PORINGLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Poringland Community Centre, Overtons Way, Poringland, Norfolk, NR14 7WB
Tel: 01508 492182 Email: clerk@poringland-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.poringlandparishcouncil.gov.uk

Grievance Policy

Policy Reference	PPC2
Version Number	3
Associated Documents	Code of Conduct Health and Safety Policy Training and Development Policy Dignity at Work Policy Worker Protection Policy
Last Review Date	February 2025
Frequency of Review	Annually
Approved by	Full Council
Date for Next Review	February 2026

This is a non-contractual policy that does not require approval from employees before changes are made. Staff will remain bound by amended non-contractual policies.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Poringland Parish Council aims to ensure that any employee with a grievance or a complaint relating to their employment with the Council, can have the issue raised, and where possible resolved, quickly, efficiently and fairly. The grievance procedure should not be used to lodge appeals against disciplinary sanctions.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

In the event of a grievance, the purpose of the policy is to:

- allow any employee to use the procedure, doing so freely and without prejudice to their position in the Council;
- 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, fairly and to the satisfaction of all concerned;
- try to resolve complaints/grievances as close as possible to their point of origin, with minimal disruption to the individuals involved, colleagues, and the Council.

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

Any grievance arising during employment should first be discussed with the employee's immediate manager. It is hoped that the majority of grievances can be resolved at this stage.

STAGE 1 – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GRIEVANCE, INVESTIGATION AND MEETING

If the matter cannot be resolved through informal discussions, the grievance should be put in writing to the employee's immediate manager. The employee will be entitled to have a meeting with the manager to discuss the grievance.

On receipt of a grievance the manager will acknowledge the grievance, conduct an investigation (or if more appropriate appoint an investigator who should be independent of the decision-making for e.g. an External HR Advisor). This will usually involve meeting with the employee concerned, and may include interviews with other employees, councillors, volunteers in order to reach a conclusion, and respond in writing to the employee of the decision made, with the reasons given. Wherever possible this process will not take more than ten working days from the date of receipt of the original grievance. Should a response look to take longer than ten working days, the employee will be informed at the earliest opportunity of the reason and the revised date/timeline.

If the employee is dissatisfied with the conclusion they may appeal in writing within three working days to the Chairman of the HR Advisory Committee.

STAGE 2 – APPEAL

The written appeal must detail the grounds for the appeal, and the management response to date. On receipt of a grievance the Chairman of the HR Advisory Group will acknowledge the appeal, conduct an investigation which will usually involve meeting with the employee concerned, reach a conclusion, and respond in writing to the employee of the decision made, with the reasons given. Wherever possible this process will not take more than ten working days from the date of receipt of the appeal. The Chairman's or their authorised deputy's decision is final. Should a response look to take longer than ten working days, the employee will be informed at the earliest opportunity of the reason and the revised date/timeline.

MEETINGS

Meetings will take place at a time and location that is reasonable for all parties. The employee must make all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.

Meetings will be conducted in a manner that enables both employer and employee to explain their cases, ask and answer questions, and where necessary present relevant evidence.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the procedure for disabled employees. Any employee who experiences difficulties with the procedure for any reason should seek assistance from the Chair of the Parish Council.

Employees have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or representative (normally internal to the Council) at all stages of the procedure, and are expected to inform the employer in advance if a companion will be attending.

The employee's chosen companion has the right to address the hearing to put forward the employee's case, sum up the case and respond on the employee's behalf to any view expressed at the hearing. The companion may also confer with the employee during the hearing. However, the Council will not permit the companion to answer questions on behalf of the employee, or to address the hearing where the employee indicates that he/she does not wish this.

The Council reserves the right to engage an independent equivalent to conduct any of the stages above, where management are not able to do so for any reason.

If a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith.

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.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Proceedings in grievance interviews or meetings and appeal interviews or meetings shall remain strictly confidential.

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. The Council should refer to its Data Protection Policy and GDPR monitoring requirements before a decision is made to record.

Appendix 1 – Raising a grievance (employees template)

Personal Address

Date

Dear (name of employer/line manager)

I have a (problem with/complaint about) <<<add details here>>>

I have evidence in the form of: <<<add details here/attach as appropriate>>>

I would be grateful if you could let me know when I can meet you to talk about my grievance.

