



UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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20th November 2024

To: Members of the Town Council Staffing Committee

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO A STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING which will take place on **Wednesday 27th November at 7:30pm** in Uppingham Town Hall. The agenda of the business to be transacted is detailed below.

Clerk to the Council
Adam Lowe

Agenda

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of members' interests and applications for dispensations
3. To confirm the minutes of the SC meeting held on 22/04/2024
4. (i) An opportunity for the public to speak, in accordance with Standing Orders 3.6 – 3.11
5. Exclusion of press and public: It was proposed that, in view of the confidential nature of the following items, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1.
6. Clerks Probation Review – Stage 1.
7. Staff handbook.
8. Staffing Policies
9. Staffing Structural Review.
10. Date of Next Meeting.

Uppingham Town Council
Minutes of Staffing Committee held at the Town Hall on Monday 22 April 2024 at 7pm

Present: Ron Simpson (Chair), Liz Clarke (ex officio), Lindsay Cooper, Pat Dalby, Christine Edwards, Barry Hobbs, Godfrey Jennings, Tom Johnson, Mark Shaw
Also present Peter Leppard – Locum Town Clerk, and 2 members of the public

- SC24/01 **To receive apologies for absence**
None
- SC24/02 **To make any Declarations of Interest**
Cllrs Shaw and Simpson declared an interest in Uppingham Late Night Shopping through their involvement in Uppingham First. Cllrs Dalby and Jennings declared an interest as marshals for Uppingham Late Night Shopping.
- SC24/03 **To approve previous minutes**
It was resolved, after 1 correction to the list of attendees, to approve the draft minutes, as circulated, of the Committee’s 13 December 2023 meeting.
- SC24/04 **To review the Health & Safety Audit report from November 2023**
It was resolved that progress towards discharging the action items from the report would now be recorded in each month’s Clerk’s Report, with particular focus for now on the High priority items.
- SC24/05 **Exclusion of press and public**
It was proposed that, in view of the confidential nature of the following items, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1. An amendment was then proposed that the intended exclusion should not apply to Uppingham town councillors who are not members of this Committee, but the vote on that amendment was lost. The substantive motion was then voted on, and passed.
- SC24/06 **Salary of Administration Assistant**
It was resolved to make a recommendation to full Council re the Administration Assistant’s salary.
- SC24/07 **Public complaints**
(In respect of the following two minutes, Cllr Simpson vacated the chair in favour of the Committee’s vice-Chair Cllr Cooper, in view of the interest he had declared.)
Cllr Cooper reminded members of the need to focus on the complaints made, excluding any other matters which were not included in the complaints.
2 public complainants joined the meeting, separately, to give evidence to the Committee in accordance with the Council’s Complaints Policy, in respect of an incident in December 2023; they each left the meeting after giving their evidence. 1 of the complainants was accompanied at the meeting by a companion.
- SC24/08 The Committee resolved to make a recommendation to full Council as to the proposed response to the complaints made.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

Signed Date



UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Disciplinary Policy
Date:	7 th October 2020
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

- 1 This policy is based on the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice <https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-for-disciplinary-and-grievance-procedures/html>. Wherever appropriate, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.
- 2 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 3 This policy confirms that:
 - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case.
 - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy principally applies to misconduct issues.
 - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case.
 - employees may be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or a work colleague at any disciplinary or investigatory meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion will not answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
 - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings arising from this procedure. The employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions.
 - if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date.
 - any changes to specified time limits in this procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council.
 - information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with current data protection legislation.
 - recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed as a reasonable adjustment to take account of an employee's medical condition.
 - employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action.
 - if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure.
 - disciplinary action taken by the Council can include an oral warning, written warning, final written warning or dismissal.
 - except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct.
 - if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it.

- the Council may consider using mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment), if both the Council and the employee consent.

Examples of misconduct

- 4 Misconduct is employee behaviour which can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct.
- unauthorised absence
 - poor timekeeping
 - misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
 - inappropriate behaviour
 - refusal to follow reasonable instructions
 - breach of health & safety rules.

Examples of gross misconduct

- 5 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct.
- bullying, discrimination or harassment
 - incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
 - violent behaviour
 - fraud or theft
 - gross negligence
 - gross insubordination
 - serious breaches of health & safety rules
 - serious and deliberate damage to property
 - use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
 - disclosure of confidential information.

Leadership of the disciplinary process

- 6 The disciplinary process will be led by:
- a) the staffing committee, if the employee whose conduct is in contention is the Clerk. (The staffing committee will appoint a disciplinary sub-committee consisting of three councillors; this sub-committee will appoint a Chair from among its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.)
 - b) the Clerk, if the employee whose conduct is in contention is not the Clerk. However, if the Clerk has him/herself been involved in the circumstances of the case in a way which means that (s)he cannot be seen as independent, then the Clerk must not lead the disciplinary process, which will instead be led by the staffing committee, as in clause a).

Disciplinary investigation

- 7 There will be an investigation of the facts by an Investigator independent from the circumstances of the case; this will normally be a councillor or senior member of staff. If there are no councillors or senior staff who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), an Investigator will be appointed from outside the Council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The Investigator will be asked to submit a report within 20 working days of appointment, or sooner if possible. In cases of alleged minor misconduct, the appointment of an Investigator may not be necessary, and thus it may be decided to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage (see paragraph 12).
- 8 The employee will be notified in writing of the alleged misconduct, asking him/her to attend a meeting with the Investigator. The employee will be given at least five working days' notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that he/she has reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a

copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The letter will also inform the employee that when he/she meets with the Investigator, he/she will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.

- 9 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or a work colleague at any investigatory meeting.
- 10 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should endeavour to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 11 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. His/her role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report of his/her findings. He/she will not be a member of any disciplinary sub-committee.
- 12 The leadership of the disciplinary process (see paragraph 6) will then decide as soon as reasonably possible whether:
 - the employee has no case to answer, and there should be no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure, or
 - the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally, or
 - the employee has a case to answer and there should be action under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 13 If it is decided not to take disciplinary action, it may be considered whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

The disciplinary meeting

- 14 If it is decided that there is a case to answer, the employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting; the following information will be included:
 - the names of the sub-committee's Chair and the other two members (if a sub-committee is leading the process), or confirmation that the Clerk will chair the meeting
 - details of the alleged misconduct, and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting by either a trade union representative or a work colleague
 - a copy of the Investigation report, all the supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
 - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing (at least ten working days) so that he /she has sufficient time to prepare for it.
 - that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf, and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least five working days before the meeting.
 - that all parties should provide each other with all supporting evidence at least five working days before the meeting. If witnesses are not attending the meeting, witness statements should be submitted to the other side at least five working days before the meeting.
- 15 The disciplinary meeting will be conducted as follows:
 - The Chair of the meeting will set out the council's case and present supporting evidence (including, if required, any witnesses).
 - The employee (or the companion) will set out his/her case and present supporting evidence (including, if required, any witnesses).
 - Any person present may question any witness.
 - The employee (or the companion) will have the opportunity to sum up his/her case.
 - The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the meeting to be reviewed/investigated further.
 - The Chair of the meeting will advise the employee in writing of the decision reached, with reasons, within five working days of the meeting.

