

## **STAFFING COMMITTEE AGENDA**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF**  
**A Meeting of the STAFFING COMMITTEE**  
**to be held at the Fleur-De-Lys Council Chamber, Market Street, Hailsham,**  
**BN27 2AE, on**

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 7.00pm**

**1. Public Forum**

A period of not more than 15 minutes for matters relevant to the responsibilities of this committee, at the discretion of the Chair.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence of appointed members.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

To receive notice of declarations of personal or prejudicial interests in respect of items on this agenda.

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To resolve that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 October 2024, are an accurate record and may be signed by the Chair.

**5. Policies**

To review the following policies, offering any suggestions/comments or amendments:

5.1 Disciplinary Policy

5.2 Occupational Health and Wellbeing including post-employment health questionnaire

5.3 Flexible Working

5.4 Probation policy and induction toolkit Oct 24

5.5 Volunteer policy and agreement

5.6 Lone Working

**6. HR Quotes**

To review HR support quotes.

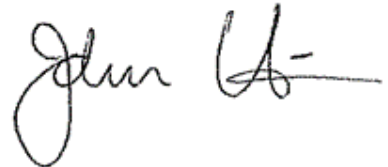
**7. Confidential Business**

To resolve that the next agenda item (8) is conducted under confidential business as it concerns: engagement, terms of service and the beginning of legal proceedings - in accordance with the Council's Standing Order No 1E.

**8. Staffing Review**

To consider implications arising from the Staffing Review.

- Recruitment: RFO, Finance Assistant
- Ongoing Issues; update
- Appraisals: Appraisals policy to come to April Staffing Committee with a view to starting appraisals in May 25
- Contracts



John Harrison, Town Clerk  
9<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**Committee Membership: Cllrs**

Gavin Blake-Coggins  
Kelly-Marie Blundell-Smith  
Barry Carpenter  
Barbara Holbrook  
Karen Nicholls (Chair)  
Anne Marie Ricketts (Dep. Chair)  
Doina Rusu

**Substitutes; Cllrs**

Chris Bryant  
Jo Crittenden  
Nathalie Hayes  
Glynn White



**HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**STAFFING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

of the meeting of the Staffing Committee,  
held at the **Fleur-De-Lys Council Chamber, Market Street, Hailsham, BN27 2AE** On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>  
October 2024 at 7.00 p.m.

SfC/24/3/ 19	<b><u>Public Forum</u></b> None presented
20	<b><u>Present:</u></b>  Cllr B. Carpenter, Cllr B. Holbrook, Cllr K. Nicholls (Chair), Cllr D. Rusu, Cllr G. White. Cllr P. Holbrook also attended.
21	<b><u>Officers Present:</u></b> J. Harrison (Town Clerk), E. Hastings (Corporate Services Manager), T. Lee (Operations & Facilities Manager)
22	<b><u>Apologies For Absence:</u></b> Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr G. Blake-Coggins, Cllr K-M. Blundell-Smith, Cllr A M Ricketts.
23	<b><u>Declarations of Interest:</u></b> None were made.
24	<b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b> <b>RESOLVED</b> that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 July 2024 are an accurate record and may be signed by the Chair.
25	<b><u>Staff phones</u></b>  J. Harrison asked the committee to consider adopting staff phones for senior managers: RFO, Town Clerk, Corporate Services Manager, Operations & Facilities Manager. J. Harrison provided quotes of refurbished phones, approximately £1,150 per year for 4 phones. The committee were advised that we have enough to cover this for the rest of the financial year. It would need to be budgeted for 25/26.  J. Harrison to check insurance cover with RFO for the phones. E. Hastings explained that there will be an "Acceptable use of IT, email, and phones" policy.  The committee discussed the need for senior managers to have phones and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> that senior managers are issued with mobile phones.
26.	<b><u>Long Service Award</u></b>  The committee were asked to consider adopting Staff Long Service Awards. E. Hastings reported who would receive the award in 25/26. The committee agreed that it was agreeable to the scheme and <b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt the Long Service Award for staff.
27.	<b><u>Confidential Business</u></b> <b>RESOLVED</b> that the press and public be excluded from the next agenda item 28 as it concerns engagement and terms of service.

28.	<p><b><u>James West Community Centre</u></b></p> <p>The committee considered a report from T. Lee regarding the staffing arrangements for the James West Centre. It was a resolution from Full Council 164.2 to refer the decision to the Staffing Committee.</p> <p>J. Harrison advised the committee that the role is full time in the agreed and adopted staffing structure brought about by the recent staffing review and is included in the budget. It was suggested that the booking system be updated so that S. Harper (Finance Assistant) is the main Officer leading on the bookings but all Officers are able to check for availability and make bookings when S. Harper is unavailable. T. Lee reported to the committee that we are investigating an online booking system.</p> <p>Cases were put forward for and against the role being full time. Cllr B. Carpenter presented a report to the committee</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to continue with the current staffing/service contract, until the bookings increase and it will be reviewed again.</p>
29.	<p><b><u>Town Crier</u></b></p> <p>J. Harrison explained that we would like to recruit a new Town Crier. The committee agreed and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to recruit a replacement Town Crier. Cllr Mary Laxton, Cllr Barry Carpenter, Cllr Paul Holbrook agreed to be on the recruitment panel.</p>
30  30.1  30.2  30.3	<p><b><u>Policies</u></b></p> <p>E. Hastings presented the following policies which have been shared with staff and managers.</p> <p><b>Grievance Policy</b></p> <p>B. Carpenter briefly left the room but returned for the resolution. The committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to put the Grievance Policy forward to Finance &amp; Governance Committee on the 27.11.24.</p> <p><b>Disciplinary Policy</b></p> <p>It was agreed to retain the oral warning section from the Council's previous version (2012). The committee discussed section 16 which states the Staffing Committee will appoint an investigator, and it will normally be a Councillor. E. Hastings asked the committee to consider changing the wording to the Town Clerk appointing a senior manager as an investigator. It would be escalated to the Staffing Committee if the investigation concerned a member of the senior management team. J. Harrison explained that we can use South-East Employers (SEE) as an independent investigator. G. White declared an interest and link to SEE. E. Hastings to ask NALC (whose model we have adopted) if we can change the wording. No motion was moved on this matter. E. Hastings to put this forward to the January Staffing Committee meeting.</p> <p><b>Display Screen Equipment and workstation assessment policy</b></p> <p>In addition to considering the DSE policy the committee were shown the DSE and workstation self-assessment. E. Hastings advised that an approximate costs for a DSE assessment with reasonable adjustments could be £0 - £660, the highest amount would include a standing desk and ergonomic chair. The committee agreed that DSE and</p>

30.4	<p>workstation assessment is vital for the staff, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to put the DSE Policy and workstation assessment forward to Finance &amp; Governance Committee on the 27.11.24.</p> <p><b>Occupational Health and Wellbeing including post-employment health questionnaire</b></p> <p>E. Hastings presented this policy but asked the committee if it could be retracted. This is so that E. Hastings can trial the questionnaire and policy with a new member of staff starting in November; there may need to be adjustments made. There was a suggestion to also trial it with existing staff. No motion was moved on this matter. E. Hastings to put this forward to the January Staffing Committee meeting.</p>
31	<p><b><u>2025-2029 Strategic Plan</u></b></p> <p>J. Harrison suggested to the committee to form a sub-committee to look at the staffing/HR strategies. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to form a sub-committee and to have 2 meetings before January; the group will consist of J. Harrison, T. Lee and E. Hastings, A. M. Ricketts, K. Nicholls, K-M Blundell-Smith.</p>
32	<p><b><u>Town Clerk's line management</u></b></p> <p>J. Harrison explained that it is recommended that the Town Clerk should have a yearly appraisal and 6-month review with set targets linked to the Strategic Plan; the appraisal should also consider support/training needed to achieve the targets.</p> <p>The committee discussed who would be most appropriate and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the appraisal panel for the Town Clerk will consist of Chair or Deputy of the Council, and Chair or Vice Chair of Finance &amp; Governance and Assets Management Committees.</p> <p>We will put appraisals on to the staffing committee agenda.</p>
33	<p><b><u>Confidential Business</u></b>  <b>RESOLVED</b> that the press and public be excluded from the next agenda items as it concerns engagement, terms of service</p>
34 34.1  34.2	<p><b><u>Staffing Review</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Recruitment</u></b></p> <p>Staff reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Grants Officer is starting 4<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• The Maintenance Operative role recruitment closing date is 11<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• The RFO is leaving on 16<sup>th</sup> December, recruitment will start as soon as possible. We have started succession planning.</li> </ul> <p>J. Harrison explained that we may need a locum for a possible RFO staffing gap, and we have made some initial inquiries. The committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to agree to the Clerk investigating the cost of a locum and to take this to Finance and Governance Committee.</p> <p><b><u>Ongoing Issues; update</u></b></p> <p>J. Harrison reminded the committee that there will need to be a review of the Staffing Review.</p>

34.3	<p><b><u>Job titles</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt the proposed job titles: Corporate Services Officer (for Democratic Services and Business Enterprise Officer) and Planning and Communities Officer (for Planning and Environment Officer).</p>
34	<p><b><u>Disciplinary investigation</u></b></p> <p>J. Harrison and E. Hastings explained that this was put on the agenda incorrectly. The existing Disciplinary policy states that a senior manager can conduct the investigation and so there was not a need to bring this to Staffing Committee.</p>
	<p>There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21:47pm.</p>

CHAIR

DRAFT

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Staffing Committee</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Emily Hastings, Corporate Services Manager</b>
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Policies</b>

**PURPOSE:**

To review the following policies, offering any suggestions/comments or amendments.

