



## ABSENCE AND SICKNESS POLICY

### 1. Introduction

The Council recognises that sickness and absence can have a big impact on both the business of the Council and the life of employees. This policy sets out how the Council will support employees during sickness absence and what action it will take, if an employee has frequent short-term sickness absences, or a prolonged period of ill health.

### 2. Policy

Should any employee consider they are affected by a disability or any medical condition which affects their ability to undertake their work, they should inform their line manager. The Council also reserves the right to require employees not to report for work, if it considers an employee is unfit to attend work due to sickness/ injury.

### 3. Notification

Should an employee be unable to work, they must inform their line manager as soon as reasonably practical, ideally on the first day of absence within one hour of their normal start time, stating the reason and the likely length of absence.

### 4. Line Manager

- 4.1. The Town Clerk is the line manager of all staff.
- 4.2. For the purpose of this policy, the Mayor or Deputy Mayor is the Line Manager for the Clerk.

### 5. Certification

- 5.1. All employees must provide the Council with a completed self-certification form for the first seven calendar days of sickness absences. The form should be completed on return to work (if the absence lasts less than seven days).
- 5.2. Should the absence extend to the eighth day (including weekends), the employee must send a fit note, issued by their GP, to the council. This note must also cover any subsequent periods of absence.

### 6. Fit Notes

Should a GP indicate "may be fit for work" on the fit note and identifies potential amendments; the Council will contact the employee and arrange for a meeting to discuss the suggested amendments, before they return to work.

### 7. Return to Work

Employees will not be allowed to return to work until their GP deems that they are fit to do so. Any requests for temporary adjustments to working conditions will be considered and accommodated, wherever possible.

## **8. Absence**

### **8.1. Short-term Absence**

If in any 3 month period there are 3 separate periods of absence (whether certificated or not), or if there is an unacceptable pattern of absence, for example regular time off on Mondays or Fridays When an employee returns to work from any absence (excluding holidays), the line manager will formally review the employees absence record.

### **8.2. Long-term Absences**

Long-term absence is a period of sickness which lasts longer than 2 weeks. The Council will take a sympathetic view about genuine health problems, and will be supportive in its approach to all employees in this situation. Such absence will be monitored by telephone contact.

### **8.3. Problematic Absence:**

If absence reaches problematic levels, the Council may have no choice but to dismiss the employee. The point, at which this action will be taken, will depend on the nature of work and the difficulties employee absence causes to the Council. The Council would regard dismissal as a last resort, following evaluation of medical information, alternative working options and employee views.

## **9. Medical Examinations and Reports**

9.1. In order to gather information about an employee's medical condition, the council may request permission to contact the employees' doctor and ask for a medical report (the employee may request a report copy).

9.2. The Council may in the case of extended periods of absence, require employees to be examined by a medical consultant of its choice in order to seek a medical opinion. If an employee refuses to be examined, they may be dealt with under the council disciplinary procedure.

## **10. Holiday Sickness**

Where an employee is laid up through sickness or injury during a period of pre-booked holiday, the Council will, subject to notification and certification, allow the employee to transfer to sick leave and take replacement holiday at a later date.

## **11. National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service ('Green Book' )**

As the Council abides by Green Book provisions, then an employee will be entitled to sick pay as defined in the employee's contract of employment.

## **12. Non-Compliance**

Any member of staff refusing to observe the policy will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy up to and including dismissal.

**13. Implementation of the Policy**

The Clerk will discuss the implementation of this policy with all existing employees and it will be included in the induction of all new employees

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## Dignity at Work and Bullying & Harassment Policy

### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

#### 1.1 Statement

In support of our value to respect others Sandown Town Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment by, or of, any of their employees, officials, members, contractors, visitors to the Council or members of the public from the community which we serve. The Council is committed to the elimination of any form of intimidation in the workplace.

This policy reflects the spirit in which the council intends to undertake all of its business and outlines the specific procedures available to all employees in order to protect them from bullying and harassment.

The council will issue this policy to all employees as part of their induction and to all members as part of their Councillor Pack. The Council may also share this policy with contractors, visitors and members of the public.

Bullying and harassment is most likely to be complained about when individual elected members or members of the public criticise Town Council employees, often without objective evidence and in environments which are open to the public such as Town Council meetings, or by way of blogs, Facebook comments, Twitter and other social media ( cyber bullying)

#### 1.2 Definitions.

1.2.1 These definitions are derived from the ACAS guidance on the topic. Both bullying and harassment are behaviours which are unwanted by the recipient. They are generally evidenced by a pattern of conduct rather than one off incidents.

1.2.2 Bullying and harassment in the workplace can lead to poor morale, low productivity and poor performance, sickness, absence, lack of respect for others, turnover, damage to the council's reputation and ultimately, Employment Tribunal or other court cases and payment of unlimited compensation.

##### Bullying

1.2.3 "Bullying may be characterised as a pattern of offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviour; an abuse of this use of power which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable which tends to undermines their confidence which may cause them to suffer stress".

##### Harassment

1.2.4 Harassment is unwanted conduct that isolates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

1.2.5 This policy cover, but is not limited to, harassment on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, belief, disability or age.

### 1.3 **Examples.**

1.3.1 Examples of unacceptable behaviour are as follows (this list is not exhaustive). Spreading malicious rumours, insulting someone, ridiculing or demeaning someone, exclusion or victimisation, unfair treatment, overbearing supervision or other misuse of position or power, unwelcome sexual advances, making threats about job security, deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading work and/or constant criticism, preventing an individual's promotion or training opportunities.

1.3.2 Bullying and harassment may occur face-to-face, in meetings, through written communication, including e-mail, by telephone, social media or through automatic supervision methods. It may occur on or off work premises, during work hours or non-work time.

### 1.4 **Penalties.**

1.4.1 Bullying and harassment are considered examples of serious misconduct which will be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure at Gross Misconduct level and may result in summary dismissal from the council for employees or through referral to the Standards Committee of the IOW Council as a contravention of the Members' Code of Conduct which may result in penalties against the member concerned.

1.4.2 In extreme cases, harassment can constitute a criminal offence and the council should take appropriate legal advice, sometimes available from the council's insurer, if such matter arises.

### 1.5 **The Legal position.**

1.5.1 Councils have a duty of care towards all their workers and liability under common law arising out of the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. Under the following laws, bullying or harassment may be considered unlawful discrimination; Sex Discrimination Act 1995, Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) 20095, Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

In addition, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and Protection from Harassment Act 1997 created a criminal offence of harassment with a fine and/or prison sentence as a penalty and a right to damages for the victim. In addition, a harasser may be personally liable to pay damages if a victim complains to an Employment Tribunal for sexual, racial, disability or age discrimination.

## 2. **PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

### 2.1 **Informal Approach**

Anyone; employee, contractor, member or visitor, who feels he or she is being bullied or harassed should try to resolve the problem informally, in the first instance. It may be sufficient to explain to the person(s) involved in the unwanted behaviour that their conduct is unacceptable, offensive or causing discomfort.

## 2.2 Formal Approach

### Employees

- 2.2.1 Where the employee feels unable to resolve the matter informally, any complaint about harassment or bullying can be raised confidentially and informally, initially with the Mayor or other Councillor if more appropriate. It may be appropriate for the complaint to be put in writing after the initial discussion with the Councillor, as this will enable the formal Grievance Procedure to be invoked.

### Others

- 2.2.2 False or malicious allegations of harassment or bullying which damage the reputation of a fellow employee /member will not be tolerated and will be dealt with as serious misconduct under the Disciplinary Procedure and/or a referral to the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.2.3 If elected members are bullying or harassing town council employees, contractors, fellow councillors or members of the public, a referral to the Monitoring Officer as a contravention of the Code of Conduct may be an initial appropriate measure. If this is unsuccessful then referral to the town council's solicitors may follow.
- 2.2.4 If any employee is experiencing bullying or harassment from a member of the public the Town Council will act reasonably in upholding its duty of care towards its own employees. Such complaints will be taken seriously and will be pursued with the third party concerned, exercising whatever sanctions are available. In some cases, harassment can constitute a criminal offence and the Town Council will take appropriate legal advice and action if such an issue arises.
- 2.2.5 A member of the public who feels he/she has been bullied or harassed by any members or officers of the council should use the council's official Complaints Procedure details are found on the Council's website.

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## Disciplinary Policy

### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This procedure is designed to help and encourage all council employees to achieve and maintain high standards of conduct whilst at work or representing the council. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all. This procedure is prepared in accordance with the dismissal and dispute resolution procedures as set out in the Employment Act 2008 and the ACAS Code of Practice APR 2009.

### 2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee until the case has been fully investigated
- 2.2. At every stage in the procedure the employee will be advised of the nature of the complaint against him or her and will be given the opportunity to state his or her case before any decision is made.
- 2.3. At all formal stages the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague during the disciplinary interview.
- 2.4. No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct when the penalty of dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice may be applied.
- 2.5. An employee will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.
- 2.6. The procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants such action.

### 3. MISCONDUCT and GROSS MISCONDUCT

#### **Misconduct**

- 3.1. The following list provides examples of misconduct which will normally give rise to formal disciplinary action:
  - a) Unauthorised absence from work
  - b) Persistent short-term and/or frequent absences from work without a medical reason
  - c) Lateness for work or poor time keeping

- d) Inappropriate standard of dress
- e) Minor breaches of Health and Safety or other Society rules or procedures
- f) Failure to perform your job to the standard expected or in line with your job
- g) description/objectives
- h) Time wasting
- i) Disruptive behaviour
- j) Misuse of the council's facilities (e.g. telephones, computers, email or the internet)
- k) Refusal to carry out reasonable requests or instructions
- l) Smoking in unauthorised areas
- m) Failure to follow an agreed council procedure

3.2. This list is not exhaustive and offences of a similar nature will result in disciplinary action being instigated N.B. persistent or frequent absence on medical grounds and long term sickness absence will be dealt with using a procedure for Incapacity, which is described in the Absence Policy.

### **Gross Misconduct**

3.3. The following list provides examples of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

- n) Theft, fraud, deliberate falsification of records, or other acts of dishonesty
- o) Fighting, assault on another person
- p) Deliberate damage to property of the council, its workers or members
- q) Gross incompetence in the conduct of work
- r) Gross negligence which results in the council or employees being put at risk.
- s) Being under the influence of illegal drugs or excessive alcohol
- t) Acts of incitement towards or actual acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation including on the grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- u) Serious acts of insubordination
- v) Serious breach of duty to keep information of the council, its service providers and its clients confidential
- w) Unauthorised entry to computer records
- x) Serious breach of the council's Security Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Confidentiality or email and Internet Policy
- y) Any action, whether committed on or off the premises, that is likely to or does bring the council into disrepute
- z) Serious negligence which causes or might causes significant loss, damage or injury
- aa) Accepting bribes or incentive payments from suppliers
- bb) Unauthorised use of Council funds or credit

cc) Working with an external agency to provide information which would be detrimental to and cause commercial risk to the council.

