

## Slough Borough Council

<b>Report To:</b>	Employment and Appeals Committee
<b>Date:</b>	21 March 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	HR Policies and Procedures: Grievance Policy and Procedure
<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Sarah Hayward, Executive Director - Strategy, and Improvement
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Surjit Nagra, Associate Director HR / Dipak Mistry, Employee Relations & Policy Manager
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Exempt:</b>	NO
<b>Appendices:</b>	Grievance Policy and Procedure

### 1. Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval on the revision to the Grievance Policy and Procedure – attached in Appendix 1. The committee is requested to note the key changes that have been made.

### 2. Recommendation

The committee is recommended to approve the revised Grievance Policy and Procedure.

The revised policy supports the organisation's commitment to positive employee relations. The key changes will support the council towards enabling improved trust and confidence between managers and employees.

### Commissioner Review

It is essential that there are clear and appropriate policies and procedures in place to support individuals and managers in the effective running of the organisation. It is essential that once approved, there is an appropriate communication and training programme to raise awareness of the new procedures with staff.

### 3. Report

#### Introductory paragraph

The councils HR policies and procedures provide guidance on how to deal with a range of employment issues for employees, managers, and others with responsibility for supporting SBC's workforce. The policies provide practical and effective guidance to

ensure consistency and transparency for employees and managers, helping to enhance the psychological contract and work towards building a positive organisational culture.

The revision to the policy and procedure covers:

- Compliance with changes to current employment legislation and statutory provisions
- Supports the council’s governance and statutory practices.
- Incorporates changes to reflect best practice.
- Amendments made to ensure clarity for all managers and employees.
- Policy changes to encourage working in a collaborative way.
- Incorporates any lessons learnt from casework.

### 3.1 HR Policy Panel Review and Consultation

The Grievance Policy and Procedure review was conducted by South East Employers Organisation who produced a revised draft taking into consideration best practice and legislative changes. Following this, consultation with key stakeholders commenced which included Trade Unions and Management representatives nominated from Directorates through a Review Policy Panel. Comments were also elicited from the staff network groups including the Women’s Network, REACH (Race Equality and Celebrating Heritage Network); and the Disability Group. Comments and feedback from the stakeholders have been incorporated and agreed into the final draft.

In addition to the above, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has also been completed.

## 4. Summary of key changes Grievance Policy and Procedure

4.1 The table below summaries the key changes:

Policy Document	Changes	Rationale
Grievance Policy and Procedure  A separate supplementary guidance will be available for undertaking investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall document has been reduced to provide clarity and navigation. Part of ACAS best practice and legislation</li> <li>• Sections 1- 5 [Overall statement, aims and scope, principals simplified]</li> <li>• Section 3.1 Clarity on reasons for grievance can be raised.</li> <li>• Section 4.4 Probationary period amended to make clear about using informal approach and not formal grievance.</li> <li>• Section 6 – New Flow charts from Informal to appeal process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lessons learnt from ER cases where cases previously went into the formal stages.</li> <li>•Builds stronger confidence in working relationships between staff and managers.</li> <li>•Reduction in Staff Side and management time</li> <li>•Staff moral and impact on wider team during investigation and disruption to service delivery is reduced.</li> <li>•Previous policy section was not clear on using informal approach during review meetings.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 7 – New Informal resolutions added to provide clarity on raising concerns and how informal resolution will be sought emphasis on informal resolution is attempted before progressing to formal routes.</li> <li>• Section 16: Timescales – revised section to provide clarity on process to complete grievances more quickly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable both employee and managers and staff to navigate with ease.</li> <li>• Encourages communication between employee and managers to improve employee relations in the teams.</li> <li>• Lessons learnt some complex investigations have longer to resolve.</li> </ul>
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## 5. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with implementation of this revised policy. However, if the procedure was not followed correctly, this could result in an employee taking action through the employment Tribunal route. This inevitably cost the organisation of defending the claim.

## 6. Environmental implications

There are no anticipated environmental implications.

## 7. Risks

HR Policies and Procedures provide good governance in supporting the council employees and managers to maintain positive employee relations. The key risk for the council is mitigated through effective policies and procedures.

## 8. Equality implications

The equality impact assessment has been undertaken to consider that there are no negative implications for any employees of the council. The revised changes would be equally applied in a fair and consistent manner to all staff.

## 9. Conclusion

The revised policy will be under pinned by training programme to ensure that managers and employees fully understand how to resolve issues in the workplace before invoking a formal grievance.

## Background Papers

### Appendix 1 – Draft Grievance Policy and Procedure