**Deferred from 24.10.24 meeting:**

The following policies have been reviewed by:

- John Harrison, Town Clerk
- HTC Managers including Hailsham Youth Service and the Post Office
- **Disciplinary Policy** – updates highlighted in red. At the 24.10.24 meeting it was agreed to retain the oral warning section from the Council’s previous version (2012). At the 24.10.24 it was suggested that E Hastings would contact NALC regarding section 16 which states the Staffing Committee will appoint an investigator, and it will normally be a Councillor, changing to the Town Clerk appointing a senior manager as an investigator. It would be escalated to the Staffing Committee if the investigation concerned a member of the senior management team. **E Hastings has received confirmation from NALC that they do not have an issue with the change.**
- **Occupational Health and Wellbeing including post-employment health questionnaire.** At the 24.10.24 meeting it was suggested that E. Hastings trial the policy and questionnaire with new and existing staff. E Hastings has done this and has been successful. The questionnaire in particular has been useful for determining whether any reasonable adjustments should/could be made. Staff who have used the questionnaire have felt that their needs have been considered and supported. E Hastings to send out to all other current staff by mid-January to end of January.

The following policies have been sent to:

- John Harrison, Town Clerk
- HTC Managers including Hailsham Youth Service and the Post Office
- The policies have been sent to HTC Staff at the same time as sending to the members of the Staffing Committee. Any comments by Staff about the policies will be raised at the Staffing Committee.
- **Flexible Working**
- **Lone Working**

- **Probation policy and induction toolkit Oct 24** – has been used successfully with new members of staff
- **Volunteer policy and agreement** – also reviewed by Cllrs A M Rickets and A Blake-Coggins

The policies will need to be put forward to Finance & Governance Committee working group for policies and Finance & Governance Committee for final approval.





## Disciplinary Policy

Owner	John Harrison, Town Clerk
Reviewer	Emily Hastings, Corporate Services Manager
Previous versions	2021 (NALC Model 2013)
Templates used/adapted	NALC 2024 Disciplinary Policy
Approver	Initial: Staffing Committee Final: Finance & Governance Committee
Date approved	
Date of next review	January 2027
Related policies/procedures	Grievance policy Capability and Performance Management (to be written) Sickness and absence
Policy covers	All HTC including Post Office and Hailsham Youth Service

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### Introduction

- 1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>).

- 2 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](https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf)
- 3 The policy is designed to help Council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.
- 4 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 5 This policy confirms:
  - **informal coaching and supervision will be considered, where appropriate, to improve conduct and / or attendance**
  - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
  - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see ACAS "Performance Management" at <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20210104113253/https://archive.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6608>
  - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
  - **employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing**
  - employees may be accompanied or represented by a companion – a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official - at any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and 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 any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions
  - if the employee's 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 7 calendar days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
  - any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
  - information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action

taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision. The appeal decision is final
- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure
- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include a written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- this procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the Council's and consent of affected parties

## Examples of misconduct

6 Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct: The list is not exhaustive.

- unauthorised absence
- poor timekeeping
- misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
- inappropriate behaviour
- refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- breach of health and safety rules.

## Examples of gross misconduct

- 7 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct: **The list is not exhaustive**
- Anything related to safeguarding/child protection issues – refer to Hailsham Youth Service Safeguarding policy
  - bullying, discrimination and harassment
  - incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
  - violent behaviour
  - fraud or theft
  - gross negligence
  - gross insubordination
  - serious breaches of council policies and procedures e.g. the Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy and any policies regarding the use of information technology
  - serious and deliberate damage to property
  - use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
  - disclosure of confidential information.

## Suspension

- 8 If allegations of gross misconduct or serious misconduct are made, the council may suspend the employee while further investigations are carried out. Suspension will be on full pay. Suspension does not imply any determination of guilt or innocence, as it is merely a measure to enable further investigation.
- 9 While on suspension, the employee is required to be available during normal hours of work in the event that the council needs to make contact. The employee must not contact or attempt to contact or influence anyone connected with the investigation in any way or to discuss this matter with any other employee or councillor.
- 10 The employee must not attend work. The council will make arrangements for the employee to access any information or documents required to respond to any allegations.

## Examples of unsatisfactory work performance

- 11 The following list contains some examples of unsatisfactory work performance: **The list is not exhaustive.**
- inadequate application of management instructions/office procedures
  - inadequate IT skills
  - unsatisfactory management of staff
  - unsatisfactory communication skills.

## The Procedure

- 12 Preliminary enquiries. The council may make preliminary enquiries to establish the basic facts of what has happened in order to understand whether there may be a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure.
- 13 If the employee's manager believes there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the council may initiate a more detailed investigation undertaken to establish the facts of a situation or to establish the perspective of others who may have witnessed misconduct.
- 14 Informal Procedures. Where minor concerns about conduct become apparent, it is the manager's responsibility to raise this with the employee and clarify the improvements required. A file note will be made and kept by the manager. The informal discussions are not part of the formal disciplinary procedure. If the conduct fails to improve, or if further matters of conduct become apparent, the manager may decide to formalise the discussions and invite the employee to a first stage disciplinary hearing.

## Disciplinary investigation

- 15 A formal disciplinary investigation may sometimes be required to establish the facts and whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- 16 If a formal disciplinary investigation is required, the Town Clerk will appoint a senior manager as an investigator. It would be escalated to the Staffing Committee if the investigation concerned a member of the senior management team. The Investigator will be responsible for undertaking a fact-finding exercise to collect all relevant information. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a Councillor. If the staffing committee considers that there are no Councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the Council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The staffing committee will inform the Investigator of the terms of reference of the investigation. The terms of reference should specify:
  - the allegations or events that the investigation is required to examine
  - whether a recommendation is required
  - how the findings should be presented. For example, an investigator will often be required to present the findings in the form of a written report
  - who the findings should be reported to and who to contact for further direction if unexpected issues arise or advice is needed.
- 17 The Investigator will be asked to submit their findings usually within 35 Calendar days of appointment where possible. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be

necessary and the Council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage - the disciplinary meeting (see paragraph 25).

- 18 The staffing committee will notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and details of the person undertaking the investigation. The employee may be asked to meet an investigator as part of the disciplinary investigation. The employee will be given sufficient notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that they have reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when they meet with the Investigator, they will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.
- 19 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official at any investigatory meeting.
- 20 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 21 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. Their role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the staffing committee whether or not disciplinary action should be considered **under the policy**.
- 22 The Investigator's report will contain their recommendations and the findings on which they were based. They will recommend either:
  - the employee has no case to answer and there should be no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure
  - the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or
  - the employee has a case to answer and a formal hearing should be convened under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 23 The Investigator will submit the report to the staffing committee which will decide whether further action will be taken.
- 24 If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

### **The disciplinary meeting**

- 25 If the staffing committee decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a staffing sub-committee of 3 councillors, to formally hear the allegations. The staffing sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee.

- 26 No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The sub-committee's letter will confirm the following:
- the names of its Chairman and other two members
  - details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
  - a copy of the information provided to the sub-committee which may include the investigation report, supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
  - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing so that they has sufficient time to prepare for it
  - that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least 5 working days before the meeting
  - that the employee and the Council will provide each other with all supporting evidence at least 5 working days before the meeting. If witnesses are not attending the meeting, witness statements will be submitted to the other side at least 5 working days before the hearing
  - that the employee may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official
- 27 The purpose of the disciplinary meeting hearing is for the allegations to be put to the employee and then for the employee to give their perspective. It will be conducted as follows:
- the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee and explain the arrangements for the hearing
  - the Chairman will set out the allegations and invite the Investigator to present the findings of the investigation report (if there has been a previous investigation)
  - the Chairman will invite the employee to present their account
  - the employee (or the companion) will set out their case and present evidence (including any witnesses and/or witness statements)
  - any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness
  - the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up
- 28 The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within 7 calendar days of the meeting. The Chairman will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision.
- 29 The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be further investigated by the sub-committee.

## Disciplinary action

30 If the sub-committee decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

### 31 Oral warning

An oral warning is issued for most first instances of minor misconduct. The council will notify the employee:

- of the reason for the warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- of the right to appeal
- that a note confirming the oral warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for six months.

### First written warning

32 If the employee's conduct has fallen beneath acceptable standards, a first written warning will be issued. A first written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

### Final written warning

33 If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve sufficiently during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:

- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. **12 months**).

### Dismissal

34 The Council may dismiss:

- for gross misconduct
- if there is no improvement within the specified time period, in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning



- if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.
- 35 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, they will receive a written statement of the reasons for their dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of their right of appeal. If the sub-committee decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action taken as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless it is modified as a result of an appeal.

## **The appeal**

- 36 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. Their written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within **7** calendar days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.
- 37 The grounds for appeal include;
- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
  - the sub-committee's disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence
  - the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
  - new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.
- 38 **Where possible**, the appeal will be heard by a panel of 3 members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of 3 members of the Council who may include members of the staff committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.
- 39 The employee will be notified, in writing, within **14** calendar days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that they may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
- 40 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 disciplinary decision
  - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
- 41 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.
- 42 The Chairman will inform the employee that they will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing.