3.4. This list is not exhaustive and other offences of a similar gravity will result in disciplinary action being instigated at Gross Misconduct level which carries a potential penalty of dismissal. Gross Misconduct is generally any conduct which places extreme pressure on the mutual trust which exists in an employment relationship.

#### 4. PROCEDURES

##### **Suspension**

4.1. If you are accused of an act of gross misconduct, you may be suspended from work on full pay while the council investigates the alleged offence. Only the appropriately convened committee has the power to suspend. This enables a swift and thorough investigation to occur. Whilst suspended pending disciplinary investigation regular contact with a nominated person at the council will be maintained although access to premises, equipment or systems may be denied.

4.2. The Investigator who compiles evidence for the disciplinary hearing must play no part in the subsequent decision-making to ensure impartiality. Councils need to consider the implications of such arrangements on its hearing and appeal panel plans early on in the disciplinary process.

##### **Informal Action**

4.3. Minor misconduct will be dealt with informally usually in a confidential one-to-one meeting between the employee and line manager. In the case of the Clerk being the individual against whom there is a complaint or allegation the matter should be handled discreetly by members of the Staffing (or similar) committee and involve an informal meeting initially. However, where the matter is more serious or informal action has not brought about the necessary improvement the following procedure will be used:

##### **Formal Action**

4.4. The level of warning you may receive for misconduct/gross misconduct will depend on how serious the council considers the alleged actions to be and your previous conduct in all the circumstances. In the event of alleged gross misconduct the formal process may commence at Stage 4 -see 3.4 below.

##### Disciplinary Letters

4.4.1. If there is a concern about an employee's conduct or behaviour then a letter will be given to the employee advising him/her of the allegation(s) and reasons why this is unacceptable. The letter should invite the employee to attend a meeting at which the alleged misconduct will be discussed and will inform the employee of their right to be

accompanied to the meeting.

- 4.4.2. The letter will specify at which stage the disciplinary procedure is being invoked (see 4 stages below) and if invoked at Stage 4 for Gross Misconduct the letter will warn that a potential outcome could be dismissal. The time, date and venue of the meeting will also be advised. Any documents to be produced at the meeting will also be provided.

#### Disciplinary Meetings

- 4.4.3. The time and location of a disciplinary meeting should be agreed with the employee and it should be held in a private location with no interruptions. This will normally be without undue delay but allowing the employee to prepare their case e.g. within 5 days of the letter being sent, where practically possible. At the meeting the manager (or in the case of the Clerk being disciplined, the Chair of the hearing panel) will state the complaint against the employee and go through the evidence which has been gathered. The employee will also be allowed to ask questions, present evidence and call witnesses if advance notice has been given that they will do so.
- 4.4.4. If the employee is unable to attend the meeting due to unforeseeable reasons out of their control (e.g. illness) then the council will reasonably rearrange the meeting. However, if the employee fails to attend the meeting without good reason the meeting can be held in the employee's absence.

### 5. OUTCOMES AND PENALTIES

#### Stage 1 - Oral Warning

- 5.1. In the instance of a first complaint that conduct does not meet acceptable standards, the employee will normally be given a formal ORAL WARNING. He or she will be advised of;
- a) the reason for the warning,
  - b) that it is the first stage of the disciplinary procedure,
  - c) the improvement that is required and the timescales for achieving this improvement,
  - d) together with a review date and any support available (where applicable) and
  - e) his or her right of appeal.
- 5.2. A brief note of the oral warning will be kept but it will be spent after 6 months, subject to satisfactory conduct.

#### Stage 2 - Written Warning

- 5.3. If the offence is a serious one, or if further to previous formal disciplinary action, a WRITTEN WARNING will be given to the employee by the Line Manager.
- 5.4. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. It

will warn that action under Stage 3 will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement and will advise of the right of appeal. A copy of this written warning will be kept on file but it will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct.

#### Stage 3 - Final Written Warning

- 5.5. If there is still a failure to improve and conduct or performance is still unsatisfactory, or the misconduct is sufficiently serious, a FINAL WRITTEN WARNING will normally be given to the employee. This will give details of the complaint, will warn that dismissal will result if there is no satisfactory improvement and will advise of the right of appeal.
- 5.6. A copy of this final written warning will be kept by the Line Manager (or in the case of the Clerk being disciplined by the Chair of the Hearing Panel) but it will be spent after 12 months (in exceptional cases the period may be longer) subject to satisfactory conduct.

#### Stage 4 - Dismissal or other sanctions

- 5.7. If conduct is still unsatisfactory and the employee still fails to reach the prescribed standards, or where the Society reasonably believes Gross Misconduct has occurred, DISMISSAL may result.
- 5.8. Only the appropriately convened hearing panel can take the decision to dismiss an employee.
- 5.9. The employee will be given a written statement of allegations against him/her, invited to a meeting and then be notified in writing of the reasons for the decision taken at the hearing. Penalties at this stage may include dismissal with notice or summary dismissal (i.e. without any notice), Final Written Warning with/without demotion, loss of pay or loss of seniority.
- 5.10. If dismissal is the outcome, the employee will be advised of the date on which employment will terminate. In all cases the employee has a right of appeal.
- 5.11. Very exceptionally, if an offence of Gross Misconduct is extremely serious an employee can be dismissed immediately without a meeting. In this situation a letter setting out reasons for dismissal would be sent to the employee offering the opportunity for an appeal hearing.

#### 6. APPEALS

- 6.1. The Appeals stage of the disciplinary process is part of the Code of Practice to which an employee has a right. It can be exercised after any of the stages of disciplinary action for Misconduct, Poor Performance or Gross Misconduct.
- 6.2. An employee who wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision should inform the Chair/Mayor (or Chair of the relevant committee) within five working days, in writing and

giving reasons for the appeal. An Appeal may be raised if:

- a) The employee thinks the finding or penalty is unfair
- b) New evidence has come to light
- c) The employee thinks that the procedure was not applied properly

6.3. Where possible the Appeal will be heard by a separate panel of elected members who have not been involved in the original disciplinary hearing, who will view the evidence with impartiality. The employee will have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or accredited Trade Union official or lay member at the appeal hearing. The outcome of the appeal and reasons for it will be advised to the employee as soon as possible after the meeting and be confirmed in writing.

6.4. At the Appeal hearing any disciplinary penalty imposed will be reviewed but it cannot be increased. The decision taken at the Appeal hearing will be final.

## 7. THE RIGHT TO BE ACCOMPANIED

7.1. At each formal stage of disciplinary interview an employee has the right to be accompanied and can make a reasonable request for such a person to accompany them. An employee can ask any other employee or a trade union representative or an appropriately accredited official employed by a trade union to accompany them, to give support and help them prepare for the disciplinary interview.

7.2. This right is enshrined in the 1999 Employment Relations Act. As this is an internal process there is no provision to have any external person accompany or represent an employee e.g. partner, parent, solicitor etc. present.

7.3. The companion can address the hearing, put and sum up the employee's case, respond on behalf of the worker to any views expressed at the meeting, confer with the employee. The companion cannot however answer questions on the employee's behalf or address the hearing if the employee does not wish him/her to or prevent the employee explaining their case.

## 8. HEARING PANELS

8.1. The town council will establish hearing panels to hear disciplinary and grievance hearings on an annual basis so that if a dispute does arise in the workplace the elected members involved are already trained and briefed on their duties as a hearing or appeal panel member. In situations where individual members are implicated in the dispute or have undertaken an investigatory role then they will need to be substituted as panel members.

## 9. NOTE-TAKING

9.1. It is highly recommended that a note-taker be provided to every meeting/hearing which arises as a result of a disciplinary process as Employment Tribunals are particularly keen to view contemporaneous notes of events which have led to an employment dispute. Councils will need to give this requirement careful consideration in order to respect employee confidentiality.

## 10. GRIEVANCES RAISED DURING DISCIPLINARY PROCESSES

10.1. In some circumstances when a disciplinary process has commenced an employee chooses to exercise his/her right to raise an internal grievance about the employment relationship with the council or individual Members. It is recommended that in line with ACAS advice, that disciplinary matters are placed on hold until grievances have been aired and actions towards a resolution have been progressed. In exceptional circumstances it is pragmatic to deal with the two disputes concurrently but specialist advice should be sought if this arises.

## 11. CRIMINAL CHARGES OR CONVICTIONS

11.1. If an employee is charged with or convicted of a criminal offence this does not automatically give rise to a disciplinary situation. Consideration needs to be given to how a charge or conviction may affect an employee's ability to undertake his or her job duties and their relationships with the employer, colleagues, subordinates or customers.

## 12. GETTING IT WRONG

12.1. Failure to follow the ACAS Code of Practice (available at [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)) can lead to an Employment Tribunal awarding an uplift of an award against the council of up to 25%.

12.2. Tribunals dealing with unfair dismissal claims are particularly interested in whether the employer followed a procedure and whether the employer acted fairly and reasonably. One way in which to avoid such a penalty is to have an agreed procedure, communicate that procedure to staff and Members, revisit and review the procedure regularly and have some training for those who are expected to operate the procedure.

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## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

It is the policy of the council to give employees the opportunity to air and seek redress for any individual employment grievance which they may have. Grievances may be any concerns, problems or complaints employees wish to raise with the council. This document describes the procedure which aims to facilitate a speedy, fair and consistent solution to an individual employee's employment grievance. This procedure is produced in line with the ACAS Code of Practice 2009 as set out in the Employment Act 2008.

### 2. PRINCIPLES

- a) At every stage in the procedure the employee will be given the opportunity to state his or her case before any decision is made.
- b) Grievances will be dealt with promptly and consistently
- c) At all formal stages the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative during the Grievance Hearing.
- d) An employee will have the right to appeal against any outcome of a Grievance Hearing.
- e) At no time will an employee be penalised or victimised for having raised a Grievance against the council

### 3. PROCEDURE

- 3.1 Wherever possible, any grievance should be raised informally with the Employee's line manager, or if this is inappropriate with the next level of management. In the case of the Clerk to the council raising a grievance this should be directed to the Chair or Mayor of the council unless the complaint is about the Chair or Mayor in which case another Member can be identified to handle the Clerk's concerns. The recipient of the grievance from a clerk should share the grievance with the relevant committee established to handle employment matters and the issues should be treated with discretion and confidentiality at all times.
- 3.2 **Written Statement:** If the employee does not consider it appropriate to raise the grievance informally, or if requested by the person the employee spoke to informally, then the employee should submit a formal grievance in writing to their line manager, or if this is inappropriate to the next level of management.
- 3.3 **Meeting or Hearing:** Generally, within a reasonable period of time e.g. five working days of receipt of a written complaint, the line manager or Chair of the appropriately convened committee or hearing panel will arrange a meeting with the employee.

