. They will state how long any restriction will apply for before we reconsider. The sort of restrictions imposed could include:

- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and limited times
- Limiting contacts to one form only (for example, a maximum of one letter or email from you a week)
- Requiring you to only contact us using one named person
- Requiring you to formally agree with us how you will behave in future before we continue working on your complaint and/or
- Using an independent advocate to work with you on our investigation into your complaint

After six months we will review whether any restrictions we imposed are still necessary and should remain.

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Ending access

It is our decision whether or not to investigate your complaint. If you continue to behave unreasonably or ignore restrictions we have placed on access, we may decide to end our work on your complaint. In exceptional circumstances we may do so without warning. For example, if you use racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory language we may decide to take action without prior warning. We will write to explain the action we have taken.

New complaints

If we have restricted our contact with you and you make a new complaint, we will decide whether or not to continue with any restrictions we put in place for the earlier complaint.

Harpole Parish Council
1st September 2025

Information available from Harpole Parish Council under the model publication scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained
<p>Class1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts) This will be current information only</p>	<p>(hard copy and/or website) Website</p>
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Website
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website
Staffing structure	Website
<p>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)</p>	<p>(hard copy and/or website) Website</p>
Annual return form and report by auditor	Website
Finalised budget	Website
Precept	Website (for Band D)
Borrowing Approval letter	hard copy available
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website
Grants given and received	Website when info supplied
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	
Members' allowances and expenses	

Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)	
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	(hard copy or website)
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Website
Quality status	Website
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous council year as a minimum	(hard copy or website) Current Council
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website (not accompanying papers)
Minutes of meetings (as above) – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website
Reports presented to council meetings – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website
Responses to consultation papers	Website
Responses to planning applications	Website
Bye-laws	Website
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only	(hard copy or website)
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders	Website Website

Committee and sub-committee terms of reference	Website
Delegated authority in respect of officers	Website
Code of Conduct	Website where supplied
Policy statements	Website where appropriate
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:	Website where appropriate
Internal policies relating to the delivery of services	
Equality and diversity policy	
Health and safety policy	
Recruitment policies (including current vacancies)	
Policies and procedures for handling requests for information	
Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	
Information security policy	Website
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Website
Data protection policies	Website
Schedule of charges) for the publication of information)	
Class 6 – Lists and Registers	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)
Currently maintained lists and registers only	
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	
Assets Register	Website
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)	
Register of members' interests	Website
Register of gifts and hospitality	Website
Allotments	Website
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Website
Community centres and village halls	Website where information supplied
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Not Applicable
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Website
Bus shelters	Website

Markets	Website
Public conveniences	Not applicable
Agency agreements	
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Website in relation to allotment and cemetery charges.
Additional Information This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above	

Contact details:

Parish Clerk – Sally Willis clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 5p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost *
	Photocopying @10p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)
Other		

* the actual cost incurred by the public authority

Harpole Parish Council IT Policy

1. Introduction

Harpole parish council recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.

This policy outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email by council members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use Harpole parish council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Harpole parish council IT resources and email accounts are to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

4. Device and software usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Harpole parish council for work-related tasks.

Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Harpole parish council data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and secure data destruction methods should be used when necessary.

6. Network and internet usage

Harpole parish council's network and internet connections should be used responsibly and efficiently for official purposes. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by Harpole parish council are for official communication only. Emails should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be sent via email unless it is encrypted.

Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

Harpole parish council users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security.

9. Mobile devices and remote Work

Mobile devices provided by Harpole parish council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication. When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices as if they were in the office.

10. Email monitoring

Harpole parish council reserves the right to monitor email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

11. Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated IT point of contact for investigation and resolution. Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

13 Training and awareness

Harpole parish council will provide regular training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and councillors will receive regular training on email security and best practices.

14. Compliance and consequences

Breach of this IT and Email Policy may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further consequences as deemed appropriate.

15. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made to address emerging technology trends and security measures.

16. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact Sally Willis

All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Harpole parish council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Harpole parish council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

Date: 1st September 2025

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL'S DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Introduction

- 1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>).
- 2 It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf
- 3 The policy is designed to help Council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.
- 4 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 5 This policy confirms:
 - informal coaching and supervision will be considered, where appropriate, to improve conduct and / or attendance
 - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
 - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see ACAS "Performance Management" at <https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6608>
 - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
 - employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing
 - employees may be accompanied or represented by a companion – a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official - at any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case
 - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions
 - if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date

that is within 7 calendar days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date

- any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision. The appeal decision is final
- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure
- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include a written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- this procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it,
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the consent of affected parties

Examples of misconduct

6 Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct: The list is not exhaustive.

- unauthorised absence
- poor timekeeping
- misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
- inappropriate behaviour
- refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- breach of health and safety rules.

Examples of gross misconduct

- 7 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct: The list is not exhaustive
- bullying, discrimination and harassment
 - incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
 - violent behaviour
 - fraud or theft
 - gross negligence
 - gross insubordination
 - serious breaches of council policies and procedures e.g. the Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy and any policies regarding the use of information technology
 - serious and deliberate damage to property
 - use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
 - disclosure of confidential information.