Disciplinary action

16 If it is decided that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

Oral warning

An oral warning is issued for most first instances of minor misconduct. The council will notify the employee:

- of the reason for the oral warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and any time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- of the right to appeal
- that a note confirming the oral warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for six months.

Written warning

If there is a repetition of earlier misconduct which resulted in an oral warning, or in cases of different and more serious misconduct, the employee will normally be given a written warning. The written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and any time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for 12 months.

Final written warning

If there is further misconduct during the period of a written warning or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:

- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for 18 months.

Dismissal

The Council may dismiss:

- for gross misconduct
- if there is no improvement within the specified time period in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning
- if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.

17 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, he/she will receive a written statement of the reasons for his/her dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of his/her right of appeal.

18 Other action imposed as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force for the timescales stated above unless it is subsequently modified as a result of an appeal. If it has been decided to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.

The appeal

19 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. His/her written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action, and must specify the grounds for appeal.

- 20 Possible grounds for appeal include:
- Failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
 - The disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence.
 - The disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case.
 - New evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.
- 21 The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. (There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three members of the Council who may include previously-uninvolved members of the staffing committee.) The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from among its members.
- 22 The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion, either a trade union representative or a work colleague.
- 23 At the appeal meeting, the Chair of the panel will:
- explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the original disciplinary decision
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
- 24 The employee (or his companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal. Any member of the appeal panel may ask questions about those grounds.
- 25 The Chair of the panel will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal hearing.
- 26 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the original disciplinary decision, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides that no disciplinary action should be taken, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 27 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 28 The appeal panel's decision is final.
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UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Equal Opportunities Policy
Date:	7 th March 2018
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STATEMENT & PROCEDURE

Introduction

The Equal Opportunities Policy is the responsibility of the Town Council, and everybody working for the Council.

All Employees and applicants will be given Equal Opportunities in employment regardless of gender, gender identity, age, race, disabilities, caring responsibilities, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and / or trade union membership.

All persons will be treated with dignity and respect in an environment free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Any complaints of this nature will be fully investigated and treated with the strictest confidence.

Any individual found to be responsible for such behaviour, following a thorough investigation, will be subject to disciplinary action.

All Employees, job applicants and contractors working for the Council will be made aware of this policy.

The policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it conforms to all relevant legislation.

Policy aims

- ✓ To select, recruit, develop and promote the very best people through objective assessment based solely upon suitability for the job.
- ✓ Ensure that all Employees and job applicants receive fair and equal treatment.
- ✓ Create a balanced work force, reflecting the diversity of the local working population.
- ✓ Cultivate a working environment that is free from harassment.

Definitions

Direct Discrimination: To treat someone less favourably on the basis of race, gender or disability; i.e. not to recruit, refuse opportunities, discipline, dismissal or provide less favourable terms and conditions.

Indirect Discrimination: Fewer females / ethnic minorities / disabled persons are able to fulfil a requirement of a job than other members of society, and the requirement cannot be justified.

Harassment: Creating a threatening, hostile or intimidating environment based upon sex or race of the victim. The decision as to whether actions constitute harassment lies with the person who is being subject to this behaviour and one single incident is sufficient to constitute a charge.

Sexual harassment: Where unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which can violate your dignity, or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Bullying and harassment: Is a behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 and examples could be spreading malicious rumours, unfair treatment, picking on or regularly undermining someone and this can be done face to face, by letter, email or by phone.

The employer's responsibility

The Town Council is directly responsible for the actions of all its Employees and agents of the Council, as well as for their protection from harassment and discrimination. As such, the Council takes an active role in protecting those for whom it is responsible.

Implementing the policy

Recruitment and Selection:

- All positions are open to all individuals who have the required level of skill, knowledge and / or experience.
- All job adverts are to be Council approved and placed in publications which have a diverse circulation.
- All job applicants should receive a copy of the Equal policy and procedures, as well as a full job description to enable them to assess their suitability for the position.

Training:

- Appropriate training on and off the job will be accessible to all Employees. All Employees will be encouraged to take advantage of all relevant training Opportunities.
- Where an individual is returning to a job following a prolonged absence, additional training and support will be offered.
- Where a position changes due to technology and / or reorganisation, appropriate training and support will be offered to the affected individuals.
- All induction trainees will be made aware of the Council's Equal Opportunities policy and procedure.

Health and Safety:

- Discrimination, intimidation and harassment can seriously compromise the Health and Safety of the work environment. As such it is the responsibility of all Employees who are aware of such activity to bring it to the attention of the Council's Management (Chair or Chairs of Committees), quickly and discreetly (although the Council accepts that this may not always be easy for the victim). All reported incidents will be treated in confidence by Management.
- Management will work with disabled Employees to ensure their Health and Safety in the workplace, through conducting through objective assessments of the safety of their working environment and where appropriate offering alterations / adaptations to the position, or examining the possibility of alternative work.

Development and Promotion:

- Ability, motivation, commitment, past experience and qualifications are the qualities used to determine an individual's promotion potential.
- Development and training will be offered to all suitably motivated individuals where Opportunities exist.
- Length of service will not determine suitability for promotion as it can indirectly discriminate against those who may have had long term illnesses or career breaks or are employed on a fixed term basis.

Terms and Conditions:

- All individuals within a post will receive the same terms and conditions.

Redundancy:

- The Council will select individuals for redundancy based on a points scheme, whose criteria will be determined with affected staff during the redundancy consultation period.

Discipline and Termination of Employment:

- Race, gender, age and disability will have no bearing upon any disciplinary actions taken by the Council.

How the procedure works

If you have a grievance relating to Equal Opportunities your Employment Contract explains how to make a Formal Complaint to the Council's Management.

If you are accused of behaviour which is in breach of the Council's Equal Opportunities policy and procedure, a relevant line Manager will initially conduct an informal investigation. Should the initial, informal investigation find that action needs to be taken; the Council will act in accordance with its formal disciplinary procedure, as detailed in your Employment Contract.



UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Member/Officer Protocol
Date:	7 th October 2020
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL

Introduction

- 1 The relationship between Councillors and officers is an essential ingredient for the successful working of the organisation. This relationship should be characterised by mutual respect and trust, with councillors and officers feeling free to speak to one another openly and honestly.
- 2 Nothing in this Protocol is intended to change that relationship. The Protocol's purpose is rather to aid Councillors and officers to perform effectively, by giving guidance on their respective roles and expectations, and on their relationship with each other. The Protocol also gives guidance on what to do on the rare occasion when things go wrong.
- 3 The Protocol should be read and operated in the context of relevant legislation and Codes of Conduct.

Roles of Councillors and Officers

- 4 Councillors and officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to each other - but their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate, and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the Council. Their job is to give advice and information to Councillors and to the authority, and to carry out the authority's work under the direction of the Council and its committees.
- 5 Councillors have three main areas of responsibility:
 - a) determining the policy of the authority and providing leadership,
 - b) representing the authority externally, and
 - c) acting as advocates on behalf of their constituents.

It is not the role of Councillors to involve themselves in the day to day management of the Council's services. Councillors must not ask officers to undertake work of a party political nature.
- 6 In giving advice to Councillors, and in preparing and presenting reports, it is the responsibility of the officer to express his/her professional views and recommendations. If a Councillor wishes to express a contrary view, he/she should not seek to pressure the officer to make a recommendation contrary to the officer's professional view.
- 7 The Town Clerk and RFO have responsibilities in law over and above their obligations to the Council and to individual Councillors, and Councillors must respect these obligations and not obstruct officers in the discharge of those responsibilities.

Expectations

- 8 Councillors can expect from officers:
 - a. A commitment to the authority as a whole, and not to any political group
 - b. A working partnership
 - c. An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures
 - d. Timely response to enquiries and complaints

- e. Professional advice, not influenced by political views or preference, which does not compromise the political neutrality of officers
- f. Regular, upto-date information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to councillors' needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities which they have
- g. Awareness of, and sensitivity to, the political environment
- h. Respect, dignity and courtesy
- i. Training and development in order to carry out their role effectively
- j. Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality
- k. That employees will not use their relationship with Councillors to advance their personal interests or those of others, or to influence decisions improperly
- l. Support for the role of Councillors as the local representatives of the authority.

9 Officers can expect from Councillors:

- a. A working partnership
- b. An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures
- c. Political leadership
- d. Respect, dignity and courtesy
- e. Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality
- f. Not to be subject to bullying or to be put under undue pressure. Councillors should have regard to the potential vulnerability of officers at junior levels; junior staff should not be asked to deal with matters outside their level of authority.
- g. That Councillors will not use their position or relationship with officers to advance their personal interests or those of others, or to influence decisions improperly.
- h. That Councillors will at all times comply with the Councillor Code of Conduct.

Limitations upon Behaviour

- 10 Close personal relationships between Councillors and officers can confuse their separate roles and hinder the proper discharge of the authority's functions, not least in creating a perception in others that a particular Councillor or officer may secure advantageous treatment. Every effort should be made to avoid this.

When things go wrong

11 Procedure for officers:

From time to time the relationship between Councillors and officers may break down or become strained. Whilst it will always be preferable to resolve matters informally, through conciliation by an appropriate senior manager or Councillors, officers will have recourse to the Grievance Procedure or to the County Council's Monitoring Officer, as appropriate to the circumstance.

12 Procedure for Councillors:

In the event that a Councillor is dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of an officer, the matter should be raised with the Town Clerk. Where the officer concerned is the Town Clerk, the matter should be raised with the Chair of the staffing committee. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, it may be necessary to invoke the Council's Disciplinary Policy.



UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Unsatisfactory Performance Policy
Date:	7 th October 2020
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

MANAGING UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE POLICY

1. If there is ongoing concern about an employee’s performance, their line manager (or, if the employee is the Clerk, a sub-committee of the staffing committee) will call a meeting with the employee, to explore the perceived problem(s). This meeting will usually result in the employee being given a fixed time period (say 1 month) to achieve specific improvements, set out by the line manager, in his/her ongoing performance. The employee will be informed that failure to achieve these could result in further managerial action. Notes will be taken by the line manager, and signed by both parties, to evidence what was discussed.
2. At the end of the fixed time period (see paragraph 7), the line manager (or sub-committee) will call a further meeting with the employee to review progress against the specific improvements which were targeted. This meeting will decide whether those improvements have been satisfactorily achieved. If they are found not to have been adequately achieved, the employee will be given a further fixed time period to improve. The employee will be informed that failure to achieve the required improvements could result in dismissal. Notes will be taken by the line manager, and signed by both parties, to evidence what was discussed.
3. At end of that further fixed time period, the line manager (or sub-committee) will call another meeting with the employee to review progress against the specific improvements which were targeted. The letter of invitation to this meeting will, in addition to stating the time and location of the meeting, inform the employee of their right to be accompanied by a companion, either a work colleague or a Trade Union representative. If the companion cannot make the required date, the Council will rearrange the meeting for a date within five working days of the original date. The letter of invitation will include as much detail of the issues to be discussed as is reasonable to provide. Any evidence to be used in the meeting will be supplied to the employee no less than two days prior to the meeting.
4. This meeting will decide whether the required improvements have been satisfactorily achieved. The employee (or his/her companion) will be invited to give their view of the employee’s performance since the “managing unsatisfactory performance” procedure commenced, after which any questions may be asked of the employee. Once all parties have had the opportunity to present their case, and all the evidence has been considered, the outcome will be decided. If the required improvements in performance are found not to have been adequately achieved, the employee may be dismissed for poor performance.
5. The employee will receive a formal Outcome letter, within 5 working days of the meeting, to inform them of the decision reached. The letter will include details of the factors taken into account in making that decision, and of the employee’s right to appeal against the decision.

The appeal process

12. An employee wishing to appeal against dismissal must give written notice of appeal to the Chair of the staffing committee, to be received within five working days of the

employee receiving written notice of the dismissal, and must specify the grounds for appeal.

13. Possible grounds for appeal include:
 - Failure by the Council to follow its staff appraisal & performance policy
 - The dismissal decision was not supported by the evidence.
 - New evidence has come to light since the meeting which dismissed.
 14. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. (There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three members of the Council who may include previously-uninvolved members of the staffing committee.) The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from among its members.
 15. The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion, either a trade union representative or a work colleague.
 16. At the appeal meeting, the Chair will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision to dismiss.
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
 17. The employee (or his/her companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal. Any member of the appeal panel may ask questions about those grounds.
 18. The Chair will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal hearing.
 19. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision to dismiss, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no action against the employee is necessary. If it decides that no action should be taken, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
 20. If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
 21. The appeal panel's decision is final.
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UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address: Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland
LE15 9PY

Policy: **Sickness & Absence (incl. RTW) Policy**

Date: 7th October 2020

Version: 1.0

Approved: Adopted at Full Council.