The Hearing Manager will endeavor to make the meeting arrangements mutually convenient and will arrange a confidential location, free from interruptions. The manager will investigate the substance of the complaint and hear submissions from the employee concerned together with such other submissions or evidence as s/he shall consider appropriate and take such steps as s/he shall consider necessary to resolve the issue raised. It may be necessary to adjourn the meeting in order for an investigation to take place.

Careful consideration of the evidence and the necessary steps required to resolve the problems will be given to the grievance. The employee may call witnesses by prior arrangement with the panel. There is no right for a Member or employee implicated in an employee's grievance to cross examine the aggrieved during a grievance hearing but the Panel may wish to make its own investigations through interviewing these individuals and/or other witnesses separately. The Panel may ask the employee what he or she would like to happen as a result of raising the grievance and bear this in mind when preparing the response.

3.4 **Response:** The Hearing Manager will advise the decision to the employee in writing and, where appropriate, include an action plan to assist in the resolution of the problem. Councils which handle internal disputes effectively generally consider the options and costs in a timely fashion, then agree and publicise the workable solutions, monitor, review and learn from the experience. There may be some value in exploring Mediation as a way in which to resolve differences between two parties.

3.5 **Appeal:** If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of the line manager on his/her complaint, s/he may appeal against the decision to the Mayor with written notice within five working days of the decision.

An Appeal may be raised if:

- The employee thinks the finding, or action plan, is unfair
- New evidence has come to light
- The employee thinks that the procedure was not applied properly

On receipt of the appeal the council's Appeals Panel shall arrange to meet and consult with the employee, the line manager or Members concerned and any other persons, as s/he shall consider appropriate without unreasonable delay. The Appeal Hearing Chair shall consider the issues and shall then take all such steps, as s/he may consider necessary to resolve those issues. Where the council's Chair or Mayor has chaired the initial grievance meeting the Vice Chair or Chair of another committee will hear the appeal as a hearing manager the decision of the Appeal Hearing will be final. The council will need to ensure that the Members involved in the hearings are able to act impartially and reasonably at all times. The outcome of the appeal should be conveyed to the employee in writing in a timely manner.

3.6 **Bullying or Harassment:** If a grievance concerns alleged bullying or harassment the matter should be reported promptly to the employee's Line Manager, or Mayor or Deputy if more appropriate, with an indication of the required action. The complaint will then be investigated and any action taken and any resolution achieved will be reported back. If the solution is not satisfactory to the complainant, the matter will be discussed further and, if appropriate, an alternative solution agreed.

The decision at this stage will generally conclude the enquiry. If a further appeal or review is available the employee will be notified. As a result of an investigation into a claim of harassment disciplinary action may be instigated against any alleged perpetrators of the action or in the case of alleged perpetrators being elected Members a Code of Conduct complaint lodged by the council through the Monitoring Officer of the Isle of Wight Council. Refer to the Dignity at Work Policy for further details

3.7 **Right to be Accompanied:** At any formal stage of the procedure an employee may be accompanied by a fellow employee of their choice or their trade union representative or official of a trade union (appropriately accredited) but as this is an internal procedure they will not be entitled to be accompanied by any external supporter e.g. partner, parent, solicitor etc. This right to be accompanied is enshrined in the Employment Relations Act 1999. To exercise this right the employee should make a reasonable request. The companion will be allowed to address the hearing, put and sum up the employee's case, respond to views expressed at the hearing and to confer with the employee during the hearing (sometimes in an adjournment) but is not allowed to answer questions on the employee's behalf, address the hearing if the employee does not wish it or prevent the employer from explaining their case.

3.8 **Hearing Panels:** The Council will establish hearing panels to hear disciplinary and grievance hearings on an annual basis so that if a dispute does arise in the workplace the elected members involved are already trained and briefed on their duties as a hearing or appeal panel member. In situations where individual members are implicated in the dispute or have undertaken an investigatory role then they will need to be substituted as panel members.

3.9 **Confidentiality:** So far as is reasonably practicable, the council will keep any grievance or complaint of harassment confidential between the manager or Member investigating the grievance or complaint, the employee and the person about whom the grievance or complaint is made. If it is necessary to investigate the matter with any other employee or person, the employee will be so advised.

3.10 **Record Keeping:** In all cases, written records of the nature of the grievance raised, the employer's response, action taken (with reasons), details of any appeal and subsequent developments will be retained and kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

3.11 **Grievances** raised during Disciplinary Process

In some circumstances when a disciplinary process has commenced an employee chooses to exercise his/her right to raise an internal grievance about the employment relationship with the council or individual Members. In line with ACAS advice, disciplinary matters are placed on hold until grievances have been aired and actions towards a resolution have been progressed. In exceptional circumstances it is pragmatic to deal with the two disputes concurrently but specialist advice should be sought if this arises.

#### **4. GETTING IT WRONG**

Following the repeal of the 2004 Dispute Resolution regulations employees no longer HAVE to raise a grievance before going to an employment tribunal. However, establishing a mechanism for differences and disputes to be resolved internally can often allow the employment relationship to continue. Failure to follow the ACAS Code of Practice (available at [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)) when dealing with grievances can lead to an Employment Tribunal awarding an uplift of an award against the council of up to 25%.

Tribunals dealing with constructive dismissal and discrimination claims are particularly interested in whether the employer followed a procedure when dealing with an internal dispute and whether the employer acted fairly and reasonably. One way in which to avoid such a penalty is to have an agreed procedure, communicate that procedure to staff and Members, revisit and review the procedure regularly and have some training for those who are expected to operate the procedure.

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**SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL**

# Health and Safety Policy

REAFFIRM DATE:  
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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Sandown Town Council takes health and safety issues seriously and is committed to protecting the health and safety of its staff and all those affected by its activities and attending its premises. This policy is intended to help the Council achieve this by clarifying who is responsible for health and safety matters and what their responsibilities are.
- 1.2 This is a statement of policy only and does not form part of your contract of employment. This policy may be amended, by the Council, at any time at its absolute discretion. The Council will review this policy at regular intervals to ensure it is achieving its aims effectively.

## 2. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY?

- 2.1 Achieving a healthy and safe workplace is a collective task shared between the Council and staff. This policy and the rules contained in it apply to all staff of the Council, irrespective of seniority, tenure, and working hours. It includes all employees and officers, consultants and contractors, casual agency staff, trainees, homeworkers, fixed-term staff and any volunteers. Specific responsibilities of staff are set out below in the section headed "Responsibilities of all staff" below.

## 3. COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Council is responsible for:
  - a. Taking reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of staff, people affected by the Council's business activities, and people visiting its premises.
  - b. Identifying health and safety risks and finding ways to manage or overcome them.
  - c. Providing a safe and healthy place of work and safe entry and exit arrangements, including during an emergency situation.
  - d. Providing and maintaining safe working areas, equipment, and systems and, where necessary, appropriate protective clothing.
  - e. Providing safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of equipment and substances.
  - f. Providing adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all staff to do their work safely, to avoid hazards and to contribute positively to their own health and safety at work.
  - g. Ensuring any health and safety representatives receive appropriate training to carry out their functions effectively.
  - h. Providing a health and safety induction and safety training appropriate to your role.
  - i. Promoting effective communication and consultation between the Council and staff concerning health and safety matters.
  - j. If an epidemic or pandemic alert is issued, providing instructions, arrangements, and advice to staff as to the organisation of business operations and steps to be taken to minimise the risk of infection.
  - k. Regularly monitoring and reviewing the management of health and safety at work, making necessary changes, and bringing those to the attention of all staff.

3.2 The Council will give you the opportunity to ask questions and advise who best to contact regarding health and safety or if you are unsure about how to safely carry out your work.

3.3 Overall responsibility for health and safety lies with the Council. They have appointed the Clerk as the Health and Safety Officer with day-to-day responsibility for health and safety matters.

3.4 Any concerns about health and safety matters should be communicated to the Health and Safety Officer.

#### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

##### *General Staff Responsibilities*

4.1 All staff must

- a. Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- b. Co-operate with the Health and Safety Officer and the Council generally to enable compliance with health and safety duties and requirements.
- c. Comply with any health and safety instructions and rules, including instructions for safe use of equipment.
- d. Keep health and safety issues in the front of their minds and take personal responsibility for health and safety implications of their own actions and omissions.
- e. Keep the workplace tidy and hazard free.
- f. Report all health and safety concerns to the Health and Safety Officer promptly, including any potential risks, hazards, however minor or trivial they may seem.
- g. Co-operate in the Council's investigation of any incident or accident which either has led to injury or which, in the Council's opinion, could have led to injury.

##### *Staff responsibilities relating to equipment.*

4.2 All staff must:

- a. Use equipment as directed, following any instructions given by representatives of management or contained in any written operating manual or instructions for use, and adhering to any relevant training.
- b. Report any fault with, damage to, malfunctioning equipment, or concern about any equipment (including health and safety equipment) or its use to the Health and Safety Officer, who is responsible for ensuring the maintenance and safety equipment.
- c. Ensure that health and safety equipment is not interfered with.
- d. Not attempt to repair equipment unless authorised to do so.

##### *Staff responsibilities relating to accidents and first aid.*

4.3 All staff must:

- a. Promptly report any accident at work, however trivial, involving personal injury, and on any of the Council's premises, to the Health and Safety Officer so details can be

recorded in the Accident Book. They must also co-operate with any associated investigation.

- b. Familiarise themselves with the details of first aid facilities and trained first aiders, which are: The Clerk, The RFO and the Administrator.
- c. If an accident occurs, seek help from a first aider.
- d. The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for investigating any injuries or work-related illnesses, preparing, and keeping, accident records, and for submitting reports under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2023 (RIDDOR) where required.

*Staff responsibilities relating to national health alerts, including the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.*

- 4.4 If an epidemic or pandemic alert is issued all staff must comply and co-operate with all instructions, arrangements and advice issued by the Council as to the organisation of business operations and steps to be taken by staff to minimise the risk of infections. Any questions should be referred to the Health and Safety Officer.
- 4.5 Given the outbreak of Coronavirus (Covid-19), it is important that all staff members follow guidelines set out in this policy to ensure maximum safety and to minimise the risk infections. We will review these guidelines regularly to ensure they are kept up-to date with Government guidance.
- 4.6 Please see the section headed "Staff returning to work - Coronavirus (Covid-19)" below for health and safety measures which specifically address the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

*Staff responsibilities relating to emergency evacuation and fire*

- 4.7 All staff must:
  - a. Familiarise themselves with the instructions about what to do if there is a fire which are located on the notice board displayed in the Clerk's office.
  - b. Ensure they are aware of the location of fire extinguishers, fire exits and alternative ways of leaving the building in an emergency.
  - c. Comply with the instructions of the fire wardens if there is a fire, suspected fire or fire alarm (or a practice drill for any of these scenarios).
  - d. Co-operate in fire drills and take them seriously (ensuring that any visitors to the building do the same). Fire drills will be held at least once every 12 months.
  - e. Ensure that fire exits, fire notices or emergency exit signs are not obstructed or hidden at any time.
  - f. Notify the Clerk immediately of any circumstances (for example, impaired mobility) which might hinder or delay evacuation or fire. This will allow the Clerk to discuss a personal evacuation plan for you, which will be shared with fire wards and colleagues working near you.
- 4.8 On discovering a fire, all staff must:
  - a. Immediately trigger the nearest fire alarm and, if time permits, call the Clerk and notify them of the location of the fire.