- 43 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the disciplinary decision of the staffing committee, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 44 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 45 The appeal panel's decision is final.



## Occupational Health and Wellbeing including post-offer employment health questionnaire

Owner	John Harrison, Town Clerk
Reviewer	Emily Hastings, Corporate Services Manager Kaylee Butcher, Democratic Services & Business Enterprise Officer
Approver	Initial: Staffing Committee Final: Finance & Governance Committee
Previous versions	N/A
Templates used/adapted	N/A
Date approved	
Date of next review	September 2026
Related policies/procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probation/Induction policy to be written</li> <li>• Capability and performance procedure to be written</li> <li>• Equality and Diversity Policy to be updated</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy to be updated</li> <li>• Display Screen Equipment Users Policy and workstation assessment</li> <li>• Sickness Absence Management Policy and Procedure to be updated</li> <li>• Dignity at work and Bullying &amp; Harassment Policy and Zero tolerance to be updated</li> <li>• Stress Management to be written</li> <li>• Mental health awareness to be written</li> <li>• Menopause policy to be written</li> </ul>
Policy covers	All HTC including Post Office and Hailsham Youth Service

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# 1. Introduction

The Council has a duty of care to safeguard the health and wellbeing of its staff. In addition, the Council is required by law to prevent physical and mental ill health that may occur as a result of its business activities. Staff are at the heart of Hailsham Town Council. Therefore, it is essential that the health of all our staff remains paramount, and that the Council strives to meet the requirements of occupational health legislation ([Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974](#)). Staff also have a responsibility to adhere to health and safety and risk management in order to maintain appropriate levels of occupational health.

## 2. Occupational Health

The Council does not have an in-house occupational health department. Where possible occupational support/advice/adjustments/decisions will be made within the Council but for more specialised support the Council will employ an outside agency. Currently the Council uses the advice of Health Management.

Phone number: 01273 818 000 Email address: [info@healthmanltd.com](mailto:info@healthmanltd.com)

<https://healthmanagement.co.uk/contact-us/>

Quotes should be obtained for best value for money.

### 2.1 Occupational Health objectives:

The Council will consider occupational health support/advice/adjustments/decisions:

- when an employee is struggling with their physical or mental health
- to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities at work
- when an employee has been off sick for a long time or is returning to work after sickness absence
- to reduce the amount of time staff need to take off sick
- control risks to mental health, such as too much pressure at work or bullying and harassment

The council will:

- Provide sufficient resources to achieve good standards of health and wellbeing
- Encourage staff to escalate any personal occupational health issues immediately to their line manager
- Line managers to keep occupational health information sensitively and confidently, liaising as appropriate with the Town Clerk/other managers with expertise and/or outside agency advice.
- Staff are empowered to raise health concerns with management with the knowledge that these concerns will be effectively acted upon
- Have Wellbeing Champions (section 6.1)
- Staff are instructed and trained on the health issues that affect them, and have the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to be competent in their workplace.
- Staff should report incidents, hazards and risks

- Health-related accidents, incidents and near misses are reported and investigated. Any lessons learned from such events will be used to take corrective action to prevent further recurrences.
- All new and existing personnel and all those working on behalf of the company are made aware of the occupational health policy at initial probation.
- Where an occupational illness prevents an existing employee / worker from carrying out their normal duties HTC will investigate re-deployment opportunities.
- For more detail on Health and Safety see the Health and Safety Policy

### 3. Occupational health procedure

The occupational health of staff will be considered:

- Post offer with a post-offer health questionnaire
- During probation
- Throughout the member of staff's contract
- During and after periods of sickness

#### 3.1 Post-offer employment health questionnaire (see Appendix 1)

To ensure that HTC is meeting its obligations under health and safety and equality legislation, post-offer employment health questionnaires are required for all new staff.

Offer letters will make it clear to successful applicants that the offer of employment is conditional pending the completion of a post-offer health questionnaire. All work post offer health assessments will be carried out fairly, objectively and in accordance with equal opportunities legislation and good occupational health practice.

A review of the information within the questionnaire is required to:

- assess whether an individual's health is compatible with the role which they have been offered
- ensure an applicant's health will not be affected by the job role
- assess where a pre-existing medical condition could be aggravated by their required work activities
- to provide appropriate health advice and guidance.
- advise on reasonable adjustments required to accommodate relevant disability/disabilities.
- investigate Access to Work funding to help fund support or adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments.

All new staff starters will receive a health questionnaire as part of the recruitment process which they are required to complete and return to the relevant line manager.

- The information supplied on the health questionnaire will be assessed and will remain confidential. ~~The questionnaire will be kept separate from the HR file because of its confidential nature, it will only be accessible by the line~~

~~manager/Corporate Services Manager and the Town Clerk.~~ The Line Manager will liaise as appropriate with the Town Clerk/ Corporate Services Manager and/or outside occupational health agency for advice. If there are any financial implications the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) will be informed.

- HTC may need to make contact with the post-holder for further information prior to confirming fitness. Depending on the nature of the proposed work new staff may be asked to attend Occupational Health for further assessment or health surveillance.

### **3.2 Occupational health during probation**

Following on from completing the post-offer employment health questionnaire, and starting their post, staff should raise any occupational health issues during probation. Staff should complete a Display Screen Equipment Users Policy and workstation assessment and read the Sickness Absence Management Policy and Procedure. Staff should raise concerns if reasonable adjustments to accommodate relevant disability are not being made. Staff may be asked to attend Occupational Health for further assessment or health surveillance.

### **3.3 Occupational health during employment**

Staff should raise concerns to their line manager if their health changes or is impacting on their employment. If any existing or new disability is having an adverse or different impact on their working practices staff should raise their concerns to their line manager.

HTC will:

- assess whether an individual's health is compatible with their role.
- ensure an applicant's health will not be affected by the job role.
- assess where an ongoing medical condition could be aggravated by their required work activities.
- provide appropriate health advice and guidance.
- advise on reasonable adjustments required to accommodate relevant disability.
- investigate Access to Work funding to help fund support or adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments.
- If a member of staff cannot do their job because of their ill health/disability HTC will start the "Capability and performance procedure".

### **3.4 Occupational health during and after periods of sickness**

See Sickness Absence Management Policy and Procedure.

## **4 Access to Work**

Access to Work can help staff to stay in work if they have a physical or mental health condition or disability. [Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/access-to-work-get-support-if-you-have-a-disability-or-health-condition)

Access to Work is a publicly funded employment support grant scheme that aims to support people with disabilities start or stay in work. It can provide practical and financial support for people who have a disability or physical or mental health condition. Support can be provided where someone needs support or adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments. An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support to enable employees to start or stay in work.

Through Access to Work, an employee can apply for:

- a grant to help pay for practical support
- support with managing mental health at work

## 5. Disability confident committed

HTC will work towards being Disability Confident Committed by the end of 2025, this will be part of the strategic plan. More details will follow within the Strategic Plan: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disability-confident-how-to-sign-up-to-the-employer-scheme>

To be recognised as Disability Confident Committed, HTC agrees to the Disability Confident commitments.

The commitments are:

- inclusive and accessible recruitment
- communicating vacancies
- offering an interview to disabled people
- providing reasonable adjustments
- supporting existing employees

## 6. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting and protecting staff wellbeing (physical and mental) in the workplace is important for every business.

The Council will aim to achieve most or all of the following by the end of 2026, this will be part of the strategic plan. More details will follow within the Strategic Plan.

HTC will promote physical wellbeing by:

- Promoting physical activity across HTC
- Supporting a healthy, balanced diet in the workplace
- Encouraging staff to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day
- Provide leaflets and information on the importance of physical activity
- Provide courses and talks on the ways that physical activity can help staff manage stress and back pain, as well as improving mental alertness and concentration



- Map out walking trails or routes in the local area and publicise them
- Provide information on local gyms, classes and sports facilities
- Encourage lunchtime activity groups, e.g. running clubs, football games
- Provide details on the UK's Cycle to Work Scheme
- To raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating for both physical and mental wellbeing
- Provide food storage and preparation areas for lunchtime meals
- Provide easy access to cold water in all offices and meeting rooms
- Encourage staff to eat lunch away from their desks

HTC will promote mental wellbeing by:

- Providing information and raising awareness of mental health issues
- Promoting policies and actions that support mental wellbeing in the workplace
- Tackle factors that may have a negative impact on mental health
- Equipping employees with the skills to support their own mental health
- Equipping line managers with the skills to identify and assist those with mental ill health
- Offering help, support and guidance to those with a mental health issue, and by making reasonable or practical adjustments to the role/environment
- Assisting those returning to work after a period of mental ill health by making any necessary adjustments to the role/environment
- Retaining and supporting staff who develop mental ill health
- Deliver non-judgemental support to any staff member experiencing a mental health issue
- Provide ways for staff to support their own mental wellbeing, for example through stress-buster activities, lunchtime activities and social events
- Have a flexible working request policy
- Set realistic targets and deadlines for staff to prevent long working hours
- Deal with any conflict quickly and make sure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment, racism or discrimination
- Ensure all staff have clear job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities, as well as the training to do their job well
- Ensure good communication between managers, staff and teams
- Check how working conditions and the organisation's policies are having an effect on mental health
- Encourage staff to talk to their line manager or a Wellbeing Champion, referral to occupational health if appropriate
- If a team member has been on long term sickness absence, ensure a gradual return to work with support at each stage
- Treat all matters relating to staff mental ill health in the strictest confidence, and only share information with prior consent from the individual concerned
- To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental ill health
- Show a positive attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues, including having positive statements in recruitment literature
- Ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act

- Do not assume that those with a mental health issue will be more susceptible to workplace stress, or will necessarily take more time off than other applicants
- Ensure that all line managers have received mental health first aid training, or have the skills to manage mental health in the workplace
- To raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for managing stress and maintaining mental wellbeing
- All employees will be made aware of the workplace mental health and wellbeing policy - and the resources that are available to them.
- The workplace mental health and wellbeing policy will be included in the employee handbook, as well as in induction packs. It will also be promoted each year and will be available to download from the shared drive.
- All staff will also be made aware of their own responsibilities in implementing the policy actions. Including, raising any issues or concerns, and seeking help from a line manager or Wellbeing Champion.
- Wellbeing Champions will be established to ensure the policy actions are implemented. Regular updates will be provided to all staff through line management.