Kind regards,

<<<Employee name???

Appendix 2 – Grievance acknowledgement letter template for employer/investigator
NB use headed paper

Date

Dear <<<employee's name>>>

Grievance Ref: <<<add reference>>>

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your grievance raised <<<date>>> regarding <<<add the grievance here>>>

I am sorry that you have felt the need to raise this grievance and that we were not able to alleviate your concerns at a more informal level.

Please be assured that I will conduct a further investigation into the issue which will involve interviewing you, re-examining the information you have provided and potentially speaking with other colleagues, councillors and volunteers as appropriate.

OR

Please be assured that I have appointed <<<<add name>>> as investigator and he/she will be conducting further investigations into the issue which will involve interviewing you, examining the information you have provided and potentially speaking with other colleagues, councillors and volunteers as appropriate. You can contact <<<<add name>>> by telephone on <<<add number>>> or by email at <<<add email>>> should you have any queries in the interim.

All elements of this process will remain strictly confidential.

Where possible, I will aim to have a response to you in no more than ten working days from the date of receipt of the original grievance. Should a response look to take longer than ten working days, I will contact you at the earliest opportunity regarding the reason and the revised date/timeline.

Yours sincerely,

<<<add name>>>
<<<add title>>>

Appendix 3 – Grievance response template (employer)
NB use headed paper

Date

Dear <<<employee's name>>>

Grievance Ref: <<<add reference>>>

I am writing further to your grievance raised <<<date>>> regarding <<<add the grievance here>>>

I am sorry that you have felt the need to raise this grievance and that we were not able to alleviate your concerns at a more informal level.

Please find below the outcome to your grievance below following my/the investigation which included the following elements:

<<<List here process taken e.g.>>>

- Interview(s) with employee
- Examination of evidence A
- Examination of evidence B
- Interviews with colleagues
- Etc

Outcome

Upheld/Not upheld

<<<enter explanation>>>

I am hopeful that this answers your concerns however, you do have the right to appeal the decision. Should you wish to appeal the decision, you have must do so within three working days and include clearly, your grounds for the appeal and Council response to date.

Yours sincerely,

<<<add name>>>
<<add title>>>

Appendix 4 – Appeal acknowledgement letter template for employer/investigator
NB use headed paper

Date

Dear <<<employee's name>>>

Grievance Ref: <<<add reference>>>

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your grievance appeal dated <<<enter date>> regarding <<<add the grievance here>>>

I am sorry that you have felt the need to appeal the outcome and that we were not able to alleviate your concerns at Stage One of the grievance process.

Please be assured that I will be investigating the issue which will involve interviewing you, examining the information you have provided and potentially speaking with other colleagues, councillors and volunteers as appropriate.

OR

Please be assured that I have appointed <<<<add name>>> as investigator and he/she will be looking into the issue which will involve interviewing you, examining the information you have provided and potentially speaking with other colleagues, councillors and volunteers as appropriate. You can contact <<<<add name>>> by telephone on <<<add number>>> or by email at <<<add email>>> should you have any queries in the interim.

All elements of this process will remain strictly confidential.

Where possible, I will aim to have a response to you in no more than ten working days from the date of receipt of the original grievance. Should a response look to take longer than ten working days, I will contact you at the earliest opportunity regarding the reason and the revised date/timeline.

Regarding the appeal, please be aware that the Chairman's or their authorised deputy's decision is final.

Yours sincerely,

<<<add name>>>
<<<add title>>>

Appendix 4 – Appeal response template (employer)
NB use headed paper

Date

Dear <<<employee's name>>>

Grievance Ref: <<<add reference>>>

I am writing further to your appeal raised <<<date>>> in reference to your grievance regarding <<<add the grievance here>>> and the decision made.

I am sorry that you have felt the need to raise this appeal and that we were not able to alleviate your concerns regarding your grievance.

Please find below the outcome to your appeal following my/the investigation which included the following elements:

<<<List here process taken e.g.>>>

- Interview(s) with employee
- Examination of evidence A
- Examination of evidence B
- Interviews with colleagues
- Etc

Outcome

Upheld/Not upheld

<<<enter explanation>>>

Please be aware that the Chairman's, or their authorised deputy's decision, is now final.

Yours sincerely,

<<<add name>>>
<<add title>>>