

Agenda - Parish Council Meeting

Members of Wiswell Parish Council are summoned to attend the Parish Council Meeting on **Wednesday 16 July 2025**, at Pendleton Village Hall, commencing at 18:30.

Members of the public are welcome to attend.

- 1. Apologies for absence.**
- 2. Approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meetings held on 14 May 2025**
- 3. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other registrable and non-registrable interests.**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary, and other registrable and non-registrable interest in respect of matters contained in the agenda.

- 4. Public participation. To receive questions and comments on any agenda item.**

This 30-minute session (time limit of five minutes per item/per person) provides members of the public an opportunity to indicate interests in an agenda item and put questions to the Parish Council. Such questions may be answered after the meeting or become an agenda item at a future Parish Council meeting.

ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION

- 5. Finance Report.**

Report of the Clerk (enclosed) to approve the:

- Accounts to date.
- Schedule of Payments as set out in the report.
- Reconciliation of Receipts and Payments as shown in the report.

- 6. Planning Matters.**

Confirmation of arrangements for reporting Parish Council responses to planning applications

- 7. Publication of minutes and the distribution of council agendas.**

Minutes:

- Council minutes should be available in draft form within two weeks of a meeting taking place.
- The draft minutes should be circulated to the Chair and Vice Chair for consideration.
- After the draft minutes have been considered and if necessary updated, they should be placed on the Council's website before formal ratification at the next Parish Council meeting.
- The approved 'signed' minutes should then be placed on the Council's website and the draft minutes removed.

Agendas:

- Draft agendas should be circulated two weeks prior to a meeting for consideration by councillors.
- Agenda packs should be finalised and published on the noticeboard (front sheet) and the Council's website (full pack) at least three working days before the meeting.

For example, for a meeting taking place on a Wednesday, the agenda should be published Thursday evening or Friday morning (at the latest) of the previous week.

8. Council Policies and Procedures.

For members to review the following documents (enclosed) which were last reviewed in 2021.

- a. Code of Conduct
- b. Disciplinary Procedure
- c. Grievance Policy

ITEMS for INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

9. Expressions of Interest (EOI) submission to RVBC - Update

Update from the from Chair regarding the EOI submitted to RVBC for a grant from the UK Shared Prosperity and Jubilee Fund to re-furbish the War Memorial.

10. LALC Area Committee meetings 28 May and 9 July 2025 - Update

11. Reports from Councillors.

12. Consideration of items for inclusion on future agendas.

Cunliffe Lane triangle near Chalker House.

13. Dates of future Council meetings.

The dates below were agreed at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 14 May 2025:

2025: 3 September and 5 November.

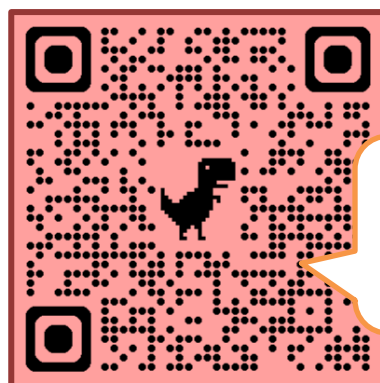
2026: 7 January, 4 March and 6 May

Stephen Houghton

Acting Clerk

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 www.wiswellpc.org.uk



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website



Meeting of Wiswell Parish Council Draft Minutes

Date:	14 th May 2025		
Place:	Pendleton Village Hall		
Present:	Cllrs Houghton; Birtwhistle; Ramsbottom.		
In attendance:	Clerk: Greera Norse. RFO: Mike Hill		
Meeting started:	19.30	Meeting Ended:	20.30

1. Apologies for absence:

Cllr A. Scholfield who could not attend due to the revised date for the meeting.

2. Approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 5th March 2025

Approved

3. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other registrable and non registrable interests.

No declaration

4. Public Participation.

There was no public participation at the meeting

5. Finance Report

RFO presented the report (enclosed) pointing out the above normal expenditure and income levels for the year ending. This was due to our successful REPF submission to RVBC which drew down an additional £13K into our accounts. We are eligible to reclaim VAT payments. The PC precept for the current year (£9750) is now in our accounts and is roughly an inflation rate increase from the previous year.

