



Staff Handbook

Deeping St James Parish Council

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Welcome to Deeping St James Parish Council

A parish council is a local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the parish. It is the level of local government closest to the community, with the District and the County Authority above it in the hierarchy.

The Parish Council is made up of a maximum of 15 councillors who are a voice for the Village while ensuring funds are spent wisely. Working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council and South Kesteven District Council and other organisations such as the police, they ensure the needs of the village and residents are met.

Points of Escalation

Throughout this handbook, we make references to points of escalation, usually your Line Manager in the first instance. For most employees, the Clerk is the Line Manager and you should refer initial queries to them. For the Clerk, the Line Manager is the Council but in reality, that means referring any queries to the Chair.

In situations where it is not appropriate for you to approach your usual Line Manager, you can approach any of the following:

The Vice Chair of the Council;
The Chair of the Council;
Any Committee Chair to whom you feel comfortable speaking.

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1. Getting Started

1.1 General Information

This section contains some general information relating to your employment. You should read the information carefully and if you have any questions, consult the Parish Clerk in the first instance.

1.2 Code of Conduct

This code of conduct is intended to ensure the standards and reputation of Deeping St James Parish Council and its staff are maintained at the highest levels. It is also a reminder that the actions of one individual can have a direct bearing on us and everyone associated with us.

Our code of conduct is as follows:

- You have an implied duty of care not to do anything to harm the Parish Council, its members, employees, suppliers or anyone else associated with the Council
- You must not engage in behaviour which has an adverse effect on the Council, its members and its employees
- You will build and maintain harmonious working relationships with your colleagues and anyone else with whom you come into contact with during your working day
- No smoking at Parish Council locations or on customer sites.
- Never make or receive calls from a mobile telephone whilst driving a Parish Council vehicle unless you are using a fully legal Bluetooth headset (the Parish Council does not provide these). Any fines or points received from such behaviour will be your responsibility and not the responsibility of Deeping St James Parish Council.*
- The Parish Council operates a zero-tolerance policy in relation to the consumption of an inappropriate amount of alcohol or other intoxicating substances, at any time, which affects your safety and that of others around you and impairs your ability to do your job. That means no alcohol or other intoxicating substances to be consumed on customer sites, in Parish Council vehicles etc.

*Please remember that if you are driving a Parish Council vehicle, you are representing the Parish Council and we therefore expect you to drive courteously and within the law (wearing a seatbelt at all times, etc).

If you persistently break the rules as outlined above, this will be considered as a disciplinary matter and dealt with under the Parish Council's disciplinary procedure.

In the case of misuse of alcohol or drugs, the Parish Council will try to deal with any issues in an informal manner where no danger or threat is posed to you as an individual or to your colleagues. However, where issues of misconduct or gross misconduct arise, these will be dealt with under the Parish Council's disciplinary procedure. If you choose to inform us of a problem, either with drugs or alcohol, any information you give will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

We reserve the right to add rules to the list above when necessary. We will inform you of any changes or additions to the rules and the reasons for doing so.

1.3 Probationary Periods

Deeping St James Parish Council operates a 3-month probationary period for all new employees. During this time, you will be making up your own mind about whether or not you want to work for Deeping St James Parish Council. At the same time, the Parish Council will be assessing your attitude, capabilities and potential. If, for any reason, you do not reach the standards required by the Parish Council during your probationary period, your employment may be terminated with one week's notice or your probationary period may be extended by mutual agreement for up to a further 3 months. Either of these options will be fully discussed with you at the time and the reasons for our decisions explained to you.

1.4 Council Property

Any Parish Council property you have and any original or copy documents obtained by you during the course of your employment must be returned to the Parish Council at any time when requested and especially before your employment with the Parish Council ends.

If you are supplied with a Parish Council mobile phone, the phone is for business use only. In the case of an emergency, you should ask for permission to use the Parish Council mobile. Unauthorised personal use will be treated as a disciplinary matter. Any mobile phone supplied is the Parish Council's property and must be returned in good working order at any time upon request.

1.5 Rights of Search

The Parish Council reserves the right to carry out random checks on persons and property (including employee's vehicles) at any time while they are on our premises. It is understood that such checks do not imply suspicion in relation to the individual concerned.

Whilst you have the right to refuse to be searched, refusal can constitute a breach of contract, which could result in your dismissal.

We reserve the right to call in the police at any stage.

2. Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy

You are reminded that during your employment you may receive or be made aware of confidential information concerning the Parish Council's business. You shall not during the term of your employment disclose or allow the disclosure of any confidential information (except in the proper course of your employment) other than information that has come into the public domain or information that you are entitled to disclose under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

For purposes of clarification, you must not discuss any confidential information relating to the work of the Council with anyone outside the Parish Council. Disclosing such information to a third party will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

After you have left the Parish Council's employment, you shall not disclose or use any information or practice that would be damaging to the Parish Council. The Parish Council shall be entitled to apply for an injunction to prevent such disclosure or use and to seek any other remedy including without limitation the recovery of damages in the case of such disclosure or use.

2.1 Privacy Policy

*"Staff" means employees, workers, agency staff and those retained on a temporary or permanent basis

**Includes, volunteers, contractors, agents, and other role holders within the council including former staff*and former councillors. This also includes applicants or candidates for any of these roles.

Your personal data – what is it?

"Personal data" is any information about a living individual which allows them to be identified from that data (for example a name, photograph, video, email address, or address). Identification can be directly using the data itself or by combining it with other information which helps to identify a living individual (e.g. a list of staff may contain personnel ID numbers rather than names but if you use a separate list of the ID numbers which give the corresponding names to identify the staff in the first list then the first list will also be treated as personal data). The processing of personal data is governed by legislation relating to personal data which applies in the United Kingdom including the General Data Protection Regulation (the "GDPR") and other legislation relating to personal data and rights such as the Human Rights Act.

Who are we?

This Privacy Notice is provided to you by Deeping St James Parish Council which is the data controller for your data.

The council works together with:

- Other data controllers, such as local authorities, public authorities, central government and agencies such as HMRC and DVLA
- Staff pension providers
- Former and prospective employers
- DBS services suppliers
- Payroll services providers
- Recruitment Agencies
- Credit reference agencies

We may need to share personal data we hold with them so that they can carry out their responsibilities to the council and our community. The organisations referred to above will sometimes be “joint data controllers”. This means we are all responsible to you for how we process your data where for example two or more data controllers are working together for a joint purpose. If there is no joint purpose or collaboration then the data controllers will be independent and will be individually responsible to you.

The council will comply with data protection law. This says that the personal data we hold about you must be:

- Used lawfully, fairly and in a transparent way.
- Collected only for valid purposes that we have clearly explained to you and not used in any way that is incompatible with those purposes.
- Relevant to the purposes we have told you about and limited only to those purposes.
- Accurate and kept up to date.
- Kept only as long as necessary for the purposes we have told you about.
- Kept and destroyed securely including ensuring that appropriate technical and security measures are in place to protect your personal data to protect personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access and disclosure.

What data do we process?

- Names, titles, and aliases, photographs.
- Start date / leaving date
- Contact details such as telephone numbers, addresses, and email addresses.
- Where they are relevant to our legal obligations, or where you provide them to us, we may process information such as gender, age, date of birth, marital status, nationality, education/work history, academic/professional qualifications, employment details, hobbies, family composition, and dependants.
- Non-financial identifiers such as passport numbers, driving licence numbers, vehicle registration numbers, taxpayer identification numbers, staff identification numbers, tax reference codes, and national insurance numbers.
- Financial identifiers such as bank account numbers, payment card numbers, payment/transaction identifiers, policy numbers, and claim numbers.
- Financial information such as National Insurance number, pay and pay records, tax code, tax and benefits contributions, expenses claimed.
- Other operational personal data created, obtained, or otherwise processed in the course of carrying out our activities, including but not limited to, CCTV footage, recordings of telephone conversations, IP addresses and website visit histories, logs of visitors, and logs of accidents, injuries and insurance claims.
- Next of kin and emergency contact information
- Recruitment information (including copies of right to work documentation, references and other information included in a CV or cover letter or as part of the application process and referral source (e.g. agency, staff referral))
- Location of employment or workplace.
- Other staff data (not covered above) including; level, performance management information, languages and proficiency; licences/certificates, immigration status; employment status; information for disciplinary and grievance proceedings; and personal biographies.
- CCTV footage and other information obtained through electronic means such as swipecard records.
- Information about your use of our information and communications systems.

We use your personal data for some or all of the following purposes: -

Please note: We need all the categories of personal data in the list above primarily to allow us to perform our contract with you and to enable us to comply with legal obligations.

- Making a decision about your recruitment or appointment.
- Determining the terms on which you work for us.
- Checking you are legally entitled to work in the UK.
- Paying you and, if you are an employee, deducting tax and National Insurance contributions.
- Providing any contractual benefits to you
- Liaising with your pension provider.
- Administering the contract, we have entered into with you.
- Management and planning, including accounting and auditing.
- Conducting performance reviews, managing performance and determining performance requirements.
- Making decisions about salary reviews and compensation.
- Assessing qualifications for a particular job or task, including decisions about promotions.
- Conducting grievance or disciplinary proceedings.
- Making decisions about your continued employment or engagement.
- Making arrangements for the termination of our working relationship.
- Education, training and development requirements.
- Dealing with legal disputes involving you, including accidents at work.
- Ascertaining your fitness to work.
- Managing sickness absence.
- Complying with health and safety obligations.
- To prevent fraud.

- To monitor your use of our information and communication systems to ensure compliance with our IT policies.
- To ensure network and information security, including preventing unauthorised access to our computer and electronic communications systems and preventing malicious software distribution.
- To conduct data analytics studies to review and better understand employee retention and attrition rates.
- Equal opportunities monitoring.
- To undertake activity consistent with our statutory functions and powers including any delegated functions.
- To maintain our own accounts and records;
- To seek your views or comments;
- To process a job application;
- To administer councillors' interests
- To provide a reference.

Our processing may also include the use of CCTV systems for monitoring purposes.

Some of the above grounds for processing will overlap and there may be several grounds which justify our use of your personal data.

We will only use your personal data when the law allows us to. Most commonly, we will use your personal data in the following circumstances:

- Where we need to perform the contract, we have entered into with you.
- Where we need to comply with a legal obligation.

We may also use your personal data in the following situations, which are likely to be rare:

- Where we need to protect your interests (or someone else's interests).
- Where it is needed in the public interest or for official purposes.

How we use sensitive personal data

- We may process sensitive personal data relating to staff, councillors and role holders including, as appropriate:

- information about your physical or mental health or condition in order to monitor sick leave and take decisions on your fitness for work;
 - your racial or ethnic origin or religious or similar information in order to monitor compliance with equal opportunities legislation;
 - in order to comply with legal requirements and obligations to third parties.
- These types of data are described in the GDPR as “Special categories of data” and require higher levels of protection. We need to have further justification for collecting, storing and using this type of personal data.
 - We may process special categories of personal data in the following circumstances:
 - In limited circumstances, with your explicit written consent.
 - Where we need to carry out our legal obligations.
 - Where it is needed in the public interest, such as for equal opportunities monitoring or in relation to our pension scheme.
 - Where it is needed to assess your working capacity on health grounds, subject to appropriate confidentiality safeguards.
 - Less commonly, we may process this type of personal data where it is needed in relation to legal claims or where it is needed to protect your interests (or someone else’s interests) and you are not capable of giving your consent, or where you have already made the information public.

Do we need your consent to process your sensitive personal data?

- We do not need your consent if we use your sensitive personal data in accordance with our rights and obligations in the field of employment and social security law.
- In limited circumstances, we may approach you for your written consent to allow us to process certain sensitive personal data. If we do so, we will provide you with full details of the personal data that we would like and the reason we need it, so that you can carefully consider whether you wish to consent.
- You should be aware that it is not a condition of your contract with us that you agree to any request for consent from us.

Information about criminal convictions

- We may only use personal data relating to criminal convictions where the law allows us to do so. This will usually be where such processing is necessary to carry out our obligations and provided we do so in line with our data protection policy.
- Less commonly, we may use personal data relating to criminal convictions where it is necessary in relation to legal claims, where it is necessary to protect your interests (or someone else's interests) and you are not capable of giving your consent, or where you have already made the information public.
- We will only collect personal data about criminal convictions if it is appropriate given the nature of the role and where we are legally able to do so. Where appropriate, we will collect personal data about criminal convictions as part of the recruitment process or we may be notified of such personal data directly by you in the course of you working for us.

What is the legal basis for processing your personal data?

Some of our processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation.

We may also process data if it is necessary for the performance of a contract with you, or to take steps to enter into a contract.

We will also process your data in order to assist you in fulfilling your role in the council including administrative support or if processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation.

Sharing your personal data

Your personal data will only be shared with third parties including other data controllers where it is necessary for the performance of the data controllers' tasks or where you first give us your prior consent. It is likely that we will need to share your data with:

- Our agents, suppliers and contractors. For example, we may ask a commercial provider to manage our HR/ payroll functions, or to maintain our database software;
- Other persons or organisations operating within local community.
- Other data controllers, such as local authorities, public authorities, central government and agencies such as HMRC and DVLA
- Staff pension providers
- Former and prospective employers

- DBS services suppliers
- Payroll services providers
- Recruitment Agencies
- Credit reference agencies
- Professional advisors
- Trade unions or employee representatives

How long do we keep your personal data?

We will keep some records permanently if we are legally required to do so. We may keep some other records for an extended period of time. For example, it is currently best practice to keep financial records for a minimum period of 8 years to support HMRC audits or provide tax information. We may have legal obligations to retain some data in connection with our statutory obligations as a public authority. The council is permitted to retain data in order to defend or pursue claims. In some cases, the law imposes a time limit for such claims (for example 3 years for personal injury claims or 6 years for contract claims). We will retain some personal data for this purpose as long as we believe it is necessary to be able to defend or pursue a claim. In general, we will endeavour to keep data only for as long as we need it. This means that we will delete it when it is no longer needed.

Your responsibilities

It is important that the personal data we hold about you is accurate and current. Please keep us informed if your personal data changes during your working relationship with us.

Your rights in connection with personal data

You have the following rights with respect to your personal data: -

When exercising any of the rights listed below, in order to process your request, we may need to verify your identity for your security. In such cases we will need you to respond with proof of your identity before you can exercise these rights.

1. *The right to access personal data we hold on you*

- At any point you can contact us to request the personal data we hold on you as well as why we have that personal data, who has access to the personal data and where we obtained the personal data from. Once we have received your request we will respond within one month.

- There are no fees or charges for the first request but additional requests for the same personal data or requests which are manifestly unfounded or excessive may be subject to an administrative fee.
- 2. *The right to correct and update the personal data we hold on you***
- If the data we hold on you is out of date, incomplete or incorrect, you can inform us and your data will be updated.
- 3. *The right to have your personal data erased***
- If you feel that we should no longer be using your personal data or that we are unlawfully using your personal data, you can request that we erase the personal data we hold.
 - When we receive your request, we will confirm whether the personal data has been deleted or the reason why it cannot be deleted (for example because we need it for to comply with a legal obligation).
- 4. *The right to object to processing of your personal data or to restrict it to certain purposes only***
- You have the right to request that we stop processing your personal data or ask us to restrict processing. Upon receiving the request, we will contact you and let you know if we are able to comply or if we have a legal obligation to continue to process your data.
- 5. *The right to data portability***
- You have the right to request that we transfer some of your data to another controller. We will comply with your request, where it is feasible to do so, within one month of receiving your request.
- 6. *The right to withdraw your consent to the processing at any time for any processing of data to which consent was obtained***
- You can withdraw your consent easily by telephone, email, or by post (see Contact Details below).
- 7. *The right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office.***
- You can contact the Information Commissioners Office on 0303 123 1113 or via email <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/> or at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Transfer of Data Abroad

Any personal data transferred to countries or territories outside the European Economic Area (“EEA”) will only be placed on systems complying with measures giving equivalent protection of personal rights either through international agreements or contracts approved by the European Union. Our website is also accessible from overseas so on occasion some personal data (for example in a newsletter) may be accessed from overseas.

Further processing

If we wish to use your personal data for a new purpose, not covered by this Privacy Notice, then we will provide you with a new notice explaining this new use prior to commencing the processing and setting out the relevant purposes and processing conditions. Where and whenever necessary, we will seek your prior consent to the new processing, if we start to use your personal data for a purpose not mentioned in this notice.

Changes to this notice

We keep this Privacy Notice under regular review and we will place any updates on the parish council’s webpage <https://deeping-st-james.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>

This Notice was last updated in May 2018.

Contact Details

Please contact us if you have any questions about this Privacy Notice or the personal data we hold about you or to exercise all relevant rights, queries or complaints at:

The Data Controller, Deeping St James Parish Council, the Institute, 38 Church Street
Deeping St James, Lincolnshire PE6 8HD

Telephone: 01778 343266

Email: clerk@dsjpc.co.uk

You can contact the Information Commissioners Office on 0303 123 1113 or via email <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/> or at the Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

2.2 Email and Internet Use Policy

This policy aims to clarify the Parish Council's position on the issues surrounding use of email and internet in the workplace on the rare occasion that you may need to use the internet and/or have access to email.

2.3 Internet Access

It is accepted that employees may need to use the internet for both work-related and non-work-related purposes. However, employees are reminded that access to, downloading of, or the storage on Parish Council computers of indecent, offensive or pornographic material is a serious breach of Parish Council policy and will be treated as gross misconduct. The downloading or transmission of certain images is a criminal offence and the police will be informed if we have evidence of this type of activity.

The downloading of any applications that have no relation to your job role is also prohibited. This is to prevent viruses or other problems that an unauthorised download may cause to the Parish Council's systems.

2.4 Parish Council Email

You are reminded that inappropriate content in Parish Council emails is not acceptable. This includes, but is not restricted to, anything that may cause offence to the recipient or constitute harassment on grounds of sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation. The same laws apply to email as to any other written document; therefore, you should avoid making any inaccurate or defamatory statements. Failure to comply will be treated as a disciplinary issue.

2.5 Parish Council Monitoring of Email and Internet Use

The Parish Council reserves the right to monitor employees' e-mails and use of the Internet in specific cases where a problem relating to excessive or unauthorised use is suspected. The purposes for such monitoring are:

- To promote productivity and efficiency.
- For security reasons.
- To ensure there is no unauthorised use of the Parish Council's time e.g. that an employee has not been using e-mail to send or receive an excessive number of personal communications.
- To ensure the smooth running of the business if the employee is absent for any reason and communications need to be checked.

- To ensure that all employees are treated with respect, by discovering and eliminating any material that is capable of amounting to unlawful harassment.

Communications of a sensitive or confidential nature should not be sent by e-mail because it is not guaranteed to be private. When monitoring e-mails, the Parish Council will, save in exceptional circumstances, confine itself to looking at the address and heading of the e-mails. However, where circumstances warrant it, the Parish Council may open e-mails and access the content. In this case, the Parish Council will avoid, if possible, opening e-mails clearly marked as private or personal. The Parish Council reserves the right to deny or remove e-mail or Internet access to or from any employee.

2.6 Social Media

We understand that you may want to use social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter in your own personal time. In all your social media activities, it's important to remember that you will have an association with the Parish Council and that your actions and comments will reflect on how other people see the Parish Council. It is for that reason that we ask you to observe the following:

- Maintain a professional working relationship with clients and other people associated with the Parish Council. This would normally mean that you do not add or accept them as friends on Facebook; however, if you feel that you would like to do so, please speak to the Director first and he will let you know the Parish Council's view, taking into account the individual circumstances;
- If you are mentioning us as your employer, please do not use bad language or say anything defamatory about us. If you have a problem, we'd much rather you talked to us instead of telling friends and family! This is especially important if you're connected to any of our clients or prospective clients who may read your comments;
- If you see anyone mentioning the Parish Council, please let us know – whether the comments are good or bad. Good comments will make us happy and bad comments will allow us the opportunity to find out what's gone wrong and how we can fix it.

2.7 Clear desk/screen policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the measures all employees are expected to take to protect personal data and confidential information.

The Parish Clerk is responsible for communicating the contents of this policy to all employees and ensuring it is complied with; keeping the policy under review and arranging any amendments or updates to the policy.

Requirements

- If employees are going to be away from their desks for an extended period of time, they need to ensure they have taken reasonable measures to prevent any unauthorised access to confidential information
- Computers must be locked when employees are away from their desks for anything more than five minutes
- When leaving the office for the day computers must be shut down completely
- Any confidential information must be disposed of in the designated confidential waste facilities
- If employees are out of the office for an extended period of time or overnight, confidential papers must be out of sight and preferably in locked cabinets
- All desks should be kept clear and as uncluttered as possible
- Do not leave any papers on printers
- Do not leave laptops, phones, tablets, portable media or valuable personal belongings unattended for any significant period of time

Breaches

All employees have an obligation to report any actual or suspected data protection compliance failures. This will allow the Parish Council to investigate the failure and take any necessary actions.

Training

All existing employees will be made aware of this policy and receive training as required. Any new employees will receive the information and training as part of their induction process. Updates to the policy will be communicated as required and where there is a substantial change to the policy or procedures, further training will be provided as necessary.

Failure to comply with any requirement from this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

3. Mobile Phones

You may use your mobile phone to make and receive calls, send texts etc during your breaks. However, use of your mobile phone at any other time is not acceptable unless it is a genuine emergency. If you continually break the rule regarding mobile phone use, you will be subject to disciplinary action.

4. Scams at work policy

According to research, in 2021 UK victims lost £1.3 billion due to phishing scams. The aim of this policy is to explain what scammers are trying to do, impacts on individuals and organisations, how to identify a scam and what you can do to prevent being scammed and in the event of a scam. This policy should be read in conjunction with our IT policy.

4.1 Scammers' aims and potential impact

Using email or the internet at work is essential but unfortunately that means you are open to scams and unsolicited contact.

A common view of scammers has been that they are opportunistic criminals who send emails/texts randomly to large numbers of people hoping that at least a few people send them small amounts of money. However, whilst there is no doubt that being conned out of money and feeling taken advantage of is unsettling, there is unfortunately a more serious and frightening side. Scammers can now be set up with admin staff, managers and technical staff and their full-time job is to try to scam people or companies. They find a way into your computer and then watch or search sometimes for months to understand what you do, what information you have access to and then decide how to use it to cause as much damage as possible. From a company point of view the data and information stored on your server or computer can be highly confidential and valuable and there are certain types of business/industry that are more at risk (e.g., legal, medical) as the impact could be catastrophic. If scammers get access to customer details they could blackmail, destroy a reputation and steal large amounts of money. Information can be copied, and the company blackmailed to prevent data being released into the public domain. If that happened, it could have massive legal and financial implications e.g., a fine for not protecting data or compensation as well as destroying the company's reputation. Another potential outcome is when company data is hacked and then the scammers demand a ransom to release it.

4.2. How to spot a scam

Perhaps the most obvious scams are those emails sent in very high volume where the content is not relevant to you.

But scam emails/texts often look like they come from a known company/organisation, colleague or friend so they look safe and trustworthy – and relevant – at first glance.

