Grievance Procedure and Policy
Lytchett Matravers Parish Council

1. Introduction

Lytchett Matravers Parish Council is committed to fostering a positive and respectful working environment. This grievance policy provides a framework for the Parish Clerk and the Caretaker, as the Council's paid employees, to raise concerns and ensures they are handled fairly, consistently, and promptly.

This policy complies with the ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures.

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2. Scope

The grievance procedure applies to any concerns, problems, or complaints raised by the Parish Clerk or the Caretaker about:

- Working conditions.
- Health and safety.
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Relationships with Councillors, colleagues, or managers.
- Breaches of Council policies or procedures.

This procedure does not apply to complaints from members of the public, which are handled under the Council's complaints policy.

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3. Principles

The Council is committed to:

- Resolving grievances promptly and fairly.
- Ensuring grievances are dealt with confidentially.
- Allowing employees to be accompanied by a colleague, trade union representative, or another appropriate representative at formal stages.
- Maintaining open and constructive communication throughout the process.
- Avoiding victimization of employees for raising grievances.

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4. Procedure

4.1 Informal Resolution

Where possible, employees should first attempt to resolve their grievance informally by discussing the issue with their line manager. For the Parish Clerk, this will typically be the Chair of the Council, and for the Caretaker, this will typically be the Parish Clerk. Many issues can be resolved quickly through open communication.

If the grievance concerns the Chair of the Council, the Parish Clerk may raise it informally with the Vice-Chair or another designated Councillor. If the grievance concerns the Parish Clerk, the Caretaker may raise it informally with the Chair of the Council.

4.2 Formal Grievance

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, the employee may raise a formal grievance. This must be done in writing and include:

- A clear description of the grievance.
- Relevant facts, dates, and evidence.
- Any steps already taken to resolve the issue informally.

The written grievance should be submitted to the Chair of the Council. If the grievance concerns the Chair, it should be submitted to the Vice-Chair. If the grievance concerns the Parish Clerk, the Caretaker should submit it to the Chair.

4.3 Acknowledgment

The grievance will be acknowledged in writing within five working days, confirming:

- Receipt of the grievance.
- The name of the person handling the grievance.
- A proposed timeline for resolution.

4.4 Investigation

The Council will conduct a fair and thorough investigation. This may involve:

- Meeting with the employee to discuss the grievance in detail.
- Interviewing relevant Councillors, colleagues, or others involved.
- Reviewing any evidence provided.

The investigation will be completed as promptly as possible, ensuring due care and attention to the issues raised.

4.5 Grievance Meeting

A grievance meeting will be arranged to discuss the findings. The employee will have the opportunity to:

- Explain their grievance in detail.
- Present evidence and call witnesses (if applicable).
- Be accompanied by a colleague, trade union representative, or another appropriate representative.

The outcome of the meeting will be communicated in writing within five working days, outlining:

- The Council's decision.
- Any actions to be taken.
- The employee's right to appeal.

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5. Appeal Process

If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may submit an appeal in writing within 10 working days of receiving the decision. The appeal should outline:

- Reasons for the appeal.
- Any new evidence or information.

The appeal will be heard by a panel of Councillors not involved in the original grievance process. The appeal decision will be communicated in writing within 10 working days of the appeal meeting. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

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6. Confidentiality

All grievances will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in resolving the grievance or as required by law.

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7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in legislation. Amendments will be approved by the Council and communicated to employees.

Reviewed 26th March 2025
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Next review date: March 2027