Accounts approved by council.

6. Update from the Chair on works completed as part of our successful REPF submission.

All work is now completed with the installation of our new noticeboard being the final piece in the jigsaw. An E mail of thanks has been sent to Hassan Ditta who ensured that we had sufficient funds in our account to pay suppliers and contractors so avoiding the potential for cash flow problems.

The RFO indicated that PCs could apply for a second round of funding. The chair agreed, with the approval of councillors present, to put in an expression of interest for the refurbishment of the war memorial in this the centenary of its unveiling. This would be likely in the region of £7K. The owners the Old School House have given their approval and support. This item will be formally discussed at the next meeting (see item 10)

7. Actions from previous meeting: updates

Liaison with RVBC regarding voting cabin near Coronation Garden – Completed

Cllr Houghton apologised for his non attendance at VE day Blackburn Cathedral due to family Commitments

Cllr Houghton reported an excellent turn out for the village VE walk on the 4th May (50 residents). Excellent post walk refreshments an opportunity for residents to mingle.
Cllr Ramsbottom to be provided with a formal PC E mail address... Clerk to action.

8. Planning updates

Mike Ramsbottom to now coordinate PC responses to applications.

9. Councillor Reports

Chair's report noted

Councillor Scholfield produced a written report his areas of responsibility which was presented to council.

10. Items to consider for future meetings

Update on expression of interest for funding opportunity subject to council approval ...

Cllr Houghton

Agenda Item 5

For Decision



Meeting Date: 16/07/2025

Title: **Finance Report**

Submitted by: Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Purpose of the report:

To update members of the Council's financial position and to seek approval of the accounts to date and agree any payments to be made.

Recommendations:

1. Approve the Report and specifically the:
2. Schedule of Payments.

Schedule of Payments to be considered for approval.

#	Ref.	Payee	Description	Gross £	Vat £	Net £	Due Date	Area of Spend
1		David Swift	Accountant	125.00	0.00	125.00	Paid	Admin.
2		Cllr. Houghton	Timber for village repairs.	55.00	0.00	55.00	Paid	Amenity
3		Use It Computers	Laptop (New)	810.00	135.00	675.00	Paid	Admin.
Totals:				990.00	135.00	855.00		

Note: Approval is not usually sought for Direct Debit payments, or for people or organisations where the Parish Council has a contractual relationship.

Receipts for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

Remittance			Income Streams						Totals
Date	Reference	Details	RVBC Precept	VAT Repay	RVBC Grants	LCC Grants	REPF	Sundry	
07/04/25	accy055780	Precept 2025/26	9,750.00						9,750.00
15/04/25	100388	HMRC VTR (01/12/23 to 31/03/25)		941.97					941.97
06/05/25	00009441	VE Day Grant			500.00				500.00
Total:			9,750.00	941.97	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,191.97

Payments for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

DD = Direct Debit

		Staff Costs			Administration Expenses			Amenity Expenses						Total
Dates	Details	Salary	HMRC	Home Use & Expenses	General Admin.	Website/ emails	General Costs	Ground Maint.	Amenity Maint.	Sundry Expenses	Resident Fund	REPF	VAT	
01/04/25	Easy Websites (DD)					44.19							8.84	53.03
15/04/25	HMRC Cumbernald 1 month tax		48.00											48.00
29/04/25	LALC - annual subscription						55.94							55.94
30/04/25	Clerk - Salary	268.67												268.67
30/04/25	RFO - Salary	214.50												214.50
30/04/25	Unity Bank service charge						6.00							6.00
01/05/25	Easy Websites (DD)					44.19							8.84	53.03
09/05/25	VE Day Weekend (Cllr. Houghton)									41.00				41.00
09/05/25	Resident - Plants for War Memorial							13.98						13.98
13/05/25	HMRC Cumbernald 1 month tax		43.40											43.40
22/05/25	P+M Payroll Services - Charge						33.30							33.30
31/05/25	Unity Bank service charge						6.00							6.00
02/06/25	Easy Websites (DD)					44.19							8.84	53.03
02/06/25	Notice Board Company											1,335.00		1,335.00
02/06/25	RFO - Salary	171.50												171.50
02/06/25	Cllr. Houghton - Timber for village repairs								55.00					55.00
02/06/25	Clerk - Salary	267.87												267.87
02/06/25	Accountant - David Swift				125.00									125.00
11/06/25	HMRC Cumbernald 1 month tax		43.80											43.80
30/06/26	Unity Bank service charge						6.00							6.00
01/07/25	Easy Websites (DD)					47.49							9.50	56.99
01/07/25	Use It Computers - New Laptop						675.00						135.00	810.00
01/07/25	Clerk - Salary	267.87												267.87
01/07/25	RFO - Salary	128.90												128.90
TOTALS:		1,319.31	135.20	0.00	125.00	180.06	782.24	13.98	55.00	41.00	0.00	1,335.00	171.02	4,157.81