Suspension

- 8 If allegations of gross misconduct or serious misconduct are made, the council may suspend the employee while further investigations are carried out. Suspension will be on full pay. Suspension does not imply any determination of guilt or innocence, as it is merely a measure to enable further investigation.
- 9 While on suspension, the employee is required to be available during normal hours of work in the event that the council needs to make contact. The employee must not contact or attempt to contact or influence anyone connected with the investigation in any way or to discuss this matter with any other employee or councillor.
- 10 The employee must not attend work. The council will make arrangements for the employee to access any information or documents required to respond to any allegations.

Examples of unsatisfactory work performance

- 11 The following list contains some examples of unsatisfactory work performance: The list is not exhaustive.
- inadequate application of management instructions/office procedures
 - inadequate IT skills
 - unsatisfactory management of staff
 - unsatisfactory communication skills.

The Procedure

- 12 Preliminary enquiries_ The council may make preliminary enquiries to establish the basic facts of what has happened in order to understand whether there may be a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure.
- 13 If the employee's manager believes there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the council may initiate a more detailed investigation undertaken to establish the facts of a situation or to establish the perspective of others who may have witnessed misconduct.
- 14 Informal Procedures. Where minor concerns about conduct become apparent, it is the manager's responsibility to raise this with the employee and clarify the improvements required. A file note will be made and kept by the manager. The informal discussions are not part of the formal disciplinary procedure. If the conduct fails to improve, or if further matters of conduct become apparent, the manager may decide to formalise the discussions and invite the employee to a first stage disciplinary hearing.

Disciplinary investigation

- 15 A formal disciplinary investigation may sometimes be required to establish the facts and whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- 16 If a formal disciplinary investigation is required, the Council's staffing committee will appoint an Investigator who will be responsible for undertaking a fact-finding exercise to collect all relevant information. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a councillor. If the staffing committee considers that there are no councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the Council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The staffing committee will inform the Investigator of the terms of reference of the investigation. The terms of reference should specify:
 - the allegations or events that the investigation is required to examine
 - whether a recommendation is required
 - how the findings should be presented. For example, an investigator will often be required to present the findings in the form of a written report
 - who the findings should be reported to and who to contact for further direction if unexpected issues arise or advice is needed.
- 17 The Investigator will be asked to submit their findings usually within 35 Calendar days of appointment where possible. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be necessary and the Council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage - the disciplinary meeting (see paragraph 22).
- 18 The staffing committee will notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and details of the person undertaking the investigation. The employee may be asked to meet an investigator as part of the disciplinary investigation. The employee will be given sufficient notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that they have

reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when they meet with the Investigator, they will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.

- 19 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official at any investigatory meeting.
- 20 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 21 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. Their role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the staffing committee whether or not disciplinary action should be considered under the policy.
- 22 The Investigator's report will contain their recommendations and the findings on which they were based. They will recommend either:
 - the employee has no case to answer and there should be no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure
 - the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or
 - the employee has a case to answer and a formal hearing should be convened under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 23 The Investigator will submit the report to the staffing committee which will decide whether further action will be taken.
- 24 If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

The disciplinary meeting

- 25 If the staffing committee decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a staffing sub-committee of 3 councillors, to formally hear the allegations. The staffing sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee.
- 26 No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The sub-committee's letter will confirm the following:
 - the names of its Chairman and other two members
 - details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
 - a copy of the information provided to the sub-committee which may include the investigation report, supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure

- the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing so that they has sufficient time to prepare for it
- that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least 2 working days before the meeting
- that the employee may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official

27 The purpose of the disciplinary meeting hearing is for the allegations to be put to the employee and then for the employee to give their perspective. It will be conducted as follows:

- the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee and explain the arrangements for the hearing
- the Chairman will set out the allegations and invite the Investigator to present the findings of the investigation report (if there has been a previous investigation)
- the Chairman will invite the employee to present their account
- the employee (or the companion) will set out their case and present evidence (including any witnesses and/or witness statements)
- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness
- the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up

28 The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within 7 calendar days of the meeting. The Chairman will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision.

29 The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be further investigated by the sub-committee.

Disciplinary action

30 If the sub-committee decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

First written warning

31 If the employee's conduct has fallen beneath acceptable standards, a first written warning will be issued. A first written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Final written warning

- 32 If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve sufficiently during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:
- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
 - that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
 - the employee's right of appeal
 - that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Dismissal

- 33 The Council may dismiss:
- for gross misconduct
 - if there is no improvement within the specified time period, in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning
 - if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.
- 34 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, they will receive a written statement of the reasons for their dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of their right of appeal. If the sub-committee decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action taken as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless it is modified as a result of an appeal.