SICKNESS & ABSENCE (incl. return to work) POLICY

Scope

1. This policy and procedure applies to any employee of Uppingham Town Council.
2. The Council always aims for the attendance of its employees on their agreed days/times. However, it recognises that absence may sometimes be necessary due to sickness (i.e. illness or injury). It is the Council’s policy to offer, as far as is reasonably possible, security of employment during such absence, subject to the policy set out below.

Notification and certification

3. If the employee is unable to attend work due to sickness, he/she must notify the Council by contacting the Clerk (but if the Clerk is reporting his/her own sickness, this must be to the Chair of the staffing committee) as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the working day on which the absence first occurs. He/she should indicate the reason for the absence and, if possible, when he/she expects to return to work. The employee must complete a self-certification form for the first seven calendar days of all sickness absences and send it to the Council. This form can be completed on the employee's return to work if the absence lasts less than seven calendar days.
4. If the employee is still absent by the eighth calendar day, they must send a fit note, issued by their GP, to the Council. The employee should also keep in touch with the Council regarding their condition and likely return-to-work date. If the employee does not follow this procedure, any entitlement to contractual sick pay and/or statutory sick pay (SSP) may be prejudiced.

Return to work

5. The employee who has been sick for more than 7 calendar days will not be allowed to return to work until their GP deems that they are fit to return. When appropriate, the employee may be interviewed on their return to work so as to:
 - check on the employee's fitness to return
 - ensure that any support the employee needs is in place
 - bring the employee up to date on any changes made during their absence.

Fit notes

6. An employee’s GP might indicate on a fit note that the employee “may be fit for work”. If this option is selected the GP will also identify potential amendments to work that should be made, selecting from:
 - phased return to work
 - amended duties
 - altered hours
 - workplace adaptations.

7. If a fit note of that type is received, the Council will contact the employee and arrange for a meeting with them. At this meeting the suggested amendments will be discussed, with the aim of facilitating the employee's return to work. If the suggested amendments are not possible the employee may need to remain on sick leave. If the amendments are possible the employee will return to work, but regular reviews will be carried out to ensure that the amendments are working adequately. Any such amendments are not to be viewed as a permanent change to the contract of employment.

Medical examinations and reports

8. The Council reserves the right (for instance, in a case of extended periods of absence) to require the employee to be examined by a practitioner of its choice, in order for a medical opinion to be sent to the Council. (A refusal to be examined may lead the Council to take disciplinary action against the employee, upto and including dismissal.)
9. In order to gain as much information about the employee's medical condition as possible, the Council may also request the employee's permission to contact his/her GP to ask for a medical report on the employee's condition. The employee may ask to see this report.

Extended and/or repeated absences

10. The Clerk will maintain sickness records for each employee (including him/herself), to assist in reviewing sickness trends.
11. The Council will be sympathetic when an employee is ill, but the employee should appreciate that, if they are repeatedly absent through ill-health or long-term injury or incapacity, it will not be possible for this situation to continue indefinitely, and thus the continuation of their employment may be reviewed, at a meeting called with the employee for that purpose. Termination of employment will not take place without:
 - medical investigation
 - full consultation with the employee
 - a consideration of an alternative role with the Council.

Meetings/home visits

12. During any absence, the employee may be periodically asked to attend a meeting (if capable of so doing) for the purpose of providing information about their sickness and, as appropriate, facilitating an effective return to work. If the employee is too unwell to leave their home, the Council reserves the right to visit him/her at home.

Disability

13. If the employee has a condition that means they might be considered disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, the Council will attempt to make reasonable adjustments to their job to accommodate their requirements. The employee will be fully consulted at all times. If reasonable adjustments or an alternative role prove not to be viable options, and there is no likelihood of a return to work in the near future, a decision to dismiss may be the inevitable outcome.

Dismissal and the right to appeal

14. In the event of dismissal of the employee on sickness grounds as outlined above, the reason for the dismissal and the circumstances leading up to that decision will be given in writing to the employee. The employee may appeal against their dismissal by writing, within five working days of their receipt of the dismissal letter, to the Chair of the staffing committee, stating the grounds on which they wish to appeal. The appeal will be heard in accordance with the appeals process within the Council's Disciplinary Policy.
15. Similarly, the right of appeal also exists if the employee objects to action by the Council short of dismissal, such as permanent alteration of the employee's role. Again, the employee's notice of appeal must be in writing to the Chair of the staffing committee, within five working days of receipt in writing of the decision to which the employee objects, stating the grounds on which he/she wishes to appeal.

Payment arrangements

16. If the employee is eligible for the payment of contractual sick pay or statutory sick pay (SSP), it will be subject to the deduction of tax and National Insurance contributions.
17. Any employee entitlement to contractual sick pay is shown in their contract of employment.

Return of the Council's equipment

18. If the employee is off sick for a period of one month or more, the Council may require them to return Council equipment until they are well enough to return to work. If the employee does not return to work following a period of sickness absence, they will be required to return all outstanding Council equipment on the date of termination of their employment

Absences for reasons other than sickness

19. Requests for time off for reasons other than sickness will be considered by the Council in the light of the individual's circumstances, legal requirements and the Council's operational needs. It is expected that, whenever reasonably possible, employees will use their annual leave entitlement to cover such absences, although compassionate leave may be granted when appropriate.
20. Unauthorised absences for reasons other than sickness will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

Abuse of this policy

21. Any abuse of this policy will be dealt with through the Council's Disciplinary Policy, and may result in disciplinary action upto and including dismissal.

Alterations and amendments to this policy

22. This policy and procedure does not form part of employees' contractual rights. 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.



UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Staff Appraisal Policy
Date:	7 th October 2020
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY

1. It is the policy of Uppingham Town Council to maintain a meaningful and effective appraisal system for all staff, which will monitor performance against agreed and achievable targets and responsibilities, and provide a regular opportunity to review formally each member of staff's performance and, if necessary, agree steps to improve it. The aim is to provide a satisfying working environment and job satisfaction for all employees.
 2. Employees will, every 6 months, have an appraisal meeting with the Clerk to the Parish Council, as their manager. Each appraisal meeting will review the employee's recent performance, and also discuss and agree objectives for the coming period. The employee's training needs will also be identified and agreed.
 3. Where the appraisal is of the Clerk, a sub-committee of the staffing committee will conduct the appraisal meeting.
 4. Appraisal meetings will cover all aspects of the employee's job description, focusing in particular on:
 - job knowledge
 - quality and quantity of work output, including achievement of objectives
 - problem-solving, initiative and innovation
 - motivation, decision-making and ability to work under pressure
 - dependability, flexibility and adaptability
 - communication and interpersonal skills
 - teamwork and/or leadership
 - work planning and effective use of time