Check: 4,157.81

Reconciliation of Receipts and Payments

	£	
Balance brought forward at 1st April 2025:	3,700.42	
Add total receipts to date:	11,191.97	
Less total payments to date:	4,157.81	
Balance:	10,734.58	<i>If these two figures are different an explanation is required.</i>
	£	
Unity Trust Bank Account - Balance at 10/07/25:	10,734.58	

Comparisons as at 10/07/2025

	FINAL ACCOUNTS 2024/25	AGREED BUDGET 2025/26	ACCOUNTS TO DATE 2025/26
INCOME	£	£	£
RVBC Precept:	9,166.00	9,750	9,750
RVBC Concurrent Grant:	113.00	0	0
RVBC in Bloom Grant:	80.00	50	0
REPF and other RVBC Grants:	12,775.34	0	500
RVBC Coronation Grant:	0.00	0	0
LCC Grants: Bio Diversity	300.00	500	0
LCC Grants: PROW	500.00	300	0
HMRC VAT Refunds:	0.00	325	942
Sundry and Other Income:	0.00	100	0
Residents Fund	265.00	0	0
	23,199.34	11,025	11,191.97
EXPENDITURE			
Staff Costs:	£	£	£
Clerk and RFO salary:	3,740	3,800	1,319.31
Home use, expenses and mileage:	611	500	0.00
HMRC:	1,776	1,800	135.20
	6,127.58	6,100	1,454.51
Administration Expenses:	£	£	£
Consumables (Ink and Paper etc):	0.00	280	0.00
Website hosting and emails:	565.48	810	180.06
Microsoft subscriptions	0.00	70	0.00
Payroll and Bank Service Charges:	182.40	185	51.30
Other website expenses:	0.00	0	0.00
GDPR, IT and Hardware:	0.00	40	675.00
Insurances:	621.18	225	0.00
Audit and legal fees	592.80	200	125.00
Room hire:	160.00	160	0.00
Training, books etc:	0.00	120	0.00
	2,121.86	2,090	1,031.36
Amenity Expenses:	£	£	£
Grnd Maint. Parish lengthsman scheme:	950.00	750	0
Grnd. Maint. Coronation Garden, War Mem.:	42.94	100	14
Amenity Maint. Noticeboard and Benches:	0.00	50	55
Amenity Maint. Phonebox, Defib, Grit bin:	16.74	100	0
Best kept village and other expenditure:	0.00	150	0
	1,009.68	1,150	69
Sundry Expenses:	£	£	£
Settlement	3500.00	0	0
LALC subscription:	55.01	60	56
Christmas tree:	350.00	350	0
Remembrance Sunday:	25.00	25	0
Contingency:	0.00	100	0
Other Sundry expenditure:	100.00	100	41
	4,030.01	635	96.94
IDENTIFIED EXPENDITURE	£	£	£
Residents Fund:	0	0	0
REPF:	11,495	0	1,335
VAT on Expenses to be Reclaimed:	724	0	171.0
	£	£	£
Total Expenditure:	25,507.75	9,975	4,157.81
SUMMARY:	£	£	£
Income:	23,199	11,025	11,191.97
Expenditure:	(25,508)	(9,975)	(4,157.81)
	(2,308.41)	1,050	7,034.16
BALANCE:	£		£
Balance brought forward at 1 April:	6,008.83	Balance carried forward:	3,700
Add surplus / less deficit from year:	(2,308.41)	Balance this period:	7,034
Balance carried forward to April 2025	3,700.42	Balance to date:	10,734.58