The policy's effectiveness can be measured through:

- Feedback from staff
- A mental health and wellbeing at work risk assessment
- Staff sickness, presenteeism and staff turnover levels
- Exit interviews
- Use of occupational health or counselling services
- Staff complaints or referrals

## 6.1 Wellbeing Champion

The Council will aim to have Wellbeing Champions by the end of 2026, this will be part of the strategic plan. They will model the NHS England Health and Wellbeing champions [NHS England » Health and wellbeing champions](#). More details will follow within the Strategic Plan.

## 7. Eyesight test policy and procedure

Regular eye tests are important for all employees.

### 7.1 Regular DSE users and employees who have driving as an essential within their job description

DSE users and employees who have driving as an 'essential' within their job description will be encouraged to have a full sight test once every two years.

The Council will pay for the cost of a full sight test, limited to one a year, up to £25.

If a sight test shows that a corrective appliance is needed to accommodate a vision defect at the viewing distance for the display equipment concerned or for driving, the Council will pay a £40 contribution towards the cost, limited to one per year. If a

prescription is needed that is not related to DSE work or driving related HTC do not have to pay for glasses.

### **7.3 Eyesight test procedure**

HTC employees are permitted time off to attend an eye test appointment. An appointment confirmation may be requested by the Line Manager or Town Clerk for confirmation of the appointment.

Employees wishing to claim for an eye test and/or contribution towards glasses (up to a maximum of £40) they must supply a valid receipt, which should be passed to the RFO for approval and payment into the employee's personal bank account via BACs.

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## Appendix 1 Post-offer employment health questionnaire



**Hailsham**  
TOWN COUNCIL

# Post-offer health Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to ensure, so far as is possible, that you are fit to carry out the duties of the post and without risk to your own or others' health and safety. Questions are asked about your past and present health, medical treatment and any impairments or disabilities, that may have implications for health and safety or may require reasonable adjustments to the job or other means of support. All post-offer health assessments will be carried out fairly, objectively and in accordance with equal opportunities legislation and good occupational health practice.

If you have any difficulties completing this form or wish to discuss any issues in a confidential setting, please contact the Corporate Services Manager for advice.

Hailsham Town Council (HTC) will retain this questionnaire, and it will be treated in accordance with data protection laws. Your questionnaire will be kept separate from your HR file because of its confidential nature, it will only be accessible by your line manager/Corporate Services Manager and the Town Clerk. Further assessment by an external Occupational Health Service may be needed and you may be required to attend for regular health surveillance or screening during employment. If there are any financial implications the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) will be informed.

Deliberately giving false or misleading information on this form could lead to the withdrawal of the offer of employment and/ or your subsequent termination of employment.

When you have completed the questionnaire please return it directly to your Line Manager.

**To be completed by the post-offer holder and to be returned to the line manager**

Position/post	
First name	
Surname	

**Please answer all the questions**

	<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Do you currently have any physical/mental health/neurodivergent condition(s) or disability, or any past physical/mental health/neurodivergent conditions or disabilities that may reoccur in the future?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
<b>2</b>	<b>Please read the Job description provided, looking at the responsibility and duties of the role. If you answered 'Yes' to answer 1 do you feel your work in this role could be affected by a current or past physical/mental health/ neurodivergent condition(s)?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
<b>3</b>	<b>Please read the Job description provided. Do you have any health conditions that could be affected or made worse by the Responsibilities and Duties of the Job identified?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
	<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

<b>4</b>	<b>Are you restricted from carrying out any specific types of work/tasks?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
<b>5</b>	<b>Do you think you may require reasonable adjustments or assistance to help you to carry out this role?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
<b>6</b>	<b>Have you had any absences from work, of 3 weeks or longer, due to illness or injury in the last 12 months?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
<b>7</b>	<b>Do you have any known medical/health condition, which would require you taking sickness absence in the next 12 months?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
	<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Are you having, or waiting for any treatment or investigations by your GP/Consultant?</b>		

	If 'YES' please provide details:		
<b>9</b>	<b>Any eyesight condition that cannot be corrected by wearing glasses or contact lenses?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		
<b>10</b>	<b>Any hearing condition that cannot be corrected by wearing hearing aids?</b>		
	If 'YES' please provide details:		

**Absence History**

How many days sickness absence have you had in the past 2 years?	Days
Was this only one episode of absence?	YES / NO
If No, how many different episodes were there within this time?	episodes

**Declaration**

I declare that the statements above are correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that their accuracy is a condition of any employment with Hailsham Town Council.

I grant consent for further occupational health assessments if needed.

<p><b>Applicant's Signature:</b> We accept electronic signatures, as well as signature pages which have been printed, signed and scanned</p>	
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	

**Please email your form back to your Line Manager and/or the Corporate Services Manager**

**For use by Occupational Health**

<p>Date questionnaire returned:</p>	
<p>Further Health Assessment Required:</p>	<p>YES / NO</p>
<p>Fit for Post:</p>	<p>YES / NO</p>
<p>Reasonable adjustments/support required:</p>	<p>YES / NO</p>





## Flexible Working Policy

Owner	John Harrison, Town Clerk
Reviewer	Kaylee Butcher, Corporate Services Manager
Previous versions	N/A
Templates used/adapted	NALC 2024
Approver	Staffing Committee Finance & Governance Committee
Date approved	Will be added in when approved
Date of next review	2 years
Related policies/procedures	Hybrid working – <b>to be written</b>
Policy covers the following	All HTC including Post Office and Hailsham Youth Service

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## 1. What is flexible working

- 1.1 Every staff member has a contract of employment that sets out the working hours. A request to work flexibly is a request from the employee to change either the number of working hours, when or where they are worked. Flexible working does not mean a member of staff can work the hours they wish from day-to-day, week-to-week.
- 1.2 Flexible working arrangements take account of employees' preferences, interests and non-work responsibilities whilst also meeting the needs of the council. Common examples of flexible working include part-time working; zero-hours / casual working; variable hours; flexitime; job-sharing; term-time working; compressed hours; career breaks; and sabbaticals.
- 1.3 Flexible working can result in benefits to councils, in that such arrangements can help make the most of today's diverse workforce and improve the council's ability to recruit and retain staff. It is good practice to make flexible working open to all staff.
- 1.4 This policy has been written to explain the process which we will use to respond to requests by staff to vary hours, pattern or place of work.

## 2. Scope

You have a statutory right to request a change to your contractual terms and conditions of employment to work flexibly from the first day of your employment, regardless of whether you work full or part-time or have a temporary contract of employment. It does not apply to agency staff.

## 3. Policy

Our policy is to comply with both the spirit and the letter of the law ([Flexible working: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/flexible-working-overview)) on the right to request flexible working. To this end its aim is to inform all staff of their right to request flexible working and to ensure those rights are understood and that staff feel confident any decisions regarding their requests will be handled objectively, fairly, free from discrimination, and that staff will not be treated detrimentally because they have asked for flexible working arrangements.

## 4. Making the request

- 4.1 To apply for flexible working, please provide the following information in writing, and submit this to the Town Clerk. In the case of the Town Clerk, the request should be submitted to the Chair of the Council:
- The date of the application,
  - A statement that this is a statutory request,
  - Details of how you would like to work flexibly and when you want to start,
  - An explanation of how you think flexible working might affect the council and how this could be dealt with, e.g. if you're not at work on certain days,
  - A statement saying if and when you've made a previous application,
  - If you are making the request because you consider the change could be a reasonable adjustment to support a disability.

4.2 You can make two statutory requests in any 12-month period.

## 5. Responding to your request

5.1 Once we receive your written request, we will arrange a discussion with you as soon as possible, unless we agree immediately to your request. It may be that we need to ask you to supply further details before the meeting. If there is likely to be a delay in discussing your request, we will inform you. You may be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague.

5.2 Having the right to request a change to your working arrangements does not necessarily mean that your request will be accepted. Your request will be fully discussed at the meeting. We will carefully consider your request looking at the benefits of the requested changes on working conditions for you as an employee and the council and weighing these against any adverse impact of implementing the changes.

5.3 Having considered the changes, you are requesting and weighing up the advantages, possible costs and potential logistical implications of granting the request, we will write to you with the decision. The decision will be either:

- To accept the request and establish a start date, with or without a trial period and review date. Where the request is granted, we will set out what changes will be made to your terms and conditions of employment, or,
- To propose an alternative, which may require further discussion, or,
- To confirm a compromise agreed at the discussion, or,
- To reject the request, setting out the reasons, how these apply to the application and the appeal process.

