



# EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

## GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY (2026)

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### 1. Policy Statement

Earls Colne Parish Council is committed to fair, consistent and lawful treatment of employees. This policy follows the ACAS Code of Practice and is designed to be proportionate to a small council workforce.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees including office staff and grounds staff.

### 3. Key Principles

- Matters dealt with promptly and confidentially
- Right to be accompanied at formal meetings
- Fair and reasonable decisions based on evidence
- Right of appeal
- No dismissal for a first offence except gross misconduct

### 4. Grievance Procedure

#### 4.1 Informal Stage

Employees should raise concerns informally with the Clerk where possible.

#### 4.2 Formal Stage

- Grievance submitted in writing
- Meeting held without unreasonable delay (normally within 10 working days)
- Employee may be accompanied
- Written outcome provided

#### 4.3 Appeal

- Appeal submitted within 5 working days



- Appeal heard by different councillors
- Final decision confirmed in writing

## **5. Disciplinary Procedure**

### 5.1 Investigation

- Proportionate investigation undertaken
- Employee informed of allegations
- Evidence gathered before any hearing

### 5.2 Disciplinary Hearing

- Written notice of hearing
- Right to be accompanied
- Opportunity to respond to evidence
- Decision issued in writing

### 5.3 Sanctions

- First written warning (typically 6 months)
- Final written warning (typically 12 months)
- Dismissal
- Alternative sanctions where appropriate

### 5.4 Gross Misconduct

- Theft, fraud or dishonesty
- Violence or threatening behaviour
- Serious breach of health and safety
- Serious insubordination
- Serious misuse of council property or data



## 5.5 Suspension

Suspension may be used where necessary during investigation. It is a neutral act and not a disciplinary sanction.

## 6. Appeals

- Appeals must be submitted in writing
- Heard by councillors not previously involved
- Final decision issued in writing

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

- Clerk manages staff and investigations
- Personnel Committee conducts hearings
- Separate councillors from the Personnel Committee hear appeals

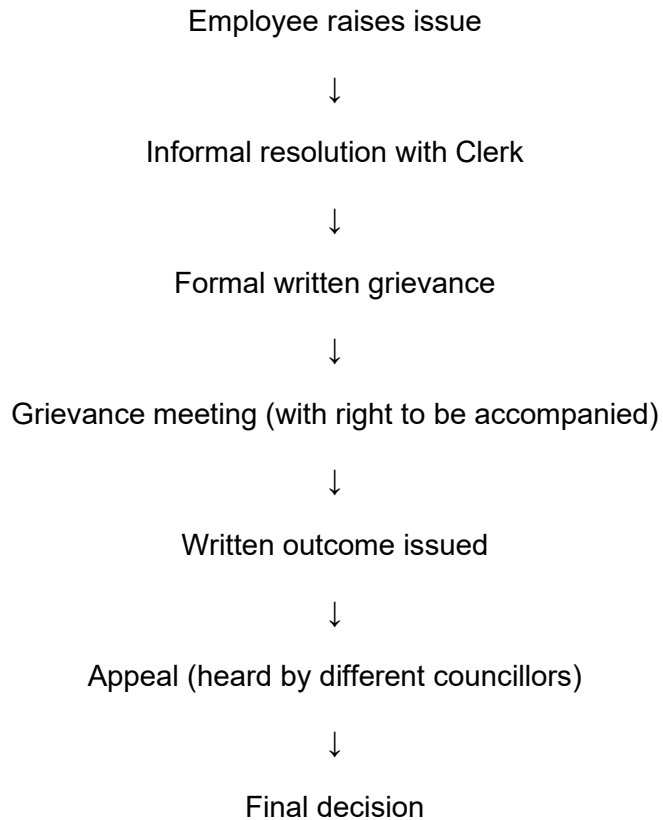
## 8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

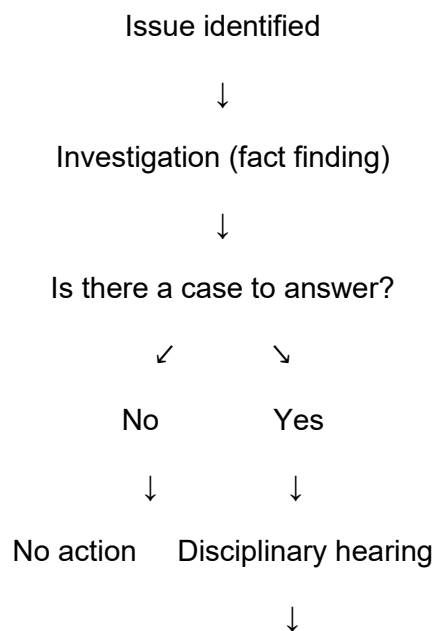


## Appendix A – Process Flowchart (Quick Guide for Councillors)

### GRIEVANCE PROCESS



### DISCIPLINARY PROCESS





Outcome decision



(Warning / Final Warning / Dismissal)



Appeal



Final decision