The appeal

- 35 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. Their written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within 7 calendar days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.
- 36 The grounds for appeal include;
- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
 - the sub-committee's disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence
 - the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
 - new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.
- 37 Where possible, the appeal will be heard by a panel of 3 members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of 3 members

of the Council who may include members of the staff committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

- 38 The employee will be notified, in writing, within 14 calendar days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that they may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
- 39 At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the disciplinary decision
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
- 40 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.
- 41 The Chairman will inform the employee that they will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing.
- 42 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the disciplinary decision of the staffing committee, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 43 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 44 The appeal panel's decision is final.

Date of policy: September 2025

Approving committee: Strategy, Finance and Policy

Date of committee meeting: 1st September 2025

Policy version reference: 1

Policy effective from: 1st September 2025

Date for next review: 1st September 2027

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL'S GRIEVANCE POLICY

Introduction

1. This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>).
2. It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. (https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf).
3. It also takes into account relevant law affecting Councils.
4. It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
5. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.
6. This policy confirms:
 - employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a companion who can be a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. This includes any meeting held with them to hear about, gather facts about, discuss, consider or resolve their grievance. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for their grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining their case.
 - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
 - any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council
 - an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about their grievance. The appeal decision is final
 - information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure
- if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if they raised the grievance in good faith
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the consent of affected parties
- Employees can only use all stages of the grievance procedure if the complaint is not a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. Employees can use the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure (paragraph 4) to deal with all grievance issues, including a complaint about a councillor. Employees cannot use the formal stages of the council's grievance procedure for a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. If the complaint about the councillor is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the monitoring officer of [[] council] who will inform the employee whether or not the complaint can be dealt with under the code of conduct. If it does not concern the code of conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 5)
- the Council may engage external investigators, grievance or appeal panels for the purposes of the process.
- If the grievance is a code of conduct complaint against a councillor, the employee cannot proceed with it beyond the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure. However, whatever the complaint, the council has a duty of care to its employees. It must take all reasonable steps to ensure employees have a safe working environment, for example by undertaking risk assessments, by ensuring staff and councillors are properly trained and by protecting staff from bullying, harassment and all forms of discrimination
- If an employee considers that the grievance concerns their safety within the working environment, whether or not it also concerns a complaint against a councillor, the employee should raise these safety concerns with their line manager at the informal stage of the grievance procedure. The council will consider whether it should take further action in this matter in accordance with any of its employment policies (for example its health and safety policy or its dignity at work policy) and in accordance with the code of conduct regime

Informal grievance procedure

7. The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with their manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with their manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the Chairman of the staffing committee or, if appropriate, another member of the staffing committee. If the employee's complaint is about a councillor, it may be

appropriate to involve that councillor at the informal stage. This will require both the employee's and the councillor's consent.

Formal grievance procedure

8. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally and the employee's complaint is not one that should be dealt with as a code of conduct complaint (see above), the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the staffing committee.
9. The staffing committee will appoint a sub-committee of 3 members to hear the grievance in the event that the grievance is raised by or relates to the Clerk. Where the grievance is not raised by or relates to the Clerk, the staffing committee may appoint the Clerk to hear the Grievance. The sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.

Investigation

10. If the sub-committee decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint an investigator to carry out an investigation before the grievance meeting to establish the facts of the case. The investigator may be an appropriate employee, Councillor or external party. The investigation may include interviews (e.g. the employee submitting the grievance, other employees, councillors or members of the public).
11. The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the sub-committee.

Notification

12. Within 14 calendar days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance (this may be longer if there is an investigation), the employee will normally be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The written notification will include the following:
 - the names of its Chairman and other members
 - the date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will normally be within 35 calendar days of when the Council received the grievance
 - the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official
 - a copy of the Council's grievance policy
 - confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend (or submit witness statements) on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of their witnesses as soon as possible before the meeting
 - confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least two days' notice
 - findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation
 - an invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

The grievance meeting

13. At the grievance meeting:
 - the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee
 - the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence
 - the Chairman will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action does they wants the Council to take
 - any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness
 - the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
 - a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.
14. The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision, in writing, usually within 7 calendar days of the meeting though may be longer e.g. where further investigations are required. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take and of the employee's right to appeal.

The appeal

15. If an employee decides that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the sub-committee, they may submit a written appeal to the staffing committee. An appeal must be received by the Council within 7 calendar days of the employee receiving the sub-committee's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.
16. Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:
 - a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
 - the decision was not supported by the evidence
 - the action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate
 - new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.
17. The appeal will be heard by a panel of 3 members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three Council members who may include members of the staffing committee. The Council may engage external parties if there are insufficient councillors to form the panel. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.
18. The employee will be notified, in writing, usually within 14 calendar days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will normally take place within 35 calendar days of the Council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that they may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
19. At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee

- explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the staffing sub-committee
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
20. The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
 21. The Chairman will inform the employee that they will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, and when they are likely to receive the letter. This may be within 14 calendar days of the appeal meeting however will be longer where further investigations are required.
 22. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the staffing committee or substitute its own decision.
 23. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

Date of policy: 1st September 2025

Approving committee: Strategy, Finance and Policy

Date of committee meeting: 1st September 2025

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