5.4 Requests to work flexibly will be considered objectively, however we may not always be able to grant a request to work flexibly if it cannot be accommodated. If we turn down your request, it will be because of one, or a combination of the following reasons, and we will explain why.

- The burden of additional costs is unacceptable to the council
- Detrimental effect on the council's ability to deliver for the community
- Inability to re-organise work among existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff
- Detrimental impact on quality
- Detrimental impact on performance
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- Planned structural changes to the council

5.5 If you are only looking for an informal change for a short period to your working hours or conditions, for instance to pursue a short course of study, we may consider allowing you to revert back to your previous conditions after a specified period, e.g. three months, or after the occurrence of a specific event, such as the end of a course of study.

5.6 You must be aware that if your request is approved you only have the statutory right to make two requests in a 12-month period, although you may still ask without the statutory right.

## **6. Timeframe for dealing with requests**

We will do what we can to respond to your request as soon as possible although the law requires the consideration process to be complete within two months of first receiving a request, including any appeal. If the request cannot be dealt with within two months, we may ask to extend the consideration process, provided you agree to the extension.

## **7. Handling requests in a fair way**

We may receive more than one request to work flexibly closely together from different employees and it may or may not be possible to accept all requests. If we agree to a request for flexible working arrangements this does not mean that we can also agree to a similar change for another employee. Each case will be considered on its merits looking at the business case in the order they have been received. We may need to take others' contractual terms into account and we may ask you if there is any room for adjustment or compromise before coming to a decision.

## **8. Appealing the decision**

8.1 If we decline your request and you wish to appeal, you must do so, in writing, within 5 days of receiving the letter informing you of the outcome. We will then write to you to arrange a meeting to discuss your appeal. This meeting will be held as soon as reasonably possible. You may wish to be accompanied at that meeting by a work colleague.

8.2 There may be circumstances when the council is unable to meet within the required timeframes, in which case a meeting will be held as soon as is practically possible.

## **9. The effect on your contract of employment**

9.1 Any change in your hours or pattern of work will normally be a permanent change to your contractual terms and conditions, unless the change is agreed on a trial basis. This means that you will not automatically be able to revert back to the previous working pattern (unless otherwise agreed). So, for example, if your new flexible working pattern involves working reduced hours, you will not automatically be able to revert to working full time hours.

9.2 Changes to your working pattern may affect other terms and conditions of employment. For example, reducing your hours of work will mean that your pay and leave will be pro-rated accordingly. Your pension may also be affected.

9.3 Any changes to your terms and conditions as a result of a change to your working pattern will be confirmed in your decision letter, however if you have further queries about how a proposed change to your pattern of work might affect your terms and conditions please speak to the Town Clerk.

## **10. Data protection**

When managing a flexible working request, we will process personal data collected in accordance with the data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which we receive a flexible working request is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing their request for flexible working. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

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## Probation Policy and Induction toolkit

<b>Owner</b>	John Harrison, Town Clerk
<b>Reviewer</b>	Emily Hastings, Corporate Services Manager
<b>Previous versions</b>	N/A
<b>Templates used/adapted</b>	ACAS Starting staff induction 2021
<b>Approver</b>	Staffing Committee Finance & Governance Committee
<b>Date approved</b>	Will be added in when approved
<b>Date of next review</b>	2 years
<b>Related policies/procedures</b>	Occupational Health and Wellbeing including post offer health questionnaire Sep 24 Staff Handbook – to be written Appraisal, Supervision and Training Policy – to be written
<b>Policy covers</b>	All HTC including Post Office and Hailsham Youth Service

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## **1- Introduction**

- 1.1 It is essential that Hailsham Town Council employees receive a really good induction so that they can integrate effectively within the organisation and become engaged in their new role. This will not only help the Council to retain new staff but result in better performance outcomes. This policy outlines details of the probation period for all new staff joining Hailsham Town Council. It also provides details on the induction process. New staff should be inducted following recruitment, but internal staff changing roles or returning to work may also need to go through an induction process.
- 1.2 The probation (reviews the new employee's ability to do the job) and induction (training to enable the new employee to do the job) periods are a time for new employees to settle into their new role. During this period, managers have the responsibility of providing the necessary information and training that will equip the individual to undertake all aspects of their role effectively. Managers must therefore ensure systems are in place to support and monitor an individual's performance throughout the induction and probation period.
- 1.3 This will guarantee that they receive assistance that is reasonable and allows them to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the post. The individual must also demonstrate their suitability and capability for the post. Joint working is essential and review meetings within the induction process will provide opportunities for two-way discussions to take place, including topics such as progress and where necessary whether additional support or training is required.

## **2- Equality and Diversity**

The council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination. The Council will strive to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect, ensuring equal opportunities throughout.

## **3- Health, Safety and wellbeing**

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility. All employees need to know how to work safely and without risks to their health. The induction process will cover key areas to ensure that important information is gathered and communicated at an early stage. Employees need to understand the hazards they could face at work and any measures or emergency procedures they must follow to keep them safe and healthy whilst at work.

## **4- Probationary procedure**

- 4.1 It is a requirement that all staff who join Hailsham Town Council successfully complete a probationary period. Probationary periods normally last for 26 weeks for all roles, however in some circumstances this can be extended up to a further two months (criteria for extension detailed below). During this time if the probation period is not successfully completed, the Town Council will issue one month's notice of intention to terminate the employee's contract. In order for the probation period to be confirmed, a completed induction checklist (Appendix 2) must be forwarded to the Corporate Services Manager at the end of this period. In addition, satisfactory interim and final probation reviews signed by a manager must be completed.



4.2 Probation concerns will be dealt with sensitively and with due respect for the employee involved.

## **5- Extension of probationary period**

5.1 It may be appropriate to extend the probationary period if:

5.1.1 Through the new employee's sickness or other authorised absence, it has not been possible to assess performance.

5.1.2 The new employee has not performed satisfactorily, but the line manager has evidence to suggest that further formal training scheduled within the next two months will improve performance and therefore warrant an extension to the probation period. In all cases where probation is to be extended, the following must be discussed between the line manager and the new employee and confirmed in writing:

- The reasons for the extension;
- Any assistance/training that will be given in the extension period;
- The period of the extension, the performance standards expected and the way in which performance will be monitored.
- That if performance still fails to meet expectations at the end of the period of extension, employment will be terminated.
- Probationary periods should not normally be extended by more than two months.
- If the probationary period does need to be extended, the individual must be informed of this before the 26 week period has elapsed.

## **6 Probation Dismissals**

6.1 If it becomes apparent that dismissal is a likely outcome, the line manager must consult with the Town Clerk and Corporate Services Manager before proceeding with the final probation review meeting. Employees who have been through a formal probation review and have not satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements during probation period (including those who have had a probationary period extension) or in a case of misconduct or gross misconduct, will be invited for a final probation review meeting. The employee will receive at least 5 working days' notice for the meeting and will have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by either a trade union representative or a work colleague. Any request to be accompanied by, for instance, relative or partner should be considered sympathetically where the employee is not a trade union member. Requests for legal representation will generally be refused.

6.2 If the outcome of the final probation review meeting is dismissal due to a gross misconduct or exceptional circumstances that would prevent the employee from working in their role. This type of dismissal is without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

6.3 If the outcome of the final probation review meeting is that the probation has not been successfully completed, the Town Council will issue one month's notice of intention to terminate the employee's contract.

## **7 Appeal on probation dismissals**

7.1 The employee may appeal the outcome of the final probation meeting if it results in dismissal of employment. Appeals will be reviewed by another member panel. The grounds of appeal should be as follows:

- The dismissal procedure was unfair.
- Any part or the overall process of the probation was unreasonable.
- The evidence presented in the final probation meeting was not substantiated and/or there was no good reason for the dismissing officer to accept it.
- The decision at the final probation meeting is unduly harsh.
- New evidence to be presented by the employee that was not reasonably available at the meeting. Reasons to be provided why it was not presented before.
- Failure to implement reasonable adjustments during probation which directly or indirectly resulted in the dismissal.

7.2 Appeals must be submitted no later than 5 working days after the date of the final decision/dismissal letter. Details on how to appeal will be provided in the outcome letter. The decision of the appeal panel is final. The employee is entitled to be represented at the appeal hearing by a workplace colleague or Trade Union Representative. Any requests to be represented by, for instance, a relative or partner should be considered and any reason for refusal communicated to the employee.

## **8 Appeal hearing**

The purpose of the appeal hearing is to review the outcome of the final probation hearing. The possible outcomes are to confirm the decision, or to withdraw the dismissal. The decision is final. In the event that an employee has less than 12 months service and is reinstated, the extension of a probation period will apply if the maximum has not been applied.