Opportunities for personal and professional development will be explored, and mentoring will be put in place when necessary.
 5. The date and time of the appraisal meeting will be agreed at least a week in advance, to give all participants adequate time to prepare. The Clerk (or, in the case of paragraph 3 above, the sub-committee) will ensure that the discussion at the meeting is, within 5 working days, documented in sufficient detail (and then shared with the employee) to enable the content to form a basis for subsequent progress review at the employee's next appraisal.
 6. If an employee's ongoing performance is giving rise to concern, it is not desirable to wait for the 6-monthly appraisal meeting to first raise this with the employee. Instead, such ongoing concern should normally first be raised through the "managing unsatisfactory performance" procedure.
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UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Staff Expenses Policy
Date:	7 th October 2020
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

STAFF EXPENSES POLICY

Introduction

- 1 This policy applies to all employees of the council. It provides a framework to allow an employee to claim and be reimbursed for any reasonable and authorised expenses that are incurred during the course of their work.
- 2 Any employee who is unsure whether a claim is likely to be acceptable should ask the Clerk prior to incurring the expenses.

Expectations

- 3 Employees are expected to:
 - Behave honestly, responsibly, and within the provisions of this policy.
 - Submit expenses claims on the approved form, and provide enough information to explain the need for the expense.
 - Submit receipts to substantiate their claim. These must be VAT receipts whenever the item is VATable, so as to allow the council to reclaim the VAT.
- 4 The Council will:
 - Check that claimed expenses are in line with this policy.
 - Approve and pay legitimate claims promptly.
- 5 If an employee fails to comply with this policy, this may delay reimbursement or cause claims to be rejected. Deliberate or persistent non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

Travel-related claims

- 6 The Council will reimburse authorised private-car mileage at 45p/mile, plus any associated parking or road-toll charges. For journeys on Council business which also incorporate the employee's normal journey to/from work, mileage claims must be only for the distance in excess of normal travel to/from work.
- 7 The council will not, under any circumstances, reimburse employees for penalty charges incurred due to speeding or any other motoring offence, or for parking fines.
- 8 Employees must demonstrate to the Clerk that they hold valid business-use insurance for the vehicle used. The Council will not accept any liability for any claim denied by an insurance company where this condition has not been met.
- 9 Claims for rail or bus travel must be for the cheapest available Standard-class fare for the journey made.
- 10 Taxi fares will be reimbursed only where there was no other reasonable alternative.

Other expenses claims

- 11 The use of overnight accommodation must be agreed in advance with the Clerk.
- 12 Reimbursement of membership fees for a relevant professional body must be agreed in advance with the Clerk.
- 13 An annual eye-testing fee, for employees who regularly use Visual Display Units (VDUs) at

work, will be reimbursed.

Claims process

- 14 Employees must submit to the Clerk, for approval, a UTC expenses form, no later than 2 months after the expense is incurred. (The Clerk must arrange for his/her own expenses to be approved by the Chair of the staffing committee.)
 - 15 The person approving any expenses claim is responsible for checking that the claim complies with this policy, and includes receipts where applicable. Once satisfied, they must sign the claim form, to authorise the payment to be made.
 - 16 Payment will be made direct to the employee (not through the payroll), usually by direct credit to their nominated bank account.
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UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Training & Development Policy
Date:	7 th October 2020
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Introduction

- 1 The Town Council is committed to training and development for employees and members of the Council, to enable them to carry out their roles effectively. Training and development are important in providing appropriate skills to develop, plan and deliver the Council’s services, to ensure the Council meets its aims and objectives.

Employees’ Training Needs

- 2 The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that all staff (including him/herself) receive adequate training, and for supporting their personal development. The Clerk will be alert to changes in training need due to changing circumstances.
- 3 Induction training will be provided for all new employees. Other training opportunities will be prioritised by the need to deliver service requirements, and by relevant health & safety needs.
- 4 Employees are encouraged to be proactive in identifying their training and development needs. These will be discussed at each 6-monthly appraisal meeting with each member of staff.
- 5 It is a mandatory requirement for the Clerk to be CiLCA-qualified, or to obtain that qualification as soon as possible.

Members’ Training Needs

- 5 Induction training will be provided for all new councillors.
- 6 The Clerk will ensure that other training opportunities are made known to members; members are encouraged to take advantage of these, whenever relevant. Reasonable travelling costs will be reimbursed to members on request.

Resourcing of training

- 7 A training & development budget will be set annually, as part of the Council’s overall budget-setting process. Every endeavour should be made not to exceed the training & development budget.
- 8 The Clerk will ensure that all training undertaken by employees and members is designed and evaluated to meet organisational requirements. It may be provided by external providers or through the Council’s in-house resources.
- 9 No employee or member should sign-up for a training opportunity without the prior approval of the Clerk. If the training is for the Clerk him/herself, the prior approval must be by the staffing committee.
- 10 Where training is funded by the Council to enable an employee to acquire a recognised qualification:
 - (a) if the employee fails to sit an examination within a reasonable period or fails

to show satisfactory progress in studying, the Council will withdraw its funding and require reimbursement of the funding received by the employee to date.

(b) the employee will, other than in exceptional circumstances, be required, if he/she leaves the Council within two years of the qualification being obtained, to reimburse the Council for a proportion of the costs of that training, commensurate with the proportion of the two years which has elapsed.

Evaluation and training records

- 11 All employees and members who undertake training are expected to provide to the Clerk a written evaluation of the training upon completion, to assess its relevance and effectiveness.
 - 12 The Clerk will provide to councillors an annual summary of the training undertaken by employees and members, and of its assessed effectiveness.
 - 13 An individual training record will be maintained by the Clerk in respect of each employee and member, including him/herself, showing each course attended (with date) and any qualifications obtained therefrom.
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UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address:	Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9PY
Policy:	Whistleblowing Policy
Date:	7 th October 2020
Version:	1.0
Approved:	Adopted at Full Council.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Introduction

1 Uppingham Town Council is committed to the highest standards of transparency, probity, integrity and accountability. This Whistleblowing Policy sets out the Council's framework for dealing with allegations of illegal or improper conduct.

2 This procedure is intended to provide a means of making serious allegations about standards, conduct, financial irregularity or possible unlawful action in a way that will ensure confidentiality, and protect those making such allegations in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so from being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged.

