Benwick Parish Council
Disciplinary and Grievance Policy

Version Control

Adopted at council meeting on 07/07/2025 (minute ref 066/25-26 b)

Reviewed: 06/07/2026 (minute ref 057/26-27 b)

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for managing disciplinary and grievance matters affecting employees of Benwick Parish Council. The Council aims to ensure all issues are dealt with fairly, promptly, and in line with statutory guidance including the ACAS Code of Practice.

This policy applies to council employees only. The Code of Conduct for Councillors should be referenced for any complaints or concerns regarding a councillor.

Part A: Disciplinary Procedure

1. Introduction

This procedure applies to all employees. Its purpose is to ensure consistent and fair treatment when conduct or performance issues arise.

2. Informal Resolution

Minor issues will normally be resolved informally through discussion. If not resolved, the formal procedure below will apply.

3. Formal Procedure

3.1 Investigation
A full investigation will be conducted by a designated impartial person.

3.2 Notification of Disciplinary Hearing

- The employee will receive written notice of the hearing.
- This will include: the allegations, date/time/location, rights, and copies of all evidence.

3.3 Representation
Employees have the legal right to be accompanied at the hearing by a trade union representative or a colleague.

3.4 The Hearing

- The employee will have the opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- Their representative may address the hearing but cannot answer questions on their behalf.
- The panel may ask questions, and the employee/representative may challenge evidence.

3.5 Outcome
A written outcome will be provided, including any sanctions (e.g., warning, dismissal).

3.6 Right of Appeal
Employees may appeal in writing within 10 working days to the Appeals Panel. A further hearing will be arranged, and the decision will be final.

4. Examples of Misconduct

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Persistent lateness or unauthorised absence
- Breach of safety procedures
- Inappropriate behaviour or language
- Gross misconduct (e.g., theft, fraud, violence)

5. Records and Confidentiality

Written records of each stage will be maintained and handled in line with the council's data protection policy.

Part B: Grievance Procedure

1. Introduction

This procedure provides a framework for employees to raise concerns or complaints. The aim is to resolve grievances fairly and quickly.

2. Informal Stage

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns informally with the Clerk or Chair before starting a formal grievance.

3. Formal Grievance

3.1 Submission

- Submit the grievance in writing to the Chair of the Council.
- It should state the nature of the grievance, dates, and any relevant details.

3.2 Investigation

- A full investigation will be carried out by an impartial person not involved in the grievance.

3.3 Grievance Hearing

- A hearing will be scheduled within 10 working days where practical.
- The employee has the right to be accompanied.
- All relevant documents will be provided in advance.

3.4 Decision

- A written decision will be provided, normally within five working days of the hearing.

3.5 Right of Appeal

- The employee may appeal in writing within 10 working days.
- A separate panel will hear the appeal and make a final decision.

4. Accessibility and Support

- Reasonable adjustments will be made for disability or language needs.
- Proceedings will be clearly documented and explained.

5. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- All grievance matters will be handled confidentially.
- Records will be kept securely and in accordance with the council's data protection policy and GDPR law.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by changes in employment legislation or best practice.

For further guidance, employees may request a copy of supporting ACAS or NALC documentation from the Clerk.