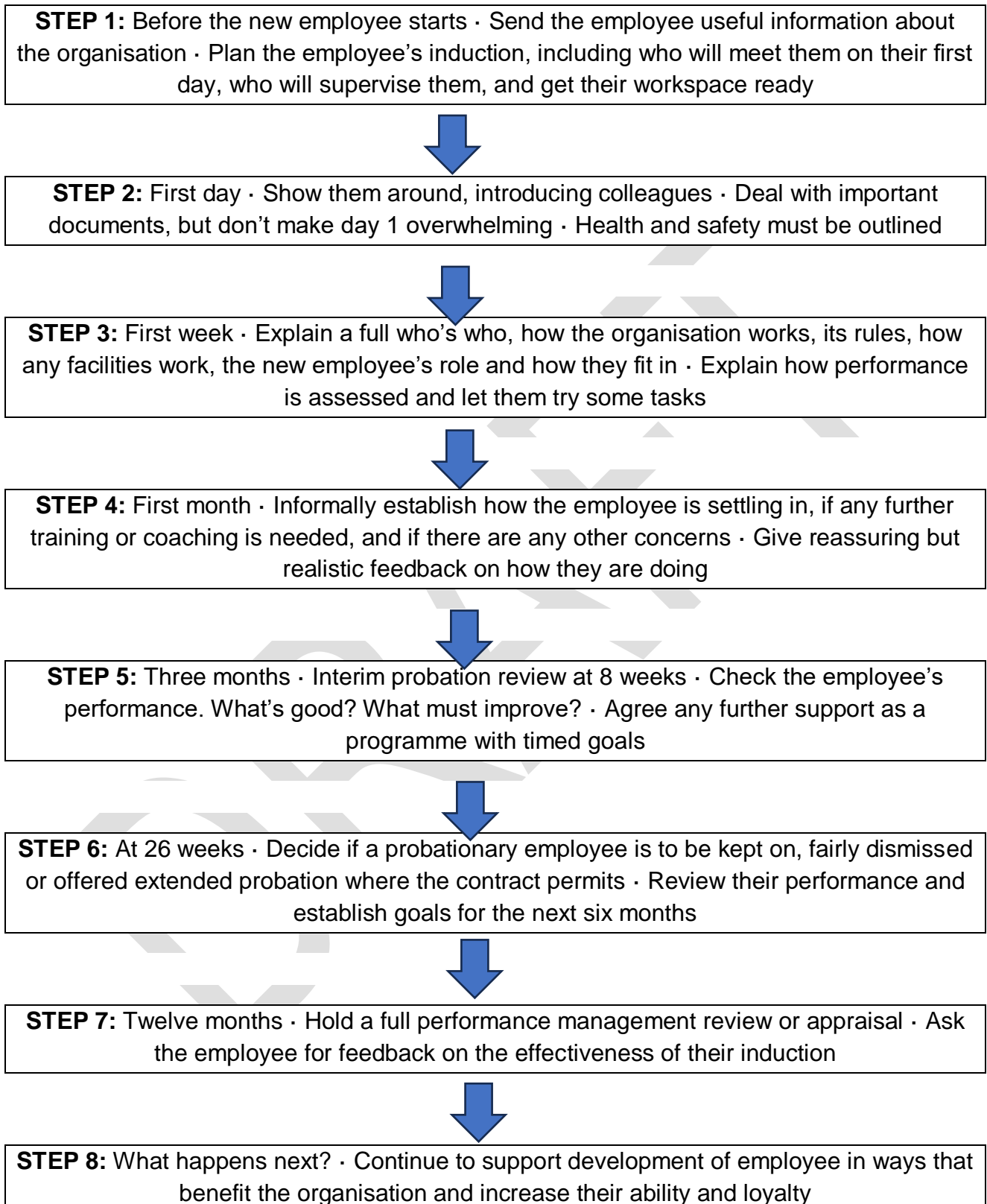
## **9 Probation period and discipline**

The Town Council's Disciplinary Procedure applies to all staff, including those who have not yet completed their probationary period. Any case of misconduct during the probationary period may lead to dismissal and gross misconduct may lead to dismissal without notice. See the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

## **10 Guidance for Line Managers**

First impressions are extremely important, and induction procedures can make the difference between retaining and losing good staff. It is the responsibility of the Line Manager to manage this process effectively and have ownership for ensuring the integration of any new employee is successful.

## 11 Induction/probation overview



## 12 Preparation for the new employee's arrival

- 12.1 There are a number of actions you need to take prior to the new employee's first day to facilitate the induction process. Most of these actions revolve around being fully prepared for the new employee. See Appendix 1 Preparation prior to start date checklist, this must be followed as soon as the employee's appointment has been confirmed. Taking some action before the employee arrives is likely to get everyone prepared and ready for a smoother induction process that gets the employee delivering results as quickly and productively as possible.
- 12.2 Make an induction plan: Planning the new recruit's induction by working out what, when and who in the organisation will get involved. Crucially, it should identify who will greet the new employee on their first day. It is common for different parts of the induction to be handled by different staff with relevant expertise.
- 12.3 Tailor the induction to everyone's advantage: Someone fresh out of university is likely to need a different induction to a new employee who has extensive experience with other companies, or someone returning to the world of work after a long absence. Some recruits might grasp certain ideas quickly while others may need more time. Adapting the plans, and building in some flexibility, can help speed up or improve the induction.
- 12.4 Check for additional considerations: In many cases, new recruits will work as flexibly as they can during their induction, including temporary changes to working patterns, locations, duties etc. Inductions may not always match the usual working hours and this should be made clear when a job offer is made.
- 12.5 Prepare the working space: Make sure the new employee's work station or space is ready and working with all the equipment they need and cleared of anything they won't – and that's even if they are unlikely to use it much on their first day. Sorting out other practicalities like security passes, photo IDs etc.
- 12.6 Make sure everything is up to date: Include the latest relevant company information such as working practices, duties, policies and procedures. Check for any recent changes on employment law and rights (go to [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)), tax and national insurance (go to [www.gov.uk/hmrc](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc)) and health and safety (go to [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)). If there have been changes, apply them to the induction process

## 13 Induction checklist

See Appendix 2 for the Induction Checklist. Aim to complete all of these tasks by the Interim Induction Review (8 weeks from start date).

## 14 First day

- 14.1 The line manager should use the first day to handle any essential matters and focus on fuelling the new starter's enthusiasm by giving them a real feel for the organisation, its culture and values.
- 14.2 Make introductions: Show new recruits around the organisation, introduce them to managers and colleagues they need to know. Try to explain what other staff are responsible for and how the new recruit would usually expect to work with them. Be careful not to introduce too many

people too quickly, and, where an employee will regularly need to work with a wide range of colleagues, giving them a staff list can help.

- 14.3 Provide a welcome pack when they start: Give the new employee a detailed pack of information in electronic format. This will give them a fuller understanding of the organisation.
- 14.4 Give them the tour: Showing the employee around the workplace will be helpful. In any event, let them know where they can find practical facilities like the toilets, kitchen and first aid facilities, and drinking water. This is a small part of looking after their health and safety.
- 14.5 Handle vital documentation: Don't overdo the red tape on the first day, but deal with important documentation, such as National Insurance details, bank account information and their P45.
- 14.6 Health and Safety musts: Hailsham Town Council must...
- outline any health and safety precautions the employee must take to protect them from harm
  - outline any training they will need to do their job safely, and without endangering other workers, and any equipment and protective clothing the Council will provide
  - ensure they know what to do if there is a fire, accident or another emergency
  - outline its insurance policy, in case they get hurt or ill through work.

## 15 First week

- 15.1 Clarify who's who: Build on the day one introductions and make sure anyone who wasn't around on day one is introduced. Remind the new employee of who does what, why and how they need to work with different staff, and the preferred methods for communicating.
- 15.2 Profile the organisation: Very briefly outline how it works, and its aims and plans.
- 15.3 Focus on the job role: Explain the new employee's role fully, how it fits in with their team and the organisation as a whole, the expected performance, how it will be assessed, and possible opportunities for development and training.
- 15.4 Start doing the job: Build in time for the new employee to do some tasks as part of their new role – it will give them a break from the flow of information, and help them relate to what they are being told and what they will be doing in their role.
- 15.5 Discuss relevant employment terms and conditions: Run through the key terms and conditions, especially in regard to what is required during any probationary periods. Answer questions and make sure the employee understands what the terms and conditions mean in practice.
- 15.6 Explain the rules: Make sure the employee knows about key...
- work practices
  - policies
  - expected behaviour, unacceptable behaviour and procedures if rules are broken. New employees should understand how problems concerning performance, discipline and absence, and serious complaints against staff, are handled.

15.7 Provide further Health and Safety information: Flesh out the earlier Health and Safety information so the new employee gains a full understanding. Include any considerations regarding pregnant employees, disabled employees with reasonable adjustments.

## 16 First month

16.1 In the first month, the focus should be to help the new employee gain a reasonable grasp of the organisation and their role. Arrange more specific support: It should become clearer if a new employee needs further training or coaching in a particular area. While the specific requirements will depend on the individual, the need for support is common with most new recruits and will help them progress towards becoming fully effective as soon as possible.

16.2 Keep doing more of the job: By now, a new employee will have been introduced to quite a few (if not all) of their tasks and the focus should be on giving them practical experience of tackling them. At this stage, shadowing a more experienced colleague performing the role will help.

16.3 Keep giving regular feedback: Depending on the need, a new employee should be getting daily or weekly on-the-job feedback on how they are getting on at this stage. Avoid giving feedback in a haphazard manner as they may associate this with being picked up for doing something wrong, or not effectively enough. Feedback should always be kept positive and constructive. Where there is a performance concern, be clear where the issues are and how the new employee can handle things differently.