3 This procedure is intended to ensure that the Town Council complies with its duty under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Scope

4 This procedure applies to all employees, including volunteers and contractors. It applies to, but is not limited to, allegations about any of the following:

- Fraud or corruption
- Unauthorised use of public funds
- Abuse of authority
- Sexual, physical or verbal abuse, or bullying or intimidation
- Serious Health & Safety shortcomings
- Conduct which is an offence or breach of the law
- Other unethical conduct

5 The Council recognises that the decision to make an allegation can be a difficult one. However, whistleblowers who make serious allegations in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so have nothing to fear, because they are doing their duty to the Council and to those for whom they are providing a service. The Council will take appropriate action to protect from any reprisals, harassment or victimisation any whistle-blower who makes a serious allegation in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so

6 All allegations will be treated in confidence, and every effort will be made, unless the whistle-blower otherwise requests, not to reveal the whistle-blower's identity - other than, if necessary, to a person involved in the investigation. However, if the matter is subsequently dealt with through other procedures such as the Disciplinary Procedure, it may be helpful if the person making the allegation gives evidence, in order for a case to be successful. Similarly, if the allegation results in court proceedings, the whistle-blower may be asked to give evidence in open court.

Anonymous allegations

7 The council encourages whistle-blowers to put their name to an allegation wherever possible, as anonymous allegations may be difficult to substantiate or prove. Allegations made anonymously are often less powerful, but acceptance of anonymous allegations for investigation will be considered, taking into account these factors:

- The seriousness of the issue
- The credibility of the allegation
- Whether the allegation can realistically be investigated from factors or sources other than the complainant

Untrue allegations

8 No disciplinary or other action will be taken against a whistleblower who makes an allegation in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so even if the allegation is not substantiated by an investigation. However, disciplinary action may be taken against a whistleblower who makes an allegation without reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so (e.g. making an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain where there is no element of public interest).

Procedure for making an allegation

9 The circumstances of each case vary, depending on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and the person suspected of malpractice; the allegation may thus be made to any appropriate person in authority. If the whistle-blower believes that their manager is involved, it would be inappropriate to raise it directly with them. Ideally, the Council would prefer any allegation to be made to the Clerk (except, if the matter concerns the Clerk, when it should ideally be made to the Chair of the staffing committee).

10 Whether a written or oral report is made, it is important that relevant information is provided including:

- the name of the person making the allegation and their preferred means of communication for this issue.
- the background and history of the allegation (giving relevant dates, and names and positions of those who may be in a position to help corroborate the allegation)
- the specific reason for the allegation. Although someone making an allegation will not be expected to prove the truth of the allegation, they need to provide enough information so as to establish that there are reasonable grounds for the allegation.

11 The recipient of an allegation will ensure that it is referred appropriately for investigation. If the allegation relates to fraud, potential fraud or other financial irregularity, the Responsible Financial Officer will be informed as soon as possible, unless the matter relates to their alleged malpractice, and he/she will then determine the method of investigation.

12 If the allegation discloses evidence of a criminal offence, a decision will be made as to whether to inform the Police. If the allegation concerns a suspected safeguarding matter, the appropriate authorities will be informed immediately.

13 Unless the allegation has been made anonymously, a written acknowledgement of the allegation having been made will be provided confidentially to the person reporting it, within 5 working days, including

- an outline indication of how the Council proposes to deal with the matter
- an estimate of how long this may take, and
- information on available whistle-blower support mechanisms.

14 Someone who has made an allegation may be accompanied by another person of their choosing during any meetings or interviews in connection with the allegation. However, if the matter is subsequently dealt with through another procedure, the right to be accompanied will then be in accordance with that procedure.

Support

15 The Council will ensure that it takes suitable steps to minimise any difficulties which may be experienced by an employee as a result of making an allegation, including if a whistle-blower is required to give evidence in disciplinary or criminal proceedings.

16 The Council acknowledges that whistleblowers need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. So, subject to legal constraints, the Council will inform those making allegations of the outcome of any investigation.



UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address: Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham,
Rutland LE15 9PY

Policy: **Grievance Policy**

Date: 7th October 2020
Version: 1.0
Approved: Adopted at Full Council.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

1. This policy is based on the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice <https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-for-disciplinary-and-grievance-procedures/html>. It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. Nevertheless, many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships; employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.
2. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
3. This policy confirms that:
 - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case raised formally with it.
 - employees may be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or a work colleague at any grievance meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case on behalf of the employee. The companion will not answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
 - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings arising from this procedure. The employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend.
 - if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date.
 - any changes to specified time limits in this procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council.
 - information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance and the action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with current data protection legislation.
 - recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed as a reasonable adjustment to take account of an employee's medical condition.
 - employees have the right to appeal against the decision about their grievance. The decision arising from the appeal is final.
 - if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure.
 - if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
 - the Council may consider using mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment), if both the Council and the employee consent.

Informal grievance procedure

4. The Council and its employees will often benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with his/her manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should informally contact the Chair of the staffing committee or, if appropriate, another member of the staffing committee.

5. If an employee considers that the grievance concerns his/her safety within the working environment, the employee should ensure that these safety concerns are raised with his/her line manager at this informal stage of the grievance procedure.

Complaints against a councillor(s)

6. Employees cannot use the formal stages of the Council's grievance procedure for a Code of Conduct complaint about a councillor. Therefore, if such a complaint is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the Monitoring Officer of Rutland County Council, who will inform the employee whether the complaint can be dealt with by Monitoring Officer under the Code of Conduct. If the complaint does not concern the Code of Conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the Uppingham Town Council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 7 below).

Formal grievance procedure

7. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally, the employee may submit a formal grievance (except as described in paragraph 6 above). It should be submitted in writing to the Chair of the staffing committee.
8. The staffing committee will appoint a sub-committee consisting of three councillors to investigate the grievance; the sub-committee will appoint a Chair from among its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.
9. The sub-committee will investigate the matter, which may include interviewing others (e.g. employees, councillors or members of the public).
10. Within 10 working days of the staffing committee receiving the employee's grievance, the employee will be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting; the following information will be included:
 - the names of the sub-committee's Chair and other two members
 - a summary of the employee's grievance based on his/her written submission
 - the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting by either a trade union representative or work colleague
 - a copy of the council's grievance policy
 - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting, which will be within 25 working days of when the staffing committee received the grievance.
 - that witnesses may attend on the employee's behalf, and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses at least five working days before the meeting
 - that the employee will provide the sub-committee with all supporting evidence at least five working days before the meeting. If witnesses are not attending the meeting, witness statements should be submitted to the sub-committee at least five working days before the meeting.

The grievance meeting

11. The grievance meeting will be conducted as follows:
 - The Chair will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee.
 - The employee (or the companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence.
 - The Chair will ask the employee what action he/she wants the council to take.
 - Any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness
 - The employee (or the companion) will have the opportunity to sum up his/her case.
 - The grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the meeting to be reviewed/investigated by the sub-committee.
 - The Chair will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the council will take.

