



# **Eton Town Council**

## **Grievance Policy & Procedure**

### **1. Policy**

It is Council policy to encourage employees with grievances relating to their employment to use the procedure below to seek satisfactory solutions. The Council will try to resolve grievances as quickly as possible to the satisfaction of the individual concerned. Where this is not possible, every effort will be made to explain the reasons for the decision.

If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome, he/she will have the right to pursue their grievance to the next stage i.e. an appeal. It is hoped that most grievances will be resolved during the informal discussion stage wherever possible. Employees who have raised grievances will be treated fairly at all times before, during and after the grievance hearing(s).

Certain kinds of grievance cannot be dealt with under this procedure either because it is inappropriate or because there are already established agreements for the settlement of disputes in relation to them. Examples of these are: -

- Matters not relating to employment or matters over which the Council has no control
- Disciplinary matters
- Queries relating to statutory deductions from pay or rates of pay collectively agreed at the national or local level
- Matters relating to the pension scheme(s)

### **2. Related policies and procedures**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders and all other current policies.

### **3. Procedure**

#### **3.1 Informal stage**

If you have a grievance about your employment you should discuss it informally with The Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor will give a response within five working days. (See Notes 1–3 below for exceptions to this procedure.) In cases where the grievance is with the Deputy Mayor please approach Cllr Bishop.

#### **3.2 Stage 1**

- If you feel that the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily through informal discussions, you must put your grievance in writing to the Mayor setting out your grievance and any steps you have taken to resolve them so far.
- You should receive a reply within five working days of the complaint being received. The Mayor will form a Grievance Panel made up of three councillors and appoint one of them to chair it. They will meet, in the absence of the public and the press, to discuss your written grievance. They will meet within ten working days of the initial contact with the Mayor. You have the right to attend the hearing. As complainant, you will be expected to attend the hearing of the grievance panel. Witnesses will be invited to attend where it is deemed appropriate.
- You have the right to be accompanied by a colleague, lay or trade union official if you wish.
- The meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated or to give the members of the Grievance Panel time to consider the decision.
- The Chair of the Grievance Panel will issue a response in writing within five working days of the conclusion of the meeting wherever possible. You will be kept informed if there are any reasons for a delay in the decision being confirmed.

#### **3.3 Appeals**

If you feel the first stage of the grievance procedure has not dealt with your complaint to your satisfaction you have the right to appeal. Appeals should be made, in writing, to the Mayor or their Deputy. The Mayor will form an Appeals Panel made up of three councillors who have not been involved with the Grievance panel in this matter and appoint one of them to chair it. A meeting will be arranged with the Appeals panel in the absence of the public and the press, to discuss your appeal. The Panel will meet within five working days of the initial contact with the Mayor. The chair of the Appeal Panel will give a response within five working days of the meeting. The Appeal Panel's decision is final.

### **3.4 Investigations**

The Council is committed to ensuring that all grievances are investigated fully. This may involve carrying out interviews with the employee concerned and third parties such as witnesses, colleagues and managers, as well as analysing written records and information pertaining specifically to the grievance raised. The investigation report will be made available to all the parties concerned. The identity of witnesses will be kept confidential where necessary.

### **4. Notes**

1. The grievance procedure should not be used for appeals against disciplinary decisions, as that is the purpose of the disciplinary appeals procedure. If, however, you have a complaint against the behaviour of a Councillor during the course of a disciplinary case, you may raise it as a grievance with the Mayor or Deputy Mayor. The disciplinary procedure may be suspended for a short period, if necessary, until the grievance can be considered.
2. Employees will not suffer any detriment as a result of lodging a grievance.
3. The timescales listed above will be adhered to wherever possible. Where there are good reasons, e.g. the need for further investigation or the lack of availability of witnesses or companions, each party can request that the other agrees to an extension of the permitted timescale.
4. The Council reserves the right to seek assistance from external mediators at any stage in the grievance procedure.
5. A copy of the written grievance and written decisions made will be placed on the employee's/ex-employee's personnel file, together with any notes or evidence taken or compiled during the course of the procedure for as long as is deemed necessary.

### **5. Abuse of this policy**

Any abuse in the application of this policy e.g. if an employee grievance is found to be malicious or to have been made in bad faith, will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and may possibly result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including dismissal.

### **6. Alterations and amendments to this policy**

The Council reserves the right to revise the contents of this policy and procedure from time to time or withdraw it at its absolute discretion, in accordance with the needs of the council.

### **7. Additional information**

For further information, please contact The Mayor.

### **8. Amendment Record**

Version 1: Initial Issue