16.4 The manager should arrange a 1:1 every couple of weeks: The 1:1 meetings should give the new employee realistic feedback on how they are doing (but keeping in mind it is very early days and that the new recruit is still feeling their way). The meeting should be relaxed and informal, gauging how the new employee feels about:

- how they are settling in, and adjusting to the role and organisation
- aspects of the role where they feel they need training or coaching
- any other concerns
- If the new employee raises reasonable and justifiable points which should help improve their performance, the supervisor/line manager should act on them.

## 17 Three months

This is a crucial milestone. If the Council, line manager and the new employee are all happy with the settling in and performance, the recruit is likely to stay. It's also crucial if things are not going so well. Either way, the new employee is unlikely to be the finished article, so in both cases the Council and line manager will need to look at where the recruit is doing well and where they need to improve or develop. Also, the Council and line manager need to address whether the recruit is meeting targets and deadlines, and re-affirm or adjust them if circumstances are changing. This is the time for Council, line manager and the new employee to work together to pinpoint any further training, coaching or development needs.

## 18 Interim review

At 8 weeks there should be an interim probation review. See Appendix 3. This is a mid-probation review. The review should be formal, structured and constructive.

## 19 Final review meeting

At 26 weeks there should be a final probation review. See Appendix 4. The review should be formal, structured and constructive. If the employee has passed their probation period the line manager should:

- review their performance, the difference training or coaching is making, and give feedback look ahead at the next six months, reviewing the employee's work objectives and possibly set some new ones in line with their role.
- assess whether the employee will need any further experience, training or coaching in new areas
- The employee who has passed their probation period will be eligible to have a yearly appraisal.
- The employee should be written to by the Town Clerk/Corporate Services Manager to confirm that they have passed their probation period.
- If the Council/Line Manager is unsure whether the employee is suitable for the job, it could extend the probationary period, see section 5 Extension of probationary period.
- If it becomes apparent that dismissal is a likely outcome see sections 6-8.

## 20 Other considerations School, college and university leavers

School, college and university leavers: This may be their first job, or the first time they are seeking a certain type of job, or employment in a specific industry. It will help if the induction makes it clear:

- what is expected of new employees at work
- where they fit into the organisation
- where there are opportunities to train and develop their skills
- that the Council understands new recruits may be nervous and that it will work with them to allay any worries
- about existing and potential hazards in the workplace.

## 21 Returning to the workplace

Employees might have taken a break from employment, or who needed or wanted a change from their last working arrangement – and their needs will differ. The most important thing for an employer to be mindful of is that there will be different general considerations for each situation, and different specific considerations for each individual. Rather than try to make assumptions, employers should talk to the employees and ask them what, if anything, ought to be taken into account when planning an induction.

## Appendix 1: Preparation prior to start date checklist

Name of starter:
Job title:
Start date:
Inductor:

	Task	Completed
1.	Source laptop, arrange set up on first day. (Uniserve).	
2.	Prepare keys/security access to the buildings (Corporate Services Officer).	
3.	Prepare desk set up. (Line Manager/ Corporate Services Officer)	
4.	Start DBS process if appropriate. (Youth Service Manager/Corporate Services Manager)	
5.	Prepare a 4 week induction, contacting appropriate colleagues to book in introduction meetings. Arrange time within the induction for employee to complete any mandatory corporate and directorate/service specific related training. (Line Manager)	
6.	Make sure the Council and Staff have received information about the new starter and are aware of the start date. (Line Manager)	
7.	Prepare HR file for employee. (RFO/Corporate Services Manager)	
8.	Ensure RFO is copied into offer letter outlining salary point scale. (Line Manager)	
9.	Arrange for any uniform, protective clothing/equipment if applicable. (Operations & Facilities Manager/ Youth Service Manager).	
10.	If employee under 18 or new/ expectant mother a risk assessment should be completed BEFORE work commences to discuss any special arrangements, i.e. supervision requirement, prohibition (Line Manager/ Corporate Services Manager)	
11.	Send the following before employee starts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft induction timetable</li> <li>• <a href="#">DRAFT POLICY HTC Occupational Health and Wellbeing including post offer health questionnaire Sep 24.docx</a> ask them to fill</li> </ul>	



	<p>out the questionnaire and either return it before they start or bring when they start.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal details form</li> <li>• Ask them to bring P45/P46, photo ID for Right to Work check, Qualification certificates and/or current driving licence (if requested as part of essential criteria in the job description)</li> <li>• Let them know about any car parking arrangements</li> <li>• Let them know about any particular dress code</li> <li>• Let them know that there is tea/coffee making facilities but if they like a special kind of tea/coffee to bring that in</li> </ul> <p>(Corporate Services Manager)</p>	
12.	<p>Create electronic welcome pack with links to relevant policies/procedures/protocols (Corporate Services Officer)</p>	

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## Appendix 2: Induction checklist

<b>Name of starter:</b>
<b>Job title:</b>
<b>Start date:</b>
<b>Inductor:</b>

Aim to complete all tasks by the Interim Induction Review (8 weeks from start date)

	Task	Completed
1.	Welcome and introduction, and overview of induction (Line Manager). Ask how employee prefers to receive information/training e.g. through written instruction/or by doing a task? What is their learning style? Ask them if they have any stationery requirements, e.g. notepad.	
2.	Personal Details Questionnaire/Bank details (explain pay date)/Pension/ P45 (or P46 if you do not have P45)/Emergency Contract details (forms to Corporate Services Manager/RFO)	
3.	Take copies of qualifications (if requested as part of essential criteria in the job description) / photo id (for Right to Work check) (Line Manager or delegated employee, copies to Corporate Services Manager/RFO)	
4.	Tour of facilities including kitchen facilities and fire exits, assembly points and fire aid kits/know who the first aiders are (Line Manager or delegated employee)	
5.	Given keys/security access to the buildings (Corporate Services Officer)	
6.	Organisational structure and Committee Calendar (Line Manager)	
7.	Set up with laptop and phone (Uniserve/ Corporate Services Officer for introduction to the phone)	
8.	ID badge for Staff pass (Communications Officer)	
10.	Booking annual leave/sickness/time in lieu/overtime (Line Manager)	
11.	Post offer health questionnaire reasonable adjustments required. Does employee require a PEEP?  (Line Manager/Corporate Services Manager). Explain the importance of maintaining wellbeing and good occupational health.	
12.	DSE self-assessment (employee/Line Manager) <a href="#">POLICY-HTC-Display-screen-equipment-and-workstation-assessment-procedure-Sep-24.pdf</a>	
13.	Read welcome pack <a href="#">Global - Welcome pack - All Documents</a> (employee/Line Manager)	

14.	<p>Read policies/procedures/protocols:</p> <p><a href="#">Council Policy Documents - Hailsham Town Council</a> – for finalised/published policies:</p> <p><a href="#">Global - Current policies - All Documents</a> - for Draft policies that are awaiting Council sign off</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Hailsham Town Council - Sickness Absence Procedure.docx</a> – needs updating</li> <li>• Staff Handbook – will be available soon!</li> </ul> <p>(Employee)</p>	
15.	Go through JD/contract and terms of conditions (Line Manager/ Corporate Services Manager)	
16.	Start looking at training required (employee/Line Manager)	
17.	Set up regular 1:1s with manager (employee/Line Manager)	
18.	Dates for interim (8 weeks) and final review meetings (26 weeks) (employee/Line Manager)	
19.	Use of IT systems including MS Teams and file sharing (employee/Line Manager)	

I confirm that I have received information on the above listed items.	
Signature of member of staff:	Date:
I confirm that the above named employee received information on the above listed items.	
Signature of line manager:	Date:

Return completed form to Corporate Services Manager either before or just after the Interim Probation Review.

### Appendix 3: Interim Probation Review Report

Name of new starter	Start date	Interim Probation Review meeting date (8 weeks after start)	End date of probation period (26 weeks after start)

Summary of strengths, achievements and areas for further development:

Progress with respect to all selection criteria and meeting general standards is **satisfactory/unsatisfactory** (delete as appropriate).

If progress is unsatisfactory, please enclose/attach an Action Plan that you have agreed with the new starter.

Manager's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MEMBER OF STAFF**

The objectives of my role and general standards have been clearly explained to me. I have met frequently with my manager to discuss my progress in the job. I have read the above summary and agree that it is a fair reflection of my progress to date.

Additional comments:

New starter's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY TOWN CLERK**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Return completed form to Corporate Services Manager with induction checklist.

## Appendix 4: Final Probation Review Report

Name of new starter	Start date	Interim Probation Review meeting date (8 weeks after start)	End date of probation period (26 weeks after start)

Summary of strengths, achievements and areas for further development:

Progress with respect to all selection criteria and meeting general standards is **satisfactory/unsatisfactory** (delete as appropriate).

If progress is unsatisfactory, please enclose/attach an Action Plan that you have agreed with the new starter.

The appointment should be confirmed **YES / NO** (delete as appropriate)

The probation period should be extended **YES / NO** (delete as appropriate)

End date for the extended probation period \_\_\_\_\_ (insert a date as agreed with Town Clerk and Corporate Services Manager)

Manager's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MEMBER OF STAFF**

The objectives of my role and general standards have been clearly explained to me. I have met frequently with my manager to discuss my progress in the job. I have read the above summary and agree that it is a fair reflection of my progress to date.

