



## Grievance Procedure

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This procedure is designed to deal with any grievances you have at work with dignity. It is intended to ensure that:

- Issues at work are raised and dealt with promptly
- Issues at work are dealt with consistently by all parties
- Any necessary investigations are carried out to establish the facts
- Staff members have an opportunity to put their case before any decisions are made
- Staff members can be accompanied at any formal grievance meeting
- An appeal process exists

### 2. What is a Grievance?

2.1 Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints that staff raise with their employers. Examples of grievance issues are;

- Terms and conditions of employment
- Health and safety
- Working relationships with colleagues
- Bullying and harassment
- New working practices
- Working environment
- Agile working arrangements
- Organisational change
- Discrimination

### 3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 Where a staff member requires reasonable adjustments to attend and participate in a grievance meeting such as a disability or language barrier the member of staff may be accompanied by an appropriate person to provide support, in addition to their right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union official. The manager responsible for the grievance meetings at each stage will ensure all reasonable adjustments and special arrangements are made. This includes ensuring all information is in an accessible format that meeting venues are accessible to all parties and that any reasonable adjustments are made to enable fair and complete participation by all parties. Staff members are invited to advise their line manager and subsequent managers of their needs and requirements to ensure they are fulfilled throughout the process wherever possible. This right is also extended to the appeal meeting.

### 4. Raising the Grievance – Stage One

4.1 The first stage of resolving concerns is for the staff member to raise their grievance informally at a meeting with their line manager as soon as possible after the concern or problem arises.

- 4.2 If it is not possible to resolve the grievance in this way the staff member should raise the matter formally and within 10 working days of the stage one meeting with their line manager. Staff members must complete the form GRP2 and pass it to the senior manager above their line manager to action.

### **5. Resolving the Grievance – Stage Two**

- 5.1 Once a grievance has been raised formally, the manager will arrange for a formal meeting to be held within 10 working days.
- 5.2 At the meeting the member of staff will be invited to explain the grievance and how he or she thinks it should be resolved. So that the facts can be established, the meeting may include the manager who made the decision at informal stage one or the meeting may be adjourned for any investigation that is required.
- 5.3 After the meeting the manager will decide what action to take, if any. Wherever possible the manager will advise the staff member verbally, of any action at the end of the meeting. The manager will then formally tell the staff member the outcome of the grievance meeting in writing within 10 working days and will include details of how to appeal the decision.

### **6. Right to Appeal – Stage Three**

- 6.1 Staff members have the right to appeal against any decision taken at stage 2. Appeals should be made in writing on form GRP3 and sent to HR within 10 working days of the written confirmation of the outcome of the stage 2 meeting.
- 6.2 Appeals will be heard by a panel of councillors who have not previously been involved in the case.
- 6.3 Appeal decisions will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days of the stage 3 meeting.

### **7. Right to be Accompanied**

- 7.1 Employees have the right to be accompanied at both the formal meeting and the appeal meeting. For additional support to meet special needs and reasonable adjustments see paragraph 3 above entitled Equality and Diversity.
- 7.2 The companion may be a colleague employed by Lewes District Council, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union. A trade union representative who is not an employed official must have been certified by their union as being competent to accompany a member of staff.
- 7.3 Staff members may be accompanied when they have made a reasonable request. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances of each individual case, but as an example, it would not normally be reasonable for the companion to be someone who might prejudice the hearing.
- 7.4 Companions may address the hearing to put and sum up the staff members' views, respond to any views expressed and confer with the member of staff. Companions do not have the right to answer questions on the staff members' behalf, address the hearing if the member of staff does not wish it or prevent the managers from explaining their case.

**8. Relationship with Other Processes**

- 8.1 Where a member of staff raises a grievance during another process e.g. disciplinary, the grievance may be temporarily suspended in order to complete the disciplinary. It may be possible in some cases where grievances and disciplinary or performance cases are related that they can be dealt with together. If a grievance is raised which is not related to an existing process, they would normally be dealt with concurrently.
- 8.2 In the event that the chair of a grievance meeting finds that a grievance has been raised maliciously, the chair may recommend disciplinary action against the employee who raised the grievance.

**For further information please see the Grievance Procedure Guidance Notes and detailed outline of the Grievance Process: Stages 1-3 including Grievance forms GRP2 and GRP3 on [Infolink](#).**