Cash flow forecast for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

		Actual			Forecast Income									
INCOME		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
1	RVBC Precept	9,750.00												9,750
2	RV in Bloom					80.00								80
3	HMRC VAT Return	941.97									150.00			1,092
4	Concurrent Funding						120.00							120
5	Other Grants		500.00											500
6	Residents Fund								200.00					200
7	REPF (against expenditure)													0
	Totals:	10,691.97	500.00	0.00	0.00	80.00	120.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	150.00	0.00	0.00	11,742

			Actual			Forecast Expenditure									
EXPENDITURE		Stream	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
20	Easy Websites	Admin.	53.03	53.03	53.03	56.99	56.99	56.99	56.99	56.99	56.99	56.99	56.99	56.99	672
21	LALC Subs. & Training	Sundry	55.94												56
22	Accountant, Legal Fees	Admin.			125.00										125
23	Office and IT	Admin.				810.00									810
24	Clerk Salary	Staff Costs	268.67		267.87	267.87	267.87	267.87	267.87	267.87	267.87	267.87	267.87	267.87	2,947
25	RFO Salary	Staff Costs	214.50		171.50	128.90	128.90	128.90	128.90	128.90	128.90	128.90	128.90	128.90	1,546
26	Defibrillator	Sundry													0
27	Unity Bank: Service Fee	Admin.	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	72
28	HMRC Income Tax	Staff Costs	48.00	43.40	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80	529
29	PM+M Payroll services	Admin.		33.30			33.30			33.30			33.30		133
30	Clerk Expenses	Staff Costs				30.00		60.00		60.00		60.00		60.00	270
31	Coronation Garden etc.	Amenity		13.98	55.00										69
32	Insurance	Admin.								625.00					625
33	Remembrance	Sundry		41.00						25.00					66
34	ICO GDPR Charge	Sundry											52.00		52
35	Phone Box/NB/Grit Bin	Sundry													0
36	Room Hire	Admin.										160.00			160
37	Lengthsman	Grnd Maint					950.00								950
38	Other Subs & Expenses	Sundry													0
39	Christmas Expenses	Sundry										350.00			350
40	REPF	REPF			1,335.00										1,335
	Totals:		646.14	190.71	2,057.20	1,343.56	1,486.86	563.56	503.56	1,246.86	503.56	1,073.56	588.86	563.56	10,767.99

Forecasts				
2025/2026	£		End of Year 2026	£
Forecast Income	11,742		Balance at 10/07/25	10,734.58
Forecast Expenditure	10,768		Forecast Income - July onwards	550.00
Forecast Balance 2025/26	974		Forecast Spend - July onwards	7,873.94
			Forecast Balance EoY 2025/26	3,410.64
			Forecast balance less Res. Fund	2,801.99

For reference:

Balance EoY 2024/25 = £3,700

2025-2026 - Unity Trust Bank Statements												
DETAILS	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Balance brought forward	3,700.42	13,746.25	14,055.54	11,998.34								
Income	10,691.97	500.00	0.00	0.00								
Expenditure	646.14	190.71	2,057.20	1,343.56								
Closing/Interim Balance	13,746.25	14,055.54	11,998.34	10,654.78								
Unity Bank Statements	13,746.25	14,055.54	11,998.34									
Statement Date:	30/04/24	31/05/24	30/06/24	31/07/24	31/08/24	30/09/24	31/10/24	31/11/24	31/12/24	31/01/25		

Residents Fund - Summary

	£	
Total amount of fund transferred:	543.65	
<i>The above and initial donation was made on 27/09/23</i>		
Gross Expenditure April 2023 to 31 March 2024:	0.00	
Gross Expenditure April 2024 to 31 March 2025:	200.00	Xmas tree donation
Donations April 2024 to 31 March 2025:	265.00	
<i>The above donation was made on 03/07/2024</i>		
Balance at 10/07/25:	608.65	
Gross Expenditure April 2025 to 31 March 2026:	0.00	

Residents Fund (ring-fenced donation).