Additional comments:

New starter's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY TOWN CLERK**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Return completed form to Corporate Services Manager



## Volunteer policy and agreement

Owner	John Harrison, Town Clerk
Reviewer	Emily Hastings, Corporate Services Manager Andy Joyes, Youth Service Manager Joel Cottingham, Deputy Youth Service Manager Anne Marie Ricketts, Deputy Mayor
Previous versions	N/A
Templates used/adapted	
Approver	Initial: Staffing Committee Final: Finance & Governance Committee
Date approved	
Date of next review	January 2027
Related policies/procedures	
Policy covers	All HTC including Hailsham Youth Service

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## Introduction

1. Hailsham Town Council (HTC) acknowledges and values the support that volunteers provide to the Council, with includes Hailsham Youth Service (HYS). This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in activities within or overseen by the Council.
2. This policy applies to volunteers working on behalf of, but not employed by, the Council. Volunteers are unpaid and of their own free will contribute their time, energy and skills.
3. Volunteers will contribute to achieving the aims, objectives and vision of the Council.

HTC: <https://www.hailsham-tc.gov.uk/town-council/>

HYS: <https://www.hailshamyouthservice.org/about.html>

## Recruitment

4. Volunteer opportunities are advertised through our websites and social media.
5. HTC will conduct a recruitment process to select volunteers. The recruitment process will aim to be fair, non-discriminatory and unbiased.
6. If appropriate the Council will request to see evidence of qualifications necessary to carry out the role.
7. If appropriate the Council will request references.

## Responsibilities

8. An outline of the role and responsibilities will be provided to all volunteers.
9. The number of hours and times for volunteering will be discussed and agreed in advance.

## Mandatory training

10. Volunteers will be required to take any appropriate mandatory training e.g. safeguarding, health and safety, food preparation.
11. If volunteers will be working with children or vulnerable adults, by law HTC will get a [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) check. The DBS will search police records to identify people who are unsuitable for certain types of work, especially work involving children and vulnerable adults. A volunteer must declare if they

receive a subsequent caution or criminal conviction after a DBS check is conducted.

12. On-the-job training will be given depending on the volunteer role.
13. Volunteers will be encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for personal growth and skill development.

## **Policies and procedures**

14. HTC will ensure that the volunteer is made aware of and has access to any relevant policies and procedures. The volunteer agrees to comply with these.
15. The volunteer will abide by confidentiality and data protection policies. The volunteer must safeguard and not use or disclose any confidential information they have access to either whilst volunteering, or afterwards. However, if the volunteer is made aware of anything where the safety of others is compromised this should be reported to a senior member of staff/Councillor.
16. The volunteer will demonstrate professional behaviour and conduct while volunteering for HTC.

## **Support and development**

17. Volunteers should be able to seek support from HTC, this could be through one to ones or supervision, formally or informally.
18. Volunteers will have a point of contact, if they need help, or have a problem, particularly relating to safety issues.

## **Communication**

19. Volunteers will maintain effective communication including promptly responding to communications, communicating about non-attendance and seeking clarification or guidance when needed.
20. HTC will provide effective communications to volunteers, including as much notice as possible if anything is cancelled and volunteers are not required.
21. Volunteers can communicate about volunteering with HTC/HYS but must not represent HTC/HYS, or appear to represent HTC/HYS, unless they have been authorised to speak on HTC/HYS' behalf.



## **Payment**

22. Volunteers will not be paid. If volunteers have any expenses these will need to be agreed by HTC in advance, and if approved receipts will be required.

## **Volunteer agreement**

23. See appendix 1 for the volunteer agreement.
24. All volunteers will read the volunteer policy and sign their agreement that they have read the policy and will abide by the policy.
25. The volunteer agreement is not intended to be a legally binding contract and is binding in honour only.

## **Ending the volunteer agreement**

26. Any breaches to the volunteer agreement will mean the ending of the volunteer agreement.
27. The volunteer agreement can be ended by the volunteer or HTC/HYS at any time.

## Appendix 1: Volunteer agreement

**Name of volunteer:**

**Volunteer role:**

- I have been issued with an outline of the role and responsibilities.
- I have been issued with the volunteer policy.
- I have read and agree with all points of the volunteer policy.
- The volunteer agreement can be ended by myself or Hailsham Town Council/Hailsham Youth Service at any time.

Emergency contact name:

Emergency contact phone number:

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Signed by HTC/HYS:**

**Print name:**

**Date:**

Send signed copy to Corporate Services Manager/Corporate Services Officer to store securely.



## Lone Working Policy

Owner	John Harrison, Town Clerk
Reviewer	Kaylee Butcher, Corporate Services Officer
Previous versions	Lone working & Violence at Work Risk assessment 2020
Templates used/adapted	NALC 2024
Approver	Staffing Committee Finance & Governance Committee
Date approved	Will be added in when approved
Date of next review	2 years
Related policies/procedures	Health & Safety Policy Risk assessment strategy Occupational health and wellbeing Safeguarding
Policy covers	All Hailsham Town Council including Post Office and Hailsham Youth Service

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## 1- Purpose of this Policy and procedure

The council recognises that some of our staff work alone, and where this is the case, seeks to ensure the health and safety of all lone workers. This document:

- Raises awareness of the safety issues relating to lone working,
- Identifies and assesses potential risks to an individual working alone,
- Explains the importance of reasonable and practicable precautions to minimise potential risk,
- Provides appropriate support to lone workers, and,
- Encourages reporting of all incidents associated with lone working so that they can be adequately managed and used to help reduce risks and improve working arrangements for the future.

## 2- The scope of this policy

It applies to all staff, whether full time, part time or temporary workers.

## 3- Policy

We will protect staff from the risks of lone working, as far as is reasonably practicable. Working alone is not in itself against the law and it is often safe to do so. However, the council's policy is to consider carefully and deal with any health and safety risks for those who work alone.

## 4- Definition

4.1 'Lone Worker' refers to people who work by themselves without work colleagues either during or outside normal working hours. Examples include:

- A caretaker who opens and closes a hall either early in the morning or late at night
- A groundsman tending to green space
- Office workers who work alone in the premises

4.2 Any worker under the age of 18 years, or anyone working in confined spaces is not permitted to work on their own.

## 5- Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility for the health and safety of work colleagues. The key responsibilities are as follows:

### 5.1 Managers

- Will try to avoid the need for lone working as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that the worker is competent to work alone.
- Ensure that all lone working activities must be formally risk assessed. This should identify the risk to lone workers; any control measures necessary to minimise those risks; and emergency procedures.
- Arrangements for lone working must be made clear to staff and the details of what can or cannot be done while working alone explained.
- Lone workers must be informed of the hazards and understand the necessary control measures that need to be put in place and have the opportunity to contribute to the risk assessment.
- Must raise the alarm if staff cannot be contacted or do not return as anticipated.
- Must ensure that all staff are aware of this lone working policy and procedure and provide appropriate levels of training and guidance on lone working.

### 5.2 Lone workers

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work
- To follow any instruction given by management or the Council
- Raise with their line manager any concerns they have in relation to lone working
- Not to work alone where there is adequate information to undertake a risk assessment.
- Inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity in the event of an accident, incident of violence or aggression whilst working alone

### 5.3 Staff

- To be aware of colleagues working on their own and alert to unexpected changes of routine, unanticipated periods where there is no communication.
- Buddies should ensure they maintain and share up to date contact details (see below)

## **6- Risk Assessments**

Managers must complete (or ensure the completion of) a Lone Working Risk Assessment prior to every lone working activity and updated as appropriate. The risk assessment should be reviewed by the lone worker before undertaking the work and communicated to all relevant staff or councillors. People who work alone will of course face the same risks in their work as those doing similar roles/tasks. However, they may additionally encounter hazards such as:

- Sudden illness
- Faulty equipment
- Travelling alone
- Remote locations
- Abuse from members of the public
- Animal attacks

## **7- Ways in which lone working risks can be reduced**

Every lone working environment and situation is different, and therefore it is not possible to implement a 'one size fits all' approach. Where there is regular or anticipated lone working, the council will devise and implement a lone working plan that meets the needs and risks of their particular circumstances. The plan should be proportionate to any risks that are identified from the risk assessment. The plan for a groundsman lone working with machinery will be more detailed than an administrator working late in the office. This should be written down and communicated to all relevant staff and where appropriate, councillors.

## **8- Health and Wellbeing**

In order to ensure your personal safety, it is important that you share any details of any aspects of your health that could lead to increased risk with your manager or specific councillors. You can then jointly plan to mitigate any potential risks caused by your circumstances. This information will be treated on a strict 'need to know' basis with your confidentiality of the utmost importance.

## 9- Reporting incidents

Any incidents or perceived risks encountered while lone working should be recorded, reviewed and acted upon. The report should include:

- A brief note of what happened, when, and who was involved,
- For any work-related aggression (verbal or physical) including threatening behaviour, all of the details of the incident and of the perpetrator should be captured, which could then be used if the police take any formal prosecution action. This might be particularly important for more serious incidents of work-related violence, and,
- In either instance, this might also include recording details of any circumstances you think might have contributed to the incident, e.g. the context of the interaction, perceptions about the condition of the perpetrator, or any environmental circumstances. This information would then support us to review our risk assessment process and see if any additional measures are needed.
- If you feel unsafe, unwell, or become injured call the emergency services if you need immediate assistance. If possible, call your manager or colleague to let them know (or ask someone to do so on your behalf).
- Call your manager if your plans change because you feel unwell or if you have a domestic emergency when working alone.