



Windlesham Parish Council

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14th April 2026

To: Cllrs Jennings-Evans, Turner, White, Du Cann, Richardson and Wheeler

And all members of Council as nominated substitutes

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Personnel Committee to be held at Lightwater Library, 83A Guildford Road, Lightwater, GU18 5SB on **20th April 2026 at 6:30pm** to act upon the under-mentioned business.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Whitfield
Clerk to the Council

MEETING INFORMATION

Members of the public are invited to attend this meeting or alternatively, if you wish to submit any questions or comment on any of the items on this agenda without attending, please email clerk@windleshampc.gov.uk by midday on 20th April 2026. Please note that all written submissions for public participation are limited to 150 words and, where possible, will be read aloud at the meeting, along with the name of the person submitting the comment. If you do not wish your name to be made public at the meeting, you must specify this to the Clerk in writing at the time of submission.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of interest:** Members to declare any interest, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any requests from members for dispensations that accord with the Localism Act 2011 S33(b-e)
3. **Public question time**
4. **Exclusion of the press and public.** To agree any items to be dealt with after the public, including the press, have been excluded under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960
5. **Grievance Policy for review**
6. **Clerks Update**

Exclusion of the press and public - To exclude members of the public, including the press, for consideration of items excluded under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

7. To approve as a correct record the confidential resolution reports for the Personnel Committee held on the 13th January 2026, including any updates.

8. Staffing Matters

- a) To consider future staffing structure**
- b) Staff Contract Reviews**
- c) Staff Annual Reviews**

Item 5 - Grievance Policy – Review of the Definition of Investigator

Personnel Committee 20th April 2026

At the Full Council meeting held in January 2026 (minute ref: C/25/162), Members considered the Council’s Grievance Policy and noted a query raised by a member of the working party regarding the definition of the *investigator* referred to at point 4 of the policy.

Full Council resolved to adopt the Grievance Policy as presented, with the further resolution that the Personnel Committee would review this point at a future date to provide clarification where necessary.

Section 4 of the policy (“Investigation”) refers to the appointment of an investigator, but does not provide a detailed definition or set out clearly whether the investigator should be:

- a councillor or sub-committee, or
- an external independent investigator.

The absence of explicit clarification does not invalidate the policy, but Members previously identified that additional clarity may assist in ensuring consistency, transparency, and good practice should the policy be invoked in future.

Action

The Personnel Committee is asked to consider whether:

- **the existing wording is sufficient, and no amendment is required; or**
- **the policy should be updated to include a clearer definition of the role, appointment, and independence of the investigator; and**

Any recommended changes would be brought back to Full Council for ratification, in line with the Council’s usual policy governance arrangements.

WINDLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL GRIEVANCE POLICY

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Version & Date	Amendments made
V1.0-200728	Adopted at Full Council meeting 28 th July 2020
V1.0-210223	Reviewed at Full Council meeting 23 rd February 2021
V1.2-220125	Reviewed at Full Council meeting 25 th January 2022
V1.2-220125	Reviewed at Full Council meeting 29 th November 2022
V1.2-231128	Reviewed at Full Council meeting 28 th November 2023
V1.2-240723	Reviewed at Full Council meeting 23 rd July 2024
V1.2-251125	Reviewed at Full Council meeting 25 th November 2025
V2 -260120	Reviewed at Full Council meeting 20 th January 2026

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. (https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf). It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.2 Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.
- 1.3 This policy confirms:
- 1.3.1 employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a companion who can be a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. This includes any meeting held with them to hear about, gather facts about, discuss, consider or resolve their grievance. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for his /her grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
 - 1.3.2 the Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date.
 - 1.3.3 any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council.

- 1.3.4 an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final.
- 1.3.5 information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 1.3.6 audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition.
- 1.3.7 if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure.
- 1.3.8 if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
- 1.3.9 the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the consent of affected parties
- 1.3.10 employees can use all stages of the grievance procedure if the complaint is not a code of conduct complaint about a Councillor. Employees can use the informal stage of the Council's grievance procedure (paragraph 4) to deal with all grievance issues, including a complaint about a Councillor. Employees cannot use the formal stages of the council's grievance procedure for a code of conduct complaint about a Councillor. If the complaint about the Councillors not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the Monitoring Officer of Surrey Heath Borough Council who will inform the employee whether or not the complaint can be dealt with under the code of conduct. If it does not concern the code of conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 5). In all cases employees can refer to the Council's speakup policy if one is in place.
- 1.3.11 the Council may engage external investigators, grievance or appeal panels for the purposes of the process.