- b. Attempt to tackle the fire ONLY if they have been trained or otherwise feel competent to do so. Nominated members of staff will be trained in the use of fire extinguishers.

4.9 On hearing the fire alarm all staff must:

- a. Remain calm and immediately evacuate the building, walking quickly without running, and following any instructions from the fire wardens.
- b. Leave without stopping to collect any personal belongings.
- c. Stay out of any lifts.
- d. Remain out of the building until notified by a fire warden that it is safe to re-enter.

4.10 The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that fire risk assessment taken place, that changes are made where required, and for making sure there are regular checks of fire extinguishers, fire alarms, escape routes, signage, and emergency lighting.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT, HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES AND MANUAL HANDLING

- 5.1 Risk assessments are essentially a careful examination of what in the workplace could cause harm to people. The Council will assess any risk and consider measures to best minimise any risks. The Council will carry out general workplace risk assessments when required or as reasonable requested by staff. Managers must ensure that any necessary risk assessments take place and the resulting recommendations are implemented. The Clerk is responsible for workplace risk assessments and any measures to control risks.
- 5.2 The use of hazardous substances will be avoided where possible and less hazardous alternatives will be used where available. Training on the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) will be provided where required.
- 5.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided where risks cannot be otherwise effectively controlled.
- 5.4 Guidance on manual handling (for example, lifting and carrying heavy objects) can be obtained from the Health and Safety Officer and where necessary training will be provided by the Council, but the Council will try to minimise or avoid the need for manual handling where there is a risk of injury.

6. STAFF RETURNING TO WORK – CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

6.1 Although Government restrictions introduced in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic have been lifted, the pandemic is ongoing and appropriate safety measures must be adhered to. Employees must adhere to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) mitigation provisions which are still relevant to our workplace. These include:

*A household member has a positive test for Covid-19.*

- 6.2 If a household member tests positive for Covid-19, the employee is asked to complete a Lateral Flow Tests and advise the Clerk of the result.
  - a. If the result is negative, a risk assessment will be taken to determine if it is safe/possible for the employee to attend the work place or work from home. The Clerk will advise the employee of the decision.
  - b. If the employee is attending the work place the employee is asked to complete a lateral flow test before doing so for the next five days.

### *An employee tests positive for Covid-19*

- 6.3 If the employee tests positive for Covid-19 the employee should not attend the workplace for 5 days.
- a. If they are well enough and their role enables them to, they may work from home but are not obligated to whilst unwell.
  - b. They should take a further lateral flow test after 5 days and the following day. They can return to the workplace if both tests are negative.
  - c. If the results are still positive the employee should not return to work until they have two consecutive negative tests.

### *Hygiene practices at work*

- 6.4 Staff must follow all hygiene measures which we implement. When appropriate, these may include frequency of hand washing, wearing protective clothing, sanitising workstations and desks.
- 6.5 We will provide adequate handwashing facilities (or hand sanitiser where not possible) at entry/exit points and when appropriate we expect all staff to use these facilities frequently whenever entering and exiting the workplace.
- 6.6 If you suspect you have Coronavirus (COVID-19) you must take a lateral flow test and if positive work from home to protect vulnerable centre users and members of staff.

### *Mental health whilst working during Coronavirus (COVID-19)*

- 6.7 We take the health of our staff seriously, including their mental well-being. Whether you are working remotely or returning to the workplace, we strongly encourage you to speak to your line manager, a colleague, or a member of the HR committee regarding any concerns or issues you have.
- 6.8 If you are working remotely from home or returning to the workplace, we encourage staff to:
- a. Connect with their fellow colleagues for informal chats or video calls.
  - b. Get regular exercise and sunlight outdoors.
  - c. Take regular breaks away from their workstation.
  - d. Ensure to drink sufficient water and eat properly.

## **7. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES**

- 7.1 Any breach of health and safety rules or failure to comply with this policy will be taken very seriously and is likely to result in disciplinary action against the offender, in accordance with the Council's disciplinary policy, up to and including immediate dismissal.

## LONE WORKER POLICY

### 1. Statement of Policy

Sandown Town Council will take every practicable step to protect the health, safety and welfare of its Employees and Councillors whenever they are required by the nature of their duties to work alone and without direct support and supervision.

The Council's employees are expected to work alone and for some staff lone working is the norm. Whilst working alone is not in itself unsafe there may be circumstances where working alone can increase risks. The Council recognises that there may be increased risks to staff who are required to work alone. The implementation of this policy should help to reduce these risks.

The policy applies to employees and Councillors and for the purposes of this policy lone working is defined as any activity or function performed on behalf of Sandown Town Council without any close supervision or with other employees.

### 2. Organisation and Arrangements

#### **Sandown Town Council is responsible for:**

- The lone working arrangements of employees;
- Determining the contents of this policy;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- Ensuring compliance with the policy and providing resources for putting the policy into practice;
- Making sure that employees and councillors are aware of this policy;
- Making sure that appropriate support is given to employees and Councillors involved in any incident.

#### **The Clerk to the Council is responsible for:**

- Making sure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly;
- Reporting annually to the Full Council on any incidents and actions taken in response.

#### **All Employees and Councillors engaged in lone working are responsible for:-**

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions;
- Follow all rules and regulations laid down by the Town Council;
- Report all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others;
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of this policy;
- Report any dangers they identify or any concerns they might have;

- Record full details of their lone working time;
- Recognise and assess potentially high risk activities before carrying out any work activity and put in place appropriate arrangements to carry out the identified task safely to mitigate risk associated with working alone;
- In addition, and if appropriate, complete a form detailing visits from aggressive or potentially violent people. Any such forms or reports should be provided to the Clerk for appropriate action to be taken.

### **3. Lone Worker Guidance**

- Lone workers must carry their mobile telephone.
- Lone workers must carry any personal alarm supplied by the Town Council.
- Employees and Councillors must take reasonable care not to put themselves at undue risk. If they feel that they would be at particular risk unless additional precautions are taken then they should discuss this with the Clerk in the first instance.
- Plan the visit – let someone know time of leaving, where going and estimated time of return.
- Try to avoid confrontation. If a situation does become heated try to stay calm. If violence is threatened it is best to withdraw.  
In the event that an officer suspects that a violent attack is imminent it may be possible to use a mobile telephone to summon assistance (e.g. 999 for the police). Heated arguments can suddenly escalate to the point at which violence is used and in practice there may be little time to call for help.
- Officers who find themselves in a violent situation may activate their personal alarms. It may be that activation of an alarm is enough to bring an attacker to their senses and persuade them to break off the attack.
- Note, personal attack alarms are not weapons and should be used only to startle an attacker and alert passers-by. Aggressive use of such alarms may actually inflame a situation.
- Personal attack alarms are not toys! They can emit a piercing noise and could damage hearing if held close to someone's ear. Do not use them for practical jokes
- Ensure that you are properly trained and have the skills and knowledge to do your job safely and without risks to health. If you feel that you need extra training then discuss this with the Clerk.

REAFFIRM DATE:

REVIEW DATE: May-2027

MINUTE NUMBER:

# Sandown Town Council

## Redundancy Policy

Adopted 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019

REAFFIRM DATE:  
REVIEW DATE: May-27  
MINUTE NUMBER:



# SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

## **Pension and Retirement Policy**

APPROVAL DATE:  
REVIEW DATE:  
MINUTE NUMBER:

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## **1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

- 1.1. Sandown Town Council believes that having a planned retirement date has benefits for the Council and its staff; and supports effective succession planning for the Council and preparedness for the staff member.
- 1.2. The council recognises that some members of staff may wish to work beyond their 'Planned Retirement Date' and that the council can gain from the retention of valuable skills, knowledge and experience that extending their employment can bring.
- 1.3. Staff have the right to request to work beyond their planned retirement date and the council is committed to considering and approving such requests where there is a clear and demonstrable benefit.
- 1.4. This policy details the procedure to be followed when staff are approaching normal retirement age and how staff can make a request to continue working beyond their planned retirement date.
- 1.5. Sandown Town Council is committed to creating a positive and inclusive environment, respecting equality and diversity and encouraging good relations between people of all ages. It recognises the valuable contribution made by staff of all ages and will work towards eliminating prejudice and discrimination irrespective of age.
- 1.6. This policy does not apply where retirement takes place before the "Planned retirement date".
- 1.7. Employees wishing to retire early should discuss their options with the Town Clerk.

## **2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

[Plan your retirement income: step by step - GOV.UK](#)

[Employment Rights Act 1996](#)

[Human Rights Act 1998](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

## **3. WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO**

- 3.1. This policy applies to all members of staff and comes into effect whenever a staff member is within 6 months of their "Planned Retirement Date".

## **4. PLANNED RETIREMENT**

- 4.1. There is no longer a "Normal Retirement Age", employees are now able to work for as long as they wish.
- 4.2. Sandown Town Council will take an employee's "Normal Retirement Age" as the date at which an employee reaches "State Pension Age".
- 4.3. This date will vary depending on the employee's date of birth and whether they are male or female.

- 4.4. The actual day of retirement is the birthday when the employee reaches their State Pension Age, but employees have the right to request to continue working beyond their planned retirement date.
- 4.5. The Council has a duty to consider such requests and will take reasonable steps to accommodate an employee's request to work beyond his/her planned retirement date.
- 4.6. In accordance with the Age Regulations, where a member of staff does not make a request to work beyond their planned retirement date or where the council is unable to approve such a request, the Council will write to the employee to confirm the end of employment, ensuring that the employee has been given a reasonable opportunity to request continued employment.
- 4.7. The Council does not operate a compulsory retirement age. The use of a Planned Retirement Date linked to State Pension Age is intended as a workforce planning tool only.
- 4.8. Any decision to retire an employee will be based on legitimate aims such as workforce planning, succession management, and maintaining service delivery, and will be applied in a proportionate and non-discriminatory manner.