At the 6 September 2023 Council Meeting:

RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL:

- a. Subject to consultation with members of the Wiswell Social Committee regarding signing off expenditure, approved that the Wiswell Resident's Fund could be transferred into the Council's Unity Trust Bank Account as set out in the report.
- b. Authorise the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements for the transfer and ring-fencing of the funds and the required changes to the Council's Finance Report.



Wiswell Parish Council Councillor Code of Conduct 2021 (Revised May 2021)

Joint Statement

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area, taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor with being intimidated, abused, bullied, or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct, and safeguard the public's trust in local government.

Introduction

This Code of Conduct was adopted by Wiswell Parish Council on the 25 May 2021 and is based upon the Model Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Association (LGA) in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media, and changes in legislation. The Council will therefore review this code annually following the LGA's review.

Definitions

For the purpose of this Code of Conduct, a "councillor" means a member or co-opted member of WPC. A "co-opted member" is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as "a person who is not a member of the authority but who:

- (a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- (b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority:

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee".

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, the Parish Council's officers, and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors, and local authority officers, should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty;
- I act lawfully;
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person;
- I avoid conflicts of interest;
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor;
- your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor.

This Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

The Council's Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct.

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

1.2 I treat the Council's employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the Council with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions, and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the Council, the relevant social media provider, or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and Council employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the Council's - Member/Officer protocol.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the Council's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the Council

As a Councillor

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of the Council.

Officers work for the Council as a whole and must be politically neutral. They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try to force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a Councillor

4.1 I do not disclose information:

- (a) given to me in confidence by anyone**
- (b) acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:**
 - (i) I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
 - (ii) I am required by law to do so;**
 - (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
 - (iv) the disclosure is:**
 - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
 - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Council, and**
 - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer, or my business interest.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents, and other information relating to or held by the Council must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or the Council and may lower the public's confidence in your or the Council's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring the Council into disrepute.

You are able to hold the Council and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the Council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position:

As a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the Council provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse Council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the Councillor authorising their use by others:

- (a) act in accordance with the Council's requirements; and**
- (b) ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Council or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Council to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the Council's own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a Councillor:

8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by the Council.

8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with any investigation or proceedings.

8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the Council's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with the Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the Council

9. Interests

As a Councillor:

9.1 I register and disclose my interests.

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, Council employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and hospitality

As a Councillor:

10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Council or from persons who may apply to the Councillor any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.

10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Council, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a Councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case, you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a Councillor. If you are unsure, contact the Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the Councillor, or a person connected with the Councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non-participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in Table 1, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion, or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

5. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in Table 2), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
 - a. your own financial interest or well-being;

- b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative, close associate; or
- c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registerable Interests as set out in **Table 2**;

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

- 8. Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:
 - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation carried on for profit or gain. (Any unpaid directorship).
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council: (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate Tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.

Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either: (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
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* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by the Council
- b) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

Wiswell Parish Council.

Disciplinary procedure

1. Purpose and scope

This procedure is designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance.

2. Principles

Informal action will be considered, where appropriate, to resolve problems.

No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee until the case has been fully investigated.

For formal action 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 at a disciplinary meeting.

Employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary meeting.

At all stages of the procedure the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative, or colleague.

No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will be dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

An employee will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action.

The procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this.

