

GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES

Document history

Notes of changes	Version No.	Date of approval and adoption
Grievance policy for employees in original format	1.0	24 April 2021
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Revised – changes to remove reference to executive members and replace with board directors.	2.0	5 April 2025
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**THIS GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES IS PUBLISHED AS APPROVED
BY CUMBRIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS ON 11 APRIL 2026**



Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC)

Grievance Policy for employees

INTRODUCTION

1. This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice. It also takes account of the most recent ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between CALC and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with CALC. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent legislation.
2. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. An employee should aim to settle most grievances informally.
3. This policy confirms:
 - the employee has the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for his /her grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
 - CALC will give the employee reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. The employee and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. 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 five working days of the original meeting date.
 - any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and CALC.



- an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final.
- information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by CALC in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the GDPR of 2018.
- recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition.
- if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure.
- if grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith.
- CALC may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires CALC's and the employee's consent.

INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

4. CALC and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with the Chief Officer to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with the Chief Officer (for example, because it concerns the Chief Officer), the employee should contact the Chairman of CALC.

FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

5. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally, the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the Chief Officer or Chair of CALC.



6. CALC will appoint a panel of three Board Directors to investigate the grievance. The panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No member with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the panel.

Investigation

7. The panel will investigate the matter before the grievance meeting which may include interviewing others (e.g. employees, councillors or members of the public).

Notification

8. Within 10 working days of CALC receiving the employee's grievance, the employee will be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The panel's letter will include the following:
 - the names of its Chairman and other members
 - a summary of the employee's grievance based on his/her written submission.
 - the date, time, and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will be within 25 working days of when CALC received the grievance.
 - the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
 - a copy of CALC's grievance policy
 - confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of witnesses at least five working days before the meeting.
 - confirmation that the employee will provide CALC with any supporting evidence at least five working days before the meeting.

The grievance meeting

9. At the grievance meeting:
 - the Chairman will introduce the members of the panel to the employee.
 - the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence.
 - the Chairman will ask the employee what action they wish CALC to take.



- any member of the panel and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness.
- the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case.
- the Chairman will provide the employee with the panel's decision, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that CALC will take and of the employee's right to appeal.
- a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the panel.

The appeal

10. If an employee decides that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the panel, they may submit a written appeal to CALC. An appeal must be received by the Chief Officer or Chair of CALC as appropriate within five working days of the employee receiving the panel's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.
11. Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:
 - a failure by CALC to follow its grievance policy.
 - the decision was not supported by the evidence.
 - the action proposed by the grievance panel was inadequate/inappropriate.
 - new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.
12. The Appeal will be heard by an appeal panel of three CALC Board Directors who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of CALC who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel may comprise members from other partner organisations. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.
13. The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will take place within 25 working days of CALC's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that they may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
14. At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee.



- explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the grievance panel.
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
15. The employee (or their companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of his/her appeal.
 16. The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
 17. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the grievance panel or substitute its own decision.
 18. The decision of the appeal panel is final.