## **5. WORKING BEYOND PLANNED RETIREMENT**

- 5.1. If it can be demonstrated that it is in the best interests of both the council and the individual to continue their employment beyond the planned retirement date, the following criteria will be taken into consideration
- 5.2. Where an employee requests to continue working beyond their Planned Retirement Date, the Council will give full and fair consideration to the request.
- 5.3. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account objective and non-discriminatory criteria, including (but not limited to):
  - Operational requirements of the Council, including workforce planning and service delivery needs
  - Succession planning considerations, including the ability to develop or recruit other staff
  - The employee's skills, knowledge, and experience, and their ongoing value to the Council
  - Performance and capability, including any recent appraisals or performance concerns
  - Attendance and disciplinary record, where relevant and proportionate
  - Health and wellbeing considerations, including any reasonable adjustments where appropriate Health considerations will only be taken into account where relevant to the role and will be assessed in line with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments
  - The impact on team structure and opportunities for other employees
  - Cost implications, including salary, pension, and any associated budgetary constraints

- The duration of the extension requested and whether a fixed-term extension would be appropriate
- 5.4. The Council will ensure that decisions are:
- Based on objective evidence
  - Consistent with previous decisions where comparable circumstances apply
  - Free from unlawful age discrimination
- 5.5. No request will be refused solely on the basis of age.
- 5.6. Employees may also request flexible working arrangements in line with the Council's Flexible Working Policy.
- 5.7. Decisions will comply with the principles set out in the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) guidance and relevant legislation.
- 5.8. The Council may, where appropriate:
- Agree a fixed-term extension
  - Propose a phased retirement, reduced hours, or alternative working arrangements
  - Review the arrangement periodically
- 5.9. Where a request is refused, the Council will:
- Provide clear, written reasons based on the criteria above
  - Ensure the employee is informed of their right to appeal
- 5.10. The burden will not be on the employee to justify continued employment; rather, the Council will assess whether there is a justified reason for the employment to end
- 5.11. The Council will monitor decisions to ensure consistency and fairness across the organisation.

## **6. PLANNED RETIREMENT PROCEDURE**

### **6.1. Overview**

- 6.2. The Planned Retirement Procedure is intended to give both staff and the council time to prepare and plan for retirement.
- 6.3. The procedure will be followed whenever a member of staff is approaching their normal retirement age, as defined in Section 4.0.

### **6.4. Stage 1 - Notification**

- (i) Sandown Town Council will write to employees 6 months prior to their normal retirement age, informing them of their planned retirement date and their right to request to work beyond their planned retirement date.

### **6.5. Stage 2 – Employee Request**

- (ii) Employees must submit a written request at least three months before their Planned Retirement Date.

- (iii) The request should include:
  - Reasons for continuing employment
  - Desired extension period

#### 6.6. Stage 3 - Consideration Process

- (iv) The Clerk will write to the member of staff arranging a meeting to discuss their request further.
- (v) This meeting will normally take place within two weeks of the written request being received or, where this is not possible, within a reasonable period of having received the request.
- (vi) The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union representative at the meeting.
- (vii) All parties should take reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Where this is not possible, a new meeting date should be agreed.
- (viii) If it is not possible to hold a meeting within a reasonable timescale, the Clerk may consider the request without a meeting being held, ensuring that any representations from the employee are considered.
- (ix) The HR Committee will consider the request to work beyond the planned retirement date.
- (x) The Clerk will write to the member of staff, normally within two weeks of the meeting having taken place, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, informing them of the outcome of their request.
- (xi) The outcome of the request will be one of the following:
  - Approved as requested:  
The request to work beyond the Planned Retirement Date is approved, and employment will be extended for the period requested, subject to any agreed terms.
  - Approved with modification:  
The request is approved, but for an alternative period or on revised terms. The reasons for the variation will be clearly explained.
  - Refused:  
The request is refused. The decision will be based on the criteria set out in Section 5 and will be supported by clear, written reasons.
- (xii) Where a request is refused, employment will end on the Planned Retirement Date. The employee will be informed of their right to appeal this decision in accordance with Section 7.
- (xiii) Where a request is accepted by the HR Committee it will be confirmed in writing. The decision will be fully documented, with clear evidence of how the decision was reached.

(xiv) The member of staff will continue to be employed by the council under the same terms and conditions and with the same rights and benefits as they had prior to reaching their planned retirement age, unless otherwise stated.

6.7. In most situations a revised retirement date will be agreed. Therefore, this procedure will once again come into effect not less than 6 months before the revised retirement date.

## **7. APPEAL PLANNED RETIREMENT PROCEDURE**

7.1. Employees have the right of appeal where a request has been refused or accepted for an alternative period.

7.2. Appeals should be submitted within 2 weeks of receiving the HR Committee's decision, or as soon as is reasonably practicable where this is not possible.

7.3. The appeal should be addressed to the Chair of the Council and be in writing, dated and state the grounds on which the appeal is being made.

7.4. Following receipt of a written appeal, the council will write to the member of staff inviting them to a meeting to discuss the appeal.

7.5. The appeal will be heard by the full council.

7.6. The appeal meeting will normally take place within two weeks of the appeal being received, or where this is not possible, within a reasonable period of having received the request.

7.7. The member of staff has the right to be accompanied at this meeting by a work colleague or Union Representative.

7.8. All parties should take reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Where this is not possible a new meeting date should be agreed, to take place as soon as is reasonably practicable.

7.9. If it is not possible to hold a meeting within a reasonable period, the Appeal panel may consider the appeal without a meeting being held, ensuring that any representations from the staff member are considered.

7.10. The member of staff will be informed of the outcome of their appeal within two weeks of the meeting.

7.11. The outcome will either confirm that the appeal has been successful and confirm the date that the employment will be extended to, or if the appeal was unsuccessful explain that the staff member will therefore retire on their planned retirement date with the reasons for the decision.

7.12. The appeal will be heard by members who were not involved in the original decision where reasonably practicable.

## **8. PENSION SCHEME**

8.1. The Council operates a contributory pension scheme with auto-enrolment (subject to eligibility).

8.2. Contributions include:

- Employee contributions

- Employer contributions
- Tax relief

8.3. The scheme is administered by the Isle of Wight Pension Fund.

8.4. Further details are available via the Pension Fund website.

[Isle of Wight Pension Fund](#)

DRAFT

## Manage staff redundancies

A redundancy plan will help you manage each stage of the redundancy process. It should show how you'll:

- avoid compulsory redundancies
- consult staff
- select staff for redundancy
- give staff notice
- work out redundancy pay
- support staff and plan for the future

You should work with staff representatives – for example trade unions – to develop your plan if it's a large or complex redundancy situation.

Having an agreed plan allows you to easily share information with all your staff and help them understand what's happening. It's particularly useful when you explain your proposed changes during the consultation phase.

You can avoid job losses by planning ahead and looking at other options.

Before making redundancies you should see if you can:

- offer voluntary redundancy or early retirement
- agree to flexible working
- temporarily reduce staff working hours
- ask staff to stop working for a short time
- retrain staff to do other jobs in your business
- let go of temporary or contract staff
- limit or stop overtime
- not hire any new staff

## 2. Offer voluntary redundancy or early retirement

Your offer needs to cover the whole workforce and it must always be the employee's choice to volunteer. Make sure you do not pressure anyone or single a person out. For example you could be accused of age discrimination if you only offer early retirement to your older workers.

You do not have to select an employee just because they volunteer. For example if your most experienced employee volunteers you can explain that you're not selecting them.

It's a good idea to make clear to staff early on that voluntary redundancy or early retirement is not automatically given.

You must have a fair way of selecting who does get voluntary redundancy or early retirement.

You can offer extra redundancy pay if you want to encourage staff to volunteer.

## **Agree to flexible working**

You can agree to update employment contracts to allow more flexible working.

This could include staff:

- working fewer hours
- homeworking
- job sharing
- working compressed hours

## **Ask staff to temporarily stop working or reduce hours**

If it's included in employment contracts you can ask staff to:

- stop working for a while (known as a 'temporary lay-off')
- work fewer hours (known as 'short-time' working)

It must be a temporary solution and not a permanent change to agreed working hours.

### **If it's not included in employment contracts**

You can ask to update an employee's contract to include these options. They do not have to accept.

See the [Acas guide on lay-offs and short-time working](#).

## **Move staff into other jobs**

You should try and move staff into other jobs within your organisation before you start the redundancy process.

### **Once you've made someone redundant**

If you're looking to fill another role that is suitable for the person you're making redundant, you should offer it to them instead of redundancy. The redundancy could be judged an 'unfair dismissal' if you do not.

If you do offer them another job it needs to be:

- in writing
- made before their contract ends
- a different job to the one they're doing – you'll need to explain how it's different

They should not have to apply for the job. The new job must start within 4 weeks of their previous job ending.

Employees have the right to a 4-week trial period if they accept a new role. The trial period should start after they've worked their notice period and their previous contract has ended.

This avoids any confusion or disputes over dates if the trial does not work out. It's a good idea to set out the dates for the trial in writing.

If you both agree it is not working out they can still claim redundancy pay. You can agree to a longer trial period but it must be agreed in writing.

#### Related content

[Download guidance for handling collective redundancies](#)

[Download guidance for lay-offs and short-time working](#)

Consultation is when you sit down with staff to explain your planned changes and get their feedback and input. Your plans must not be finalised at this stage and you should aim to include any staff suggestions or ideas you agree with.

### 3. Who you must consult

You must discuss your planned changes with each member of staff who could be affected. This can include staff who are not actually losing their jobs.

You must sit down with each employee individually to explain changes and get their ideas and feedback. The meeting can take place over the phone if you both agree to it and there is a clear need, for example if someone works remotely.

#### **When you must consult elected representatives**

You must also consult trade unions or employee representatives during 'collective' redundancies. A collective redundancy is when you're making 20 or more redundancies within 90 days in a single establishment.

This means you must discuss redundancy changes with both elected representatives and individual members of staff in collective redundancies.

#### **How to consult**

There are set rules for collective redundancies which you must follow.

There are no set rules for consultations with fewer than 20 redundancies

but it's good practice to follow the same process.

You can read [the Acas guide to handling collective redundancies](#).

An employment tribunal could accept a claim for unfair dismissal if you can't show you've consulted an employee or employee representatives.

**You must consult staff who are on maternity leave.**

## Prepare for the consultation

You should get the information ready that you're going to share.

During the consultation period you must let staff know in writing:

- why you need to make redundancies
- the number of people and which jobs are at risk
- how you will select employees for redundancy
- how you plan to carry out the redundancies, including timeframes
- how you will calculate redundancy pay
- details of any agency workers you're using

You should also have:

- a trained person to lead the consultation
- a clear way of presenting your redundancy plan
- question and answers document

Call Acas on 0300 123 1150 to find out about training courses for your staff.

## When to begin your consultation

It's important you do not present a finalised redundancy plan to your employees. You must leave enough time to include any suggestions you agree to.

Number of redundancies	When to begin consultation
Under 20	No set rules
20 to 99 redundancies within 90 days in one establishment	30 days before the first redundancy
100 or more redundancies within 90 days in one establishment	45 days before the first redundancy

You must include in your total:

- voluntary redundancies
- employees you're moving into other roles

You only need to include employees on fixed-term contracts if you're making them redundant before the end of their contract.

## **Notify the Redundancy Payment Service (RPS)**

For collective redundancies you must let the RPS know your plans before the consultation starts.

Fill in [form HR1 on GOV.UK](#) and send it to the RPS address on the form.

You can be fined if you do not notify the RPS.

## **How long the consultation lasts**

There are no rules for how long the consultation should last. It can last longer than the minimum periods listed above if it's a large or complex redundancy situation.

You do not need to reach agreement for the consultation to come to an end. You simply need to show that the consultation was genuine and that you aimed to reach agreement. You must be able to show that you've listened to your employees and that you responded to questions and suggestions.

## **What to discuss at the consultation**

Consultations allow you to explain why you're planning on making redundancies.

In return it allows employees to discuss:

- ways to avoid or reduce redundancies
- how to reduce the impact of redundancies
- how the organisation can restructure or plan for the future
- how people are selected for redundancy

You must consider and respond to any suggestions made by employees. You can reject any ideas you do not think are reasonable but you should explain why. It's important to document all discussions and the reasons for your decisions.

You might not always be able to avoid redundancies but by working with employees you'll often be able to save jobs and come away with a better idea of how your business can plan for the future.

## **What information to share**

You should be as open as possible with unions and employee representatives. This will allow employees to feel part of the conversation.

Not providing enough information often leads to frustration and mistrust and can sometimes mean the consultation is invalid.

You should aim to provide the right level of detail for staff to understand your proposals. The information should not be so long or complex that a specialist is needed.

## Consult staff individually

You would normally consult individuals after you've completed consultation with employee representatives. You can choose to overlap with individual consultations if needed.

Related content

[Download guidance on handling collective redundancies](#)

You must select employees for redundancy in a fair way and not discriminate against any individuals or groups.

It's a good idea to use selection criteria to help you choose which employees to make redundant.

You should base the criteria on:

- standard of work
- skills, qualifications or experience
- attendance record (do not include absence relating to disability or maternity)
- disciplinary record

You must not select staff because of their:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- race
- sex
- sexual orientation
- religion or belief
- marriage or civil partnership status
- pregnancy or maternity leave – see [the Acas guide to redundancy for pregnant employees or those on maternity leave](#)
- family related leave – for example parental, paternity or adoption leave
- role as an employee or trade union representative
- membership of a trade union
- part-time or fixed-term employee status
- pay and working hours, including the Working Time Regulations, annual leave and the National Minimum Wage

Make sure your criteria does not indirectly discriminate against any of these groups. For example if you use flexible working as a criteria you could be discriminating against women. You would need to show that

flexible working is no longer possible after your business has changed.

## 4. Agree criteria with staff

You should consult employees to identify and agree selection criteria. For example you could sit down with employees to work out the skills and experience needed for your business in the future.

The more open and collaborative your selection process is the more your employees will trust that it is fair.

### Select staff in a fair way

It's a good idea to score employees against all the agreed selection criteria. This will help you avoid relying on one particular criteria and can lower the risk of discriminating against employees.

It will also help you:

- be objective when selecting employees
- easily share with staff how the selection process works
- explain your decisions at tribunals

### Ask staff to reapply for their jobs

You can ask staff to reapply for their jobs to help you decide who to select. You should still use criteria when you interview staff to make sure you're selecting people in a fair way.

### How to score employees

You can decide how much you want to score each criteria. You should also provide written evidence to support your score.

You don't have to use the points system used in this guide, it's just an example. The 'standard of work' criteria could look like:

Criteria: standard of work	Score	Evidence
Outstanding	15	
Exceeds objectives for the role	12	
Meets all objectives for the role	9	
Meets some objectives of the role	6	

Criteria: standard of work	Score	Evidence
Fails to meet objectives for the role	3	

## Decide which criteria are most important

You can adjust the points you give for each criteria. For example if it's agreed that 'attendance record' is less important you can allocate fewer points. This creates a 'weighting' which allows you to be more flexible in how you score staff.

Apply the selection criteria to the group of employees at risk of redundancy. This is sometimes known as the 'pool of selection'.

## Set up an appeals process

You should set up an appeals process for employees who feel they have been unfairly selected. This can reduce the chances of someone making a claim against you to an employment tribunal.

You should explain in your redundancy plans how someone can appeal. You might meet with staff face-to-face to listen to their concerns or ask them to write a letter or email explaining why they do not agree with your decision.

Related content

[Download guidance on handling collective redundancies](#)

[Download guidance on managing redundancy for pregnant employees or those on mat...](#)

You can only make an employee redundant once you've finished consulting staff.

It's best to tell an employee face-to-face that you're making them redundant. You should also let them know in writing.

You should include in the letter:

- their notice period
- leaving date
- how much redundancy pay they're due
- how you calculated the redundancy pay
- any other pay you owe them (for example holiday pay)
- when and how you'll pay them
- how they can appeal

You must give them at least the statutory notice period. This is based on how long they've worked for you.

How long they've worked for you	Minimum statutory notice
One month up to 2 years	A week
Between 2 and 12 years	One week per year
12 years or more	12 weeks

You should also check your employment contracts – they might include a longer notice period.

## When the notice period starts

The notice period starts when your employee gets the letter or email telling them they've been selected for redundancy. You should make sure you know when this happens.

It's a good idea to give them the letter at work or send it by recorded delivery. If you send it by recorded delivery make sure only the employee can sign for it.

Related content

[Download guidance for handling collective redundancies](#)

You must pay redundancy to employees who have:

- an employment contract
- worked for 2 full years

## 6. How to calculate redundancy pay

You must pay at least the statutory amount to your employees.

Use the [GOV.UK redundancy pay calculator](#) to work out an employee's statutory redundancy pay.

How much redundancy pay each employee gets depends on their age and how long they've worked for you. It's capped at 20 years – working backwards from the date you made them redundant. You must pay:

- 1.5 weeks pay for each year of work after their 41st birthday
- 1 week pay for each year of work after their 22nd birthday
- half a week for each year of work before their 22nd birthday

The limit for weekly pay is £525. The maximum total amount of statutory redundancy pay is £15,750.

You should check your employment contracts as you might need to pay more than the statutory amount.

You can choose to pay higher amounts if you want to encourage voluntary redundancies.

### **If your employee's pay changes from week to week**

Calculate the average weekly pay for the previous 12 weeks from the date you made them redundant.

If they did not work for a whole week during that time – for example they were on holiday or off sick – replace it with an earlier week.

You must share in writing with employees how you've calculated redundancy payments.

### **When you must pay redundancy**

You must pay redundancy on an employee's last day. You can pay shortly after on a set date if you both agree in writing.

You should clearly communicate when and how the payment will be made. For example let employees know if payments will be included in their monthly pay or as separate payments.

### **If you cannot afford to pay redundancy**

If making redundancy payments puts your business at risk you can ask the Redundancy Payments Service (RPS) for financial help.

If you're insolvent you can get RPS to make your redundancy payments and recover the debt from your assets.

Call the RPS helpline to discuss your options.

RPS helpline: 0330 331 0020

Related content

[Redundancy pay calculator on GOV.UK](#)

[Download guidance on handling collective redundancies](#)

Redundancy can create difficult situations and conversations in your organisation.

You should think about how to support:

- employees at risk of redundancy
- managers who are breaking the news
- the people leading the consultation
- employee representatives
- staff that are staying on

It's often forgotten that those staying on experience stress from seeing colleagues and friends being made redundant. They will also be part of a

changing organisation and might feel uncertain about what the business and their roles will look like in future.

You can support staff by providing:

- counselling
- additional face-to-face meetings
- help getting financial advice
- clear plans for the future of your organisation
- help finding work for another company

## 7. Help staff find another job or training

You must allow staff a reasonable amount of time off to look for another job or training if:

- you're making them redundant
- they've worked for 2 full years (including the notice period)

### Paying staff who take time off to look for another job

You must pay employees who take time off to look for new work. The most you need to pay for the whole notice period is 40% of one week's pay. This is the total amount and not the amount per week.

For example if an employee gets paid £500 a week for a 5 day working week, the most you would have to pay them for their time off is £200 (40% of their weekly pay). This stays the same even if they take more than 2 days off.

### Contact Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus offers a 'Rapid Response Service' to help people get straight back into work. They can also help employees write or update CVs.

To get help using the Rapid Response Service email:

[rrs.enquiries@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rrs.enquiries@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk)

You need to include in the email:

- your contact details
- the town and postcode your business is based in
- the location of the redundancies

They can also give you useful information about finding work to pass on to your staff.

## Support the people breaking the bad news

You should make sure that anyone breaking the news to staff:

- understands in detail the organisation's plans
- knows why redundancies are being made
- is trained (at least in how to hold difficult conversations)
- is not over-worked (their role often involves long hours)
- has a group of colleagues they can turn to for support
- understands the support they can get from trade unions

Staff will have lots of questions about what's happening – it's important the person telling them they're being made redundant understands the changes and plans in detail.

Line managers often have to break the news to staff about redundancies. You should give line managers training and support to help them manage these difficult conversations.

They can then offer support and help to staff who are being made redundant. This in turn helps staff who are staying on believe that the organisation has dealt with the situation fairly and will be a good place to work in the future.

If the situation is handled in the right way it can make a big difference to:

- how staff react and cope with being made redundant
- the morale of staff who are staying on
- the success of the planned changes and future of the organisation

Related content

[Download guidance on handling collective redundancies](#)

DRAFT



# SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

## **Pension and Retirement Policy**

APPROVAL DATE:  
REVIEW DATE:  
MINUTE NUMBER:

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## **1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

- 1.1. Sandown Town Council believes that having a planned retirement date has benefits for the Council and its staff; and supports effective succession planning for the Council and preparedness for the staff member.
- 1.2. The council recognises that some members of staff may wish to work beyond their 'Planned Retirement Date' and that the council can gain from the retention of valuable skills, knowledge and experience that extending their employment can bring.
- 1.3. Staff have the right to request to work beyond their planned retirement date and the council is committed to considering and approving such requests where there is a clear and demonstrable benefit.
- 1.4. This policy details the procedure to be followed when staff are approaching normal retirement age and how staff can make a request to continue working beyond their planned retirement date.
- 1.5. Sandown Town Council is committed to creating a positive and inclusive environment, respecting equality and diversity and encouraging good relations between people of all ages. It recognises the valuable contribution made by staff of all ages and will work towards eliminating prejudice and discrimination irrespective of age.
- 1.6. This policy does not apply where retirement takes place before the "Planned retirement date".
- 1.7. Employees wishing to retire early should discuss their options with the Town Clerk.

## **2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

[Plan your retirement income: step by step - GOV.UK](#)

[Employment Rights Act 1996](#)

[Human Rights Act 1998](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

## **3. WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO**

- 3.1. This policy applies to all members of staff and comes into effect whenever a staff member is within 6 months of their "Planned Retirement Date".

## **4. PLANNED RETIREMENT**

- 4.1. There is no longer a "Normal Retirement Age", employees are now able to work for as long as they wish.
- 4.2. Sandown Town Council will take an employee's "Normal Retirement Age" as the date at which an employee reaches "State Pension Age".
- 4.3. This date will vary depending on the employee's date of birth and whether they are male or female.

- 4.4. The actual day of retirement is the birthday when the employee reaches their State Pension Age, but employees have the right to request to continue working beyond their planned retirement date.
- 4.5. The Council has a duty to consider such requests and will take reasonable steps to accommodate an employee's request to work beyond his/her planned retirement date.
- 4.6. In accordance with the Age Regulations, where a member of staff does not make a request to work beyond their planned retirement date or where the council is unable to approve such a request, the Council will write to the employee to confirm the end of employment, ensuring that the employee has been given a reasonable opportunity to request continued employment.
- 4.7. The Council does not operate a compulsory retirement age. The use of a Planned Retirement Date linked to State Pension Age is intended as a workforce planning tool only.
- 4.8. Any decision to retire an employee will be based on legitimate aims such as workforce planning, succession management, and maintaining service delivery, and will be applied in a proportionate and non-discriminatory manner.

## **5. WORKING BEYOND PLANNED RETIREMENT**

- 5.1. If it can be demonstrated that it is in the best interests of both the council and the individual to continue their employment beyond the planned retirement date, the following criteria will be taken into consideration
- 5.2. Where an employee requests to continue working beyond their Planned Retirement Date, the Council will give full and fair consideration to the request.
- 5.3. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account objective and non-discriminatory criteria, including (but not limited to):
  - Operational requirements of the Council, including workforce planning and service delivery needs
  - Succession planning considerations, including the ability to develop or recruit other staff
  - The employee's skills, knowledge, and experience, and their ongoing value to the Council
  - Performance and capability, including any recent appraisals or performance concerns
  - Attendance and disciplinary record, where relevant and proportionate
  - Health and wellbeing considerations, including any reasonable adjustments where appropriate Health considerations will only be taken into account where relevant to the role and will be assessed in line with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments
  - The impact on team structure and opportunities for other employees
  - Cost implications, including salary, pension, and any associated budgetary constraints

- The duration of the extension requested and whether a fixed-term extension would be appropriate
- 5.4. The Council will ensure that decisions are:
- Based on objective evidence
  - Consistent with previous decisions where comparable circumstances apply
  - Free from unlawful age discrimination
- 5.5. No request will be refused solely on the basis of age.
- 5.6. Employees may also request flexible working arrangements in line with the Council's Flexible Working Policy.
- 5.7. Decisions will comply with the principles set out in the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) guidance and relevant legislation.
- 5.8. The Council may, where appropriate:
- Agree a fixed-term extension
  - Propose a phased retirement, reduced hours, or alternative working arrangements
  - Review the arrangement periodically
- 5.9. Where a request is refused, the Council will:
- Provide clear, written reasons based on the criteria above
  - Ensure the employee is informed of their right to appeal
- 5.10. The burden will not be on the employee to justify continued employment; rather, the Council will assess whether there is a justified reason for the employment to end
- 5.11. The Council will monitor decisions to ensure consistency and fairness across the organisation.

## **6. PLANNED RETIREMENT PROCEDURE**

### **6.1. Overview**

- 6.2. The Planned Retirement Procedure is intended to give both staff and the council time to prepare and plan for retirement.
- 6.3. The procedure will be followed whenever a member of staff is approaching their normal retirement age, as defined in Section 4.0.

### **6.4. Stage 1 - Notification**

- (i) Sandown Town Council will write to employees 6 months prior to their normal retirement age, informing them of their planned retirement date and their right to request to work beyond their planned retirement date.

### **6.5. Stage 2 – Employee Request**

- (ii) Employees must submit a written request at least three months before their Planned Retirement Date.

- (iii) The request should include:
  - Reasons for continuing employment
  - Desired extension period

#### 6.6. Stage 3 - Consideration Process

- (iv) The Clerk will write to the member of staff arranging a meeting to discuss their request further.
- (v) This meeting will normally take place within two weeks of the written request being received or, where this is not possible, within a reasonable period of having received the request.
- (vi) The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union representative at the meeting.
- (vii) All parties should take reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Where this is not possible, a new meeting date should be agreed.
- (viii) If it is not possible to hold a meeting within a reasonable timescale, the Clerk may consider the request without a meeting being held, ensuring that any representations from the employee are considered.
- (ix) The HR Committee will consider the request to work beyond the planned retirement date.
- (x) The Clerk will write to the member of staff, normally within two weeks of the meeting having taken place, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, informing them of the outcome of their request.
- (xi) The outcome of the request will be one of the following:
  - Approved as requested:  
The request to work beyond the Planned Retirement Date is approved, and employment will be extended for the period requested, subject to any agreed terms.
  - Approved with modification:  
The request is approved, but for an alternative period or on revised terms. The reasons for the variation will be clearly explained.
  - Refused:  
The request is refused. The decision will be based on the criteria set out in Section 5 and will be supported by clear, written reasons.
- (xii) Where a request is refused, employment will end on the Planned Retirement Date. The employee will be informed of their right to appeal this decision in accordance with Section 7.
- (xiii) Where a request is accepted by the HR Committee it will be confirmed in writing. The decision will be fully documented, with clear evidence of how the decision was reached.

(xiv) The member of staff will continue to be employed by the council under the same terms and conditions and with the same rights and benefits as they had prior to reaching their planned retirement age, unless otherwise stated.

6.7. In most situations a revised retirement date will be agreed. Therefore, this procedure will once again come into effect not less than 6 months before the revised retirement date.

## **7. APPEAL PLANNED RETIREMENT PROCEDURE**

7.1. Employees have the right of appeal where a request has been refused or accepted for an alternative period.

7.2. Appeals should be submitted within 2 weeks of receiving the HR Committee's decision, or as soon as is reasonably practicable where this is not possible.

7.3. The appeal should be addressed to the Chair of the Council and be in writing, dated and state the grounds on which the appeal is being made.

7.4. Following receipt of a written appeal, the council will write to the member of staff inviting them to a meeting to discuss the appeal.

7.5. The appeal will be heard by the full council.

7.6. The appeal meeting will normally take place within two weeks of the appeal being received, or where this is not possible, within a reasonable period of having received the request.

7.7. The member of staff has the right to be accompanied at this meeting by a work colleague or Union Representative.

7.8. All parties should take reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Where this is not possible a new meeting date should be agreed, to take place as soon as is reasonably practicable.

7.9. If it is not possible to hold a meeting within a reasonable period, the Appeal panel may consider the appeal without a meeting being held, ensuring that any representations from the staff member are considered.

7.10. The member of staff will be informed of the outcome of their appeal within two weeks of the meeting.

7.11. The outcome will either confirm that the appeal has been successful and confirm the date that the employment will be extended to, or if the appeal was unsuccessful explain that the staff member will therefore retire on their planned retirement date with the reasons for the decision.

7.12. The appeal will be heard by members who were not involved in the original decision where reasonably practicable.

## **8. PENSION SCHEME**

8.1. The Council operates a contributory pension scheme with auto-enrolment (subject to eligibility).

8.2. Contributions include:

- Employee contributions

- Employer contributions
- Tax relief

8.3. The scheme is administered by the Isle of Wight Pension Fund.

8.4. Further details are available via the Pension Fund website.

[Isle of Wight Pension Fund](#)

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SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

# Sharps Management and Disposal Policy

APPROVAL DATE: 29/09/2026

REVIEW DATE: 29/09/2027

MINUTE NUMBER:

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Sandown Town Council is committed to protecting employees, contractors, volunteers, and the public from risks associated with the use, handling, or discovery of sharp items (sharps).
- 1.2. This policy outlines the safe procedures for managing sharps in line with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance and local authority protocols.

## **2. LEGISLATION:**

- 2.1. Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- 2.2. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations
- 2.3. Environmental Protection Act 1990
- 2.4. Hazardous Waste Regulations
- 2.5. HSE guidance on sharps injuries

## **3. PURPOSE**

- 3.1. This policy ensures:
  - Safe handling, storage, and disposal of sharps.
  - Proper training and awareness for those who may encounter sharps.
  - Compliance with health and safety and environmental regulations.
  - A coordinated response to incidents involving sharps.

## **4. SCOPE**

- 4.1. This policy applies to:
  - All Sandown Town Council employees and contractors.
  - Volunteers operating under the council's direction.
  - Council premises, public areas, and events managed or supported by the council.

## **5. DEFINITION OF SHARPS**

- 5.1. Sharps include, but are not limited to:
  - Hypodermic needles
  - Blades and scalpels
  - Lancets
  - Broken glass
  - Any object capable of puncturing or cutting the skin

## **6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 6.1. Town Clerk / Line Managers

- 6.1.1. Ensure this policy is implemented and reviewed.
- 6.1.2. Provide training and equipment as needed.
- 6.2. Employees / Contractors / Volunteers
  - 6.2.1. Follow procedures outlined in this policy.
  - 6.2.2. Report sharps incidents promptly.

## 7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. Sharps risks will be identified and reviewed as part of regular workplace and event risk assessments. Key locations include:
  - Parks and open spaces
  - Public toilets
  - Beachfront and seafront areas
  - Event venues
  - Community clean-up operations

## 8. SAFE HANDLING PROCEDURES

- 8.1. Do not touch or handle sharps with bare hands.
- 8.2. Use protective puncture resistant gloves (puncture-resistant gloves meeting EN388) and mechanical tools (e.g., litter pickers).
- 8.3. Place sharps directly into a **rigid, puncture-proof sharps container**.
- 8.4. Never attempt to recap, bend, or break sharps.
- 8.5. Staff who have not received sharps training or do not have the required PPE should not attempt to remove sharps.

## 9. SHARPS CONTAINERS

- 9.1. Approved yellow sharps bins must be:
  - Clearly labelled
  - Accessible near known risk areas (or carried by relevant staff)
  - Sealed when full and collected for safe disposal
- 9.2. The Town Council has sharps disposal containers in all its toilets which are collected by a licenced contractor.

## 10. DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

- 10.1. All sharps waste is classified as **clinical / hazardous waste**.
- 10.2. Publicly found sharps should be reported immediately for removal via local authority teams (e.g., Emergency Hit Squad). (01983) 823777 or [waste.contract@iow.gov.uk](mailto:waste.contract@iow.gov.uk)
- 10.3. Sharps on Sandown Town Council Land should be reported to the Clerk or Deputy Clerk who will arrange for removal.

## **11. INCIDENT PROCEDURE (SHARPS INJURY)**

- 11.1. Wash the area with soap and running water — do not scrub.
- 11.2. Encourage the wound to bleed gently.
- 11.3. Cover the wound with a sterile dressing.
- 11.4. Seek immediate medical attention.
- 11.5. Report the incident to the Town Clerk and complete an incident report form.
- 11.6. Incidents will be reported to the HR Committee.

## **12. TRAINING**

- 12.1. Relevant staff, contractors and volunteers will receive training on:
  - Identifying sharps
  - Safe handling and disposal
  - Using PPE and sharps bins
  - Incident response

## **13. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 13.1. This policy will be:
  - Reviewed annually or after any sharps-related incident.
  - Updated to reflect any changes in legislation or local authority procedures.

# Staff Recruitment and Retention Policy

## Staff Recruitment

- 1.1 Any vacancy will have a Job Description and Person Specification prepared for it and this will be available to any prospective candidate by way of the Town Council website or a recruitment pack.
- 1.2 Application for vacancies will be by means of standard application forms
- 1.3 All applications received by the deadline will be viewed and assessed against the job description and person characteristics appertaining to the specific vacancy. A shortlist will be drawn up for those candidates selected for interview. Any variation to 1.1 and/or 1.3 will be informed to the Council and minuted.
- 1.4 Candidates will be selected taking full account of the provisions of any Equality legislation in force at the time.
- 1.5 Offers of employment following the selection process described above will normally be made initially by telephone and followed up by a letter.
- 1.6 Unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the outcome by letter and feedback will be made if requested.
- 1.7 All offers of employment are made subject to satisfactory references being received and are subject to a three month probationary period..
- 1.8 That references taken up will be from the current employer or immediate past employer. The Town Council will also check on the candidate's right to work in the UK according to Home Office rules.
- 1.9 The Town Council will also need to verify any qualifications which are relevant to the position being offered through sight of the appropriate original documentation.
- 1.10 All staff employed by the Town Council will be required to sign the Town Council's formal Contract of Employment on appointment and not later than 2 months into their service with the Town Council.
- 1.11 All staff are paid in accordance with the nationally negotiated local government pay scales in force at the time, and subject to the NJC terms and conditions

## Staff Retention

- 2.1 All staff employed by the Town Council will be subject to an annual appraisal process.
- 2.2 The appraisal process provides a method of identifying any further training and development needs as well as monitoring staff performance and aiding in the retention of valuable members of staff.
- 2.3 Staff training will enhance the aim of high quality service provision by the Town Council. The Town Council regards the provision of training for individual employees' as opportunities for personal advancement, primarily within the organisation, where those opportunities exist.

REAFFIRM DATE:

REVIEW DATE:

MINUTE NUMBER:

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# SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

## Training and Development Policy

REAFFIRM DATE:  
REVIEW DATE:  
MINUTE NUMBER:

## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

- 1.1. Sandown Town Council believes in supporting and investing in councillor and staff training and development; enabling them to replenish their knowledge and learn new skills, to realise their full potential, which benefits the community they serve.

## **2. SCOPE**

- 2.1. This policy applies to
- 2.1.1. The councils 12 elected (or co-opted) councillors
  - 2.1.2. The Clerk/RFO, Deputy Clerk, Caretaker and Litter Picker.
  - 2.1.3. Any other permanent, full-time or part-time, employees of the council.
- 2.2. Employees with temporary/short-term contracts might attend trainings at the clerks discretion.
- 2.3. This policy doesn't cover contractors or consultants.

## **3. INDUCTION**

### **1.1. Staff**

All new members of staff joining the Council will receive an induction consisting of:

- 3.1.1. A walk around the ward and councils provisions.
- 3.1.2. Council Induction pack and briefing session including but not limited to:
  - Standing Orders
  - Financial Regulations
  - Members Code of Conduct
  - All policies of the Council
  - Budget information
  - Map of the wards.
  - Other information deemed relevant.
- 3.1.3. Training in the skills and knowledge for the job
- 3.1.4. An annual performance review which will include consideration of additional training for personal development and additional skills to support the council's objectives.
- 3.1.5. A copy of the council's provisions management document

### **1.2. Councillors**

All new Councillors, within their first six months on joining the Council, will receive an induction consisting of;

- 3.1.6. A walk around the ward and councils provisions with the Clerk and Mayor

3.1.7. A Councillor Welcome Pack containing copies of key documents and policies such as:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Members Code of Conduct
- All policies of the Council
- Budget information
- Map of the wards.
- Other information deemed relevant.

3.1.8. On becoming a member of any Committee - appropriate briefing on the Terms of Reference, and detailed knowledge required to be an effective member of the committee.

3.1.9. Council will ensure sufficient budget allocation to support this policy.

#### **4. GENERAL ACTIVITIES**

4.1. The Clerk will alert members of staff and Councillors when new training opportunities are available.

4.2. Training needs identified will take into consideration the overall objectives of the Council as well as the needs of the individual. This will be monitored by the relevant parties during staff appraisals, formal and informal conversations and any other methods as appropriate.

4.3. The council will budget for training and development of councillors and staff.

4.4. The Council will encourage training and pay expenses arising from approved training.

4.5. There will be a library of relevant publications offering information on all aspects of local government in the town councils offices.

4.6. The Council is committed to networking with other Councils as an effective means of sharing information and linking in with each other's training events.

4.7. The Council is committed to the Clerk being a member of the Society of Local Council Clerks

4.8. The Parish Council is committed to being members of the Hampshire Association of Local Councils and recognises the training opportunities it offers.

4.9. Requests for training and development should be made via the clerk (or deputy clerk)

4.10. Additional training needs will also be reviewed if:

- The council obtains new equipment.
- The council delivers new services.
- There are changes to legislation effecting the council.
- New, relevant qualifications are offered.

4.11. Additional training will also be considered following an accident, complaint, mistake, or similar instance.

## **5. TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS**

- 5.1. The Council will ensure that all new Councillors receive adequate training at the earliest opportunity either in house or externally if appropriate training is available.
- 5.2. Attendance of induction session explaining the role of a Councillor.
- 5.3. Access to relevant courses
- 5.4. Circulation of documentation such as briefings and newsletters/magazines.

## **6. TRAINING FOR THE CLERK AND OR OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

- 6.1. Induction session explaining the relevant role and other staff members.
- 6.2. The opportunity to gain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) within 24 months of appointment to maintain Local Council Award Scheme recognition.
- 6.3. Subscription to relevant publications and advice services.
- 6.4. Provision of Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold Baker, the SLCC Clerks Manual other relevant publications.
- 6.5. Regular training including but not limited to:
  - Equality and Diversity
  - Health and Safety at Work
  - Workplace Hazards
  - The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences
  - Lone Working
  - Fire Safety Awareness
  - Risk Management
  - Risk Assessment
  - VAT for Local Council's (Clerk/RFO and deputy)
- 6.6. The annual appraisal will be used to help identify any additional training relevant to the discharge of duties.

## **7. TRAINING FOR THE CARETAKER**

- 7.1. Induction session explaining the role.
- 7.2. A tour of the relevant site(s) from the Clerk.
- 7.3. Regular training in including but not limited to:

- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety at Work
- Workplace Hazards
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences
- Lone Working
- Fire Safety Awareness
- Manual Handling

7.4. Other training as highlighted during appraisals.

## **8. TRAINING FOR THE LITTER PICKER.**

8.1. Induction session explaining the role.

8.2. A tour of the relevant site(s) from the Clerk.

8.3. Regular training in including but not limited to:

- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety at Work
- Workplace Hazards
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences
- Lone Working
- Manual Handling

8.4. Other training as highlighted during appraisals.

DRAFT

# SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

## VOLUNTEER POLICY 2018

This Policy applies to volunteers working on behalf of, but not employed by, Sandown Town Council.

1. Volunteers must be adequately trained to be able to carry out the role required. The exact nature of the training will depend on the role. It is not possible to detail what constitutes 'adequacy' as requirements will vary according to:

- ❖ The job or activity
- ❖ The existing competency of volunteers
- ❖ The circumstances of the work (e.g. the degree of supervision)
- ❖ The tools and/or equipment being used

The training standard, however, must be sufficient to ensure the Health & Safety of volunteers and any people who might be affected by the work, as far as reasonable practicable. Responsibility for providing training rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by Sandown Town Council to undertake the work.

2. Volunteers, if working for only a few hours to help at an event or similar, must still be informed about the task and its purpose, health and safety and supervision arrangements. Responsibility for this rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by Sandown Town Council to undertake the work.

3. Volunteers expect to be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, age, faith/religion, disability or sexual orientation. Volunteers must be accommodated from all walks of life.

4. Volunteers must undergo an induction appropriate for the task(s) being undertaken. This must include health and safety, what to do if there is a problem and an introduction to other relevant individuals. Responsibility for the induction rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by Sandown Town Council to undertake the work.

5. A risk assessment must be undertaken in order to identify risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. If an area of activity presents a significant risk, consideration must be given to reducing or stopping the activity which gives rise to the risk. Sandown Town Council, through the offices of its Clerk or other person(s) as advised, must receive a copy of such risk assessment records. Responsibility for undertaking the risk assessment rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by Sandown Town Council to undertake the work. Risk assessments and their associated paperwork must comply with current Health and Safety at Work legislation.

6. So far as insurance is concerned, on condition that volunteers are working at the sole request of and under the sole control of Sandown Town Council then they will

be insured under the Town Council's Public Liability and Employers' Liability cover. Reporting to Sandown Town Council in respect of work which is of an ongoing nature is not necessary on each occasion and does not require formal approval of Sandown Town Council on each occasion.

**7.** Volunteers must carry out only less hazardous work involving, for example, path maintenance and grass cutting, with the use of non-powered tools only, other than lawnmowers/grass cutting equipment and strimmers, when stout footwear must be worn and safety goggles in case of strimmers. If there are serious issues with regards to trees, this work must be carried out a qualified tree surgeon with their own public liability cover of no less than £5,000,000.

Prior to work commencing, a visual inspection must be carried out to ensure that there are no obvious hazards such as litter, glass or stones. Responsibility for undertaking the inspection rests with the individual to whom authority has been provided by Sandown Town Council to undertake the work. Remedial action must be taken immediately and these inspections are to be recorded.

If volunteers use their own tools, the Sandown Town Council cannot be held liable for any injury caused by them through the use of faulty equipment/tools. Cleaning materials must not be stronger than those available on shop shelves. High visibility vests or other appropriate clothing must be worn where appropriate.

**8.** Jewellery, necklaces, watches and the like must not be worn if they might compromise the safe working environment for the volunteer.

**9.** Generally trainers, open-toed shoes, heeled shoes or sandals must not be worn if by so doing the safe working environment for the volunteer is compromised.

**10.** Long hair must be tied up if it is long enough to compromise health and safety requirements.

**11.** All work undertaken by volunteers shall have regard to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all other Health & Safety Legislation.

**12.** If Sandown Town Council is required to make a decision, a detailed and fully costed proposal must be submitted to the Clerk by no later than the Monday of the week preceding the Town council meeting.

**13.** Expenses will be paid only with the prior approval of Sandown Town Council and after receipt by the Town Council of paper receipts in respect of same. They will not include safety equipment or clothing.

**14.** Volunteers must inform Sandown Town Council of the work they intend to undertake before commencing such work, preferably in writing to the Clerk.

APPROVAL DATE:  
REVIEW DATE: May-27  
MINUTE NUMBER:

DRAFT