3. The procedure

First stage of formal procedure

This will normally be either:

- an improvement note/oral warning for unsatisfactory performance if performance does not meet acceptable standards. This will set out the performance problem, the improvement that is required, the timescale, any help that may be given and the right of appeal. The individual will be advised that it constitutes the first stage of the formal procedure. A record of the improvement note/oral warning will be kept by the chairman/vice chairman for 6 months, but will then be considered spent – subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory performance

or

- a first warning for misconduct if conduct does not meet acceptable standards. This will be in writing and set out the nature of the misconduct and the change in behaviour required and the right of appeal. The warning will also inform the employee that a final written warning may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change. A record of the warning will be kept by the chairman/vice chairman, but it will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after a specified period of 9 months.

Final written warning

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve performance during the period of a prior warning, a final written warning may be given to the employee. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. It will also warn that failure to improve may lead to dismissal (or some other action short of dismissal) and will refer to the right of appeal. A copy of this written warning will be kept by the chairman/vice chairman but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory conduct or performance.

Dismissal or other sanction

If there is still further misconduct or failure to improve performance the final step in the procedure may be dismissal or some other action short of dismissal. Dismissal decisions can only be taken by a resolution of the

council , and the employee will be provided in writing with reasons for dismissal, the date on which the employment will terminate, and the right of appeal.

If some sanction short of dismissal is imposed, the employee will receive details of the complaint, will be warned that dismissal could result if there is no satisfactory improvement, and will be advised of the right of appeal. A copy of the written warning will be kept by the chairman/vice chairman but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to achievement and sustainment of satisfactory conduct or performance.

Gross misconduct

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

- theft or fraud
- physical violence or bullying
- deliberate and serious damage to property
- serious misuse of the councils property or name
- deliberately accessing internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material
- serious insubordination
- unlawful discrimination or harassment
- bringing the council into serious disrepute
- serious incapability at work brought on by alcohol or illegal drugs
- causing loss, damage or injury through serious negligence
- a serious breach of health and safety rules
- a serious breach of confidence.

- Abusive, obscene language or gestures.

If you are accused of an act of gross misconduct, you may be suspended from work on full pay, normally for no more than five working days, while the alleged offence is investigated. If, on completion of the investigation and the full disciplinary procedure, the council is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred, the result will normally be summary dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

Appeals

An employee who wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision must do so within five working days. All members of the council as a committee

will hear appeals and committees decision is final. At the appeal any disciplinary penalty imposed will be reviewed.

Approved at Meeting of 2nd November 2021.

WISWELL PARISH COUNCIL'S GRIEVANCE POLICY

Introduction

1. This policy is based on the National Association of Local Councils template 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.
2. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with the chairman/vice chairman.
3. This policy confirms:
 - 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.
 - 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
 - any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council
 - an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final
 - 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)

- 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
- 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
- if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
- the Council may consider 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
- 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 councillor is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the chairman/vice chairman of Wiswell parish 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)
- 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 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
- 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 with the chairman/vice chairman of the council 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

Informal grievance procedure

4. The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with the chairman/vice chairman 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 the chairman/vice chairman (for example, because it concerns the chairman/vice chairman), the employee should contact another member of the council. 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.

Formal grievance procedure

5. 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 Chairman/vice chairman of the council.
6. The council will appoint a sub-committee of three members of the council or other suitable independent persons if it is not to have three council members to hear the grievance. The sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.

Investigation

7. If the sub-committee decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint an suitable independent 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).
8. The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the sub-committee.

Notification

9. 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:
 - the names of its Chairman and other members
 - 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
 - the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official
 - a copy of the Council's grievance policy
 - 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
 - confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least two days' notice
 - findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation
 - an invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

The grievance meeting

10. At the grievance meeting:
 - the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee
 - the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence
 - the Chairman will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action does he/she wants the Council to take
 - any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness
 - the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
 - a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.
11. The Chairman 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.

The appeal

12. 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 council. 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.
13. Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:
 - a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
 - the decision was not supported by the evidence
 - the action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate
 - new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.
14. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the council who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the council who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of all council members. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.
15. 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.
16. At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the staffing sub-committee
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.

17. The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
18. 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.
19. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the staffing committee or substitute its own decision.
20. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

Approved at Meeting of 2nd November 2021.