The appeal

12. An employee receiving the decision of the grievance meeting will be notified of the right of appeal. His/her written notice of appeal must be received by the staffing committee within five working days of the employee receiving written notice of the grievance decision, and must specify the grounds for appeal.
 13. Possible grounds for appeal include:
 - Failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
 - The sub-committee's decision was not supported by the evidence.
 - The action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate.
 - New evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.
 14. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. (There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three members of the Council who may include previously-uninvolved members of the staffing committee.) The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from among its members.
 15. The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time and place of the appeal meeting; the meeting will take place within 25 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion, either a trade union representative or a work colleague.
 16. At the appeal meeting, the Chair will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the grievance sub-committee
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
 17. The employee (or his/her companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal. Any member of the appeal panel may ask questions about those grounds.
 18. The Chair will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
 19. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the grievance sub-committee or substitute its own decision.
 20. The appeal panel's decision is final.
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UPPINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Address: Town Hall, High Street East, Uppingham,
Rutland LE15 9PY

Policy: **Health and Safety Policy**

Date: 2013
Version: 1.0
Approved: Adopted at Full Council.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

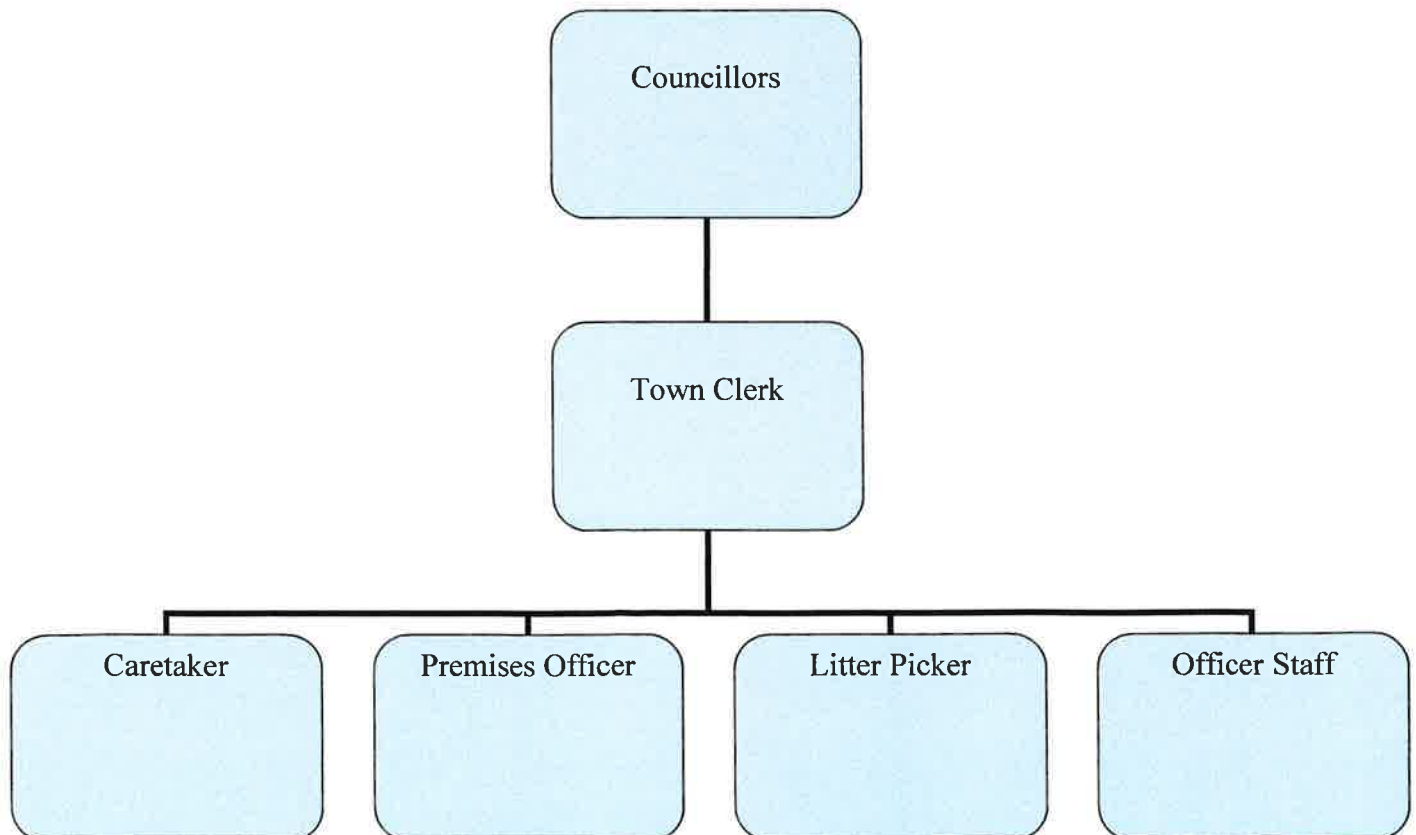
It is our policy to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- A workplace and work activities that will be safe for our employees, visitors and others who may be affected by what we do.
- Safe plant, equipment and systems of work.
- Safe use, handling and storage of articles and substances.
- Instruction and training for and consultation with our employees.
- A safe working environment.
- Adequate facilities and welfare arrangements.
- Sufficient resources to implement the policy and the assignment of responsibilities.

Employees are reminded that they have a duty to take reasonable steps for their health and safety and other people who may be affected and to co-operate with arrangements in all matters relating to health and safety.

This policy will be kept up-to-date and reviewed annually.

Health And Safety Organisational Chart



Responsibilities

Town Councillors

The Councillors have the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of Uppingham Town Council but designates the Town Clerk to undertake the day to day management.

The Council has nominated the Clerk to have special responsibility for health and safety.

The Council will ensure that :-

- they provide a lead in developing a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation.
- all its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions.
- adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety.
- they will promote the active participation of workers in improving health and safety performance.
- they will review the health and safety performance of the Council on an annual basis.

Town Clerk

The Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for health and safety within the Council. She will ensure that :-

- our Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice
- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant and work equipment in a safe condition
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger
- health and safety objectives are set and their achievement is measured and reported in the annual report.
- areas in the control of Uppingham Town Council are inspected and maintained in a safe condition

Premises Officer

The Premises Officer has responsibility for ensuring the open areas, cemeteries and play area are free of hazards.

The Premises Officer will:

- Undertaken weekly documented inspections of the play areas
- Undertake regular inspections of the cemetery checking paths, litter bins and seating
- Visually check headstones for stability
- Inspect other open spaces and buildings and document findings
- Report any concerns to the Town Clerk

Caretaker

The Caretaker will ensure that in their areas of control:

- Regularly inspect the Town Hall for hazards and report finding to the Town Clerk
- Undertake fire checks as defined in the Fire Log Book and complete the documentation.
- Avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others

Employees

All employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own safety
- take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions
- observe the safety rules
- comply with the Health and Safety policy
- conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others
- dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation
- conduct themselves in an orderly manner in the work place and refrain from any antics or pranks
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed
- avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to their supervisor
- report all accidents to the Town Clerk whether an injury is sustained or not
- attend as requested any health and safety training course
- observe all laid down procedures for processes, materials and substances used
- observe the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and fire exit routes.

Arrangements

1.1 Accident Investigation

It is our policy to investigate.

- All accidents resulting in any reportable injury or losses of any assets.
- Accidents, however minor.
- All near-misses.

The investigation will involve taking witness statements, photographing evidence where appropriate and obtaining any other evidence of an incident.

From this information the Town Clerk will decide whether further action is necessary to prevent a re-occurrence or to comply with legislation

1.2 Accident Reporting

It is our policy to report all serious injuries, industrial diseases and dangerous occurrences.

We will report all notifiable accidents to the enforcing authority.

The Accident Book must be fully completed for all injuries incurred at work, however minor.

1.3 Alcohol and Drug Abuse

No alcohol can be consumed on the premises unless specifically authorised by the Town Clerk or member of the Council.

Anyone found taking alcohol or drugs on the premises without permission is guilty of gross

misconduct, and will be disciplined accordingly

1.4 **Asbestos**

The Policy of Uppingham Town Council is to:

- Produce and maintain an Asbestos Register that is available to all staff, contractors and property users.
- Promote awareness of the hazards associated with asbestos.
- Produce a Management Policy and Procedures Plan.
- Periodically review the plan to ensure that any areas of asbestos requiring it, are sealed, encapsulated, inspected, monitored, labelled or removed.
- Ensure the Council's Policy conforms to Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006.

1.5 **Consultation**

Staff meetings will be held regularly. Any items discussed will be noted and where appropriate, actioned.

1.6 **Consultation and Training**

The Council is committed to providing employees with adequate information, instruction and training. External assistance will be used to provide professional health and safety training if required.

- We will ensure that all newly appointed or promoted staff receive an efficient induction into their jobs.
- We will provide training to increase the productivity and performance of existing staff, ensuring that they are updated in line with new legislative requirements, techniques and technology.
- Training needs will be reviewed at least once a year.
- Records of training will be kept for all employees.

1.7 **Contractors**

All contractors working on our premises are required to comply with appropriate rules and regulations governing their work activities.

We will ensure that, prior to engaging any contractor, they are competent and that work is carried out safely.

1.8 **COSHH**

We recognise that some substances have the potential to cause ill health and we will introduce measures to identify any such substances our employees use or are exposed to in the course of their work.

Where practical alternatives exist, we will not use harmful substances.

Substances that we must use will be assessed and control measures introduced to prevent risk.

No product should be brought onto the premise or used by an employee until it has been assessed and deemed safe.

1.9 **Display Screen Equipment**

It is our policy to provide a safe and comfortable working environment and we will put in place arrangements and procedures for the assessment of risks from the use of DSE.

A user, defined as a person using display screen equipment for a large proportion of their working day, is entitled to free eyesight tests and this will be discussed with the individuals concerned. It is unlikely that any member of Uppingham Town Council staff is a “User” as defined by the DSE Regulations however, every effort will be made to ensure those working with computers are comfortable.

1.10 **Driving At Work**

Driving is not an integral part of the Council activities and there are no Council owned vehicles.

Those employees using their own vehicles for attending Council activities should ensure their vehicle is roadworthy and they themselves are fit and capable of driving with the appropriate licence.

The Council expects those driving for work to be physically fit, healthy and wear the appropriate vision aids as prescribed by their optician.

It is the responsibility of the individual to comply with the requirements of DVLA with regards to the licence and the Highway Code.

1.11 **Electricity At Work**

All electrical systems on our premises will be inspected to ensure there is no danger.

All portable appliances will be given a thorough electrical test by a competent person at fixed intervals, which reflect the potential risks associated with the class of appliance.

The fixed wiring installation supplying electrical sockets, lighting or other wired in equipment will be inspected by a competent electrician at least every five years.

1.12 **Fire Safety**

We will put in place arrangements for the assessment of risks from fire and appropriate control measures to minimise the risks identified. These measures will include the following arrangements, procedures and controls;

- Regular inspection of the premises for fire safety.
- Fire extinguishers will be placed at clearly signed fire points.
- Emergency exit routes will be kept clear at all times.
- We will train in the use of extinguishers, procedures for fire drills and evacuation.
- Records of training and drills will be kept.

We will

- Provide adequate numbers of fire extinguishers on the premises.
- Ensure that the fire extinguishers are subject to regular maintenance.
- Formulate emergency evacuation procedures.
- Practice the evacuation procedures at least twice a year.

1.13 **First Aid**

We recognise our legal duty to make sufficient provision for first aid to employees.

We will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that there are an adequate number of trained first aiders.

In the event of anything other than minor injuries, medical assistance must be sought.

1.14 **Lone Working**

Uppingham Town Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety.

The Council will determine, by risk assessment, those activities where work can actually be done safely by one unaccompanied person. This will include the identification of hazards from means of access and/or egress, machinery, goods, substances, etc.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- the remoteness or isolation of workplaces
- any problems of communication
- the possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other persons
- the nature of injury or damage to health

1.15 Information and Training

Employees will be given all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone.

Employees will be required to follow the safe working procedures devised including:

- when working alone, e.g. in an isolated area a member of the Council is aware of your location and expected time frame necessary to complete the task
- check that work being done has been subject to risk assessment and check the assessment yourself – some work may have been identified as requiring the assistance of a second person or simply prohibited from being a lone working activity
- if possible and arranged beforehand, keep in regular contact with someone else, e.g. use a mobile phone to call
- If there is no mobile phone connectivity then ensure you arrange for an alternative method of checking in i.e. visiting the office, walkie talkie, other
- do not put yourself at risk; if you do not feel safe discuss the situation with the Town Clerk

Certain tasks will not be carried out whilst working alone and these include working at height i.e. from ladders, heavy lifting activities. Further arrangements will be put in place for these activities.

1.16 Manual Handling

We will undertake risk assessments in respect of all manual handling operations identified as having a significant risk and will strive to reduce these risks as far as possible.

Training in lifting techniques will be provided for staff involved in all operations identified as having a significant risk.

1.17 Noise

The Council does not consider that the noise levels in its work activities exceed the lower action level as defined in the Noise at Work Regulations

1.18 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE will be provided where our risk assessments show that a risk cannot otherwise be avoided.

It will only be used where it is not reasonably practicable to modify the activity, the process, or the method of work to prevent risk.

PPE will be maintained and replaced as necessary to ensure its effectiveness. Employees must report loss or obvious defects in PPE as soon as practicable.