- 1.3.12 if the grievance is a code of conduct complaint against a Councillor, the employee cannot proceed with it beyond the informal stage of the council's grievance
- 1.3.13 procedure. However, whatever the complaint, the Council has a duty of care to its employees. It must take all reasonable steps to ensure employees have a safe working environment, for example by undertaking risk assessments, by ensuring staff and Councillors are properly trained and by protecting staff from bullying, harassment and all forms of discrimination.
- 1.3.14 if an employee considers that the grievance concerns his or her safety within the working environment, whether or not it also concerns a complaint against a Councillor, the employee should raise these safety concerns at the first opportunity with his or her line manager at the informal stage of the grievance procedure. The Council will consider whether it should take further action in this matter in accordance with any of its employment policies (for example its health and safety policy or its dignity at work policy) and in accordance with the code of conduct regime.

2 Informal grievance procedure

It is in the best interests of the Council and its employees if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with his/her manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the Chair of the Personnel committee or, if appropriate, another member of the Personnel committee. If the employee's complaint is about a Councillor, it may be appropriate to involve that Councillor at the informal stage. This will require both the employee's and the Councillor's consent.

3 Formal grievance procedure

If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally and the employee's complaint is not one that should be dealt with as a code of conduct complaint (see above), the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Personnel committee. If the

employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the Chair of the Council.

The Personnel committee will appoint a sub-committee of three members to hear the grievance.

The sub-committee will appoint a Chair from one of its members. No Councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.

4 Investigation

4.1 If the sub-committee decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint an investigator to carry out an investigation before the grievance meeting to establish the facts of the case. The investigation may include interviews (e.g. the employee submitting the grievance, other employees, Councillors or members of the public).

4.2 The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the sub-committee.

5 Notification

5.1 Within 10 working days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance (this may be longer if there is an investigation), the employee will normally be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The written notification will include the following:

5.2

5.2.1 the names of its Chair and other members;

5.2.2 a summary of the employee's grievance based on his/her written submission;

5.2.3 the date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will normally be within 25 working days of when the Council received the grievance;

5.2.4 the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official;

5.2.5 a copy of the Council's grievance policy;

5.2.6 confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend (or submit witness statements) on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses as soon as possible before the meeting;

- 5.2.7 confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least five days' notice
- 5.2.8 findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation;
- 5.2.9 an invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

6 The grievance meeting

6.1 At the grievance meeting:

- 6.1.1 the Chair will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee;
- 6.1.2 the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence;
- 6.1.3 the Chair will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action he/she wants the Council to take;
- 6.1.4 any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness;
- 6.1.5 the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case;
- 6.1.6 a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.

The Chair will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision, in writing, usually within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take and of the employee's right to appeal.

Notes must be taken by an individual who is not part of the sub committee and these notes must be agreed by the employee and the Chair.

7 The appeal

- 7.1 If an employee decides that his/her grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the sub-committee, he/she may submit a written appeal to the personnel committee. An appeal must

be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving the sub-committee's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.

7.2 Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:

7.2.1 a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy;

7.2.2 the decision was not supported by the evidence;

7.2.3 the action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate.

7.2.4 new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.

7.3 The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the personnel committee who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the personnel committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three Councilmembers who may include members of the personnel committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from one of its members.

7.4 The employee will be notified, in writing, usually within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will normally take place within 25 working days of the Council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.

7.5 At the appeal meeting, the Chair will:

7.5.1 introduce the panel members to the employee;

7.5.2 explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the personnel sub-committee;

7.5.3 explain the action that the appeal panel may take.

- 7.6 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
- 7.7 The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
- 7.8 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the personnel committee or substitute its own decision.
- 7.9 The decision of the appeal panel is final.

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if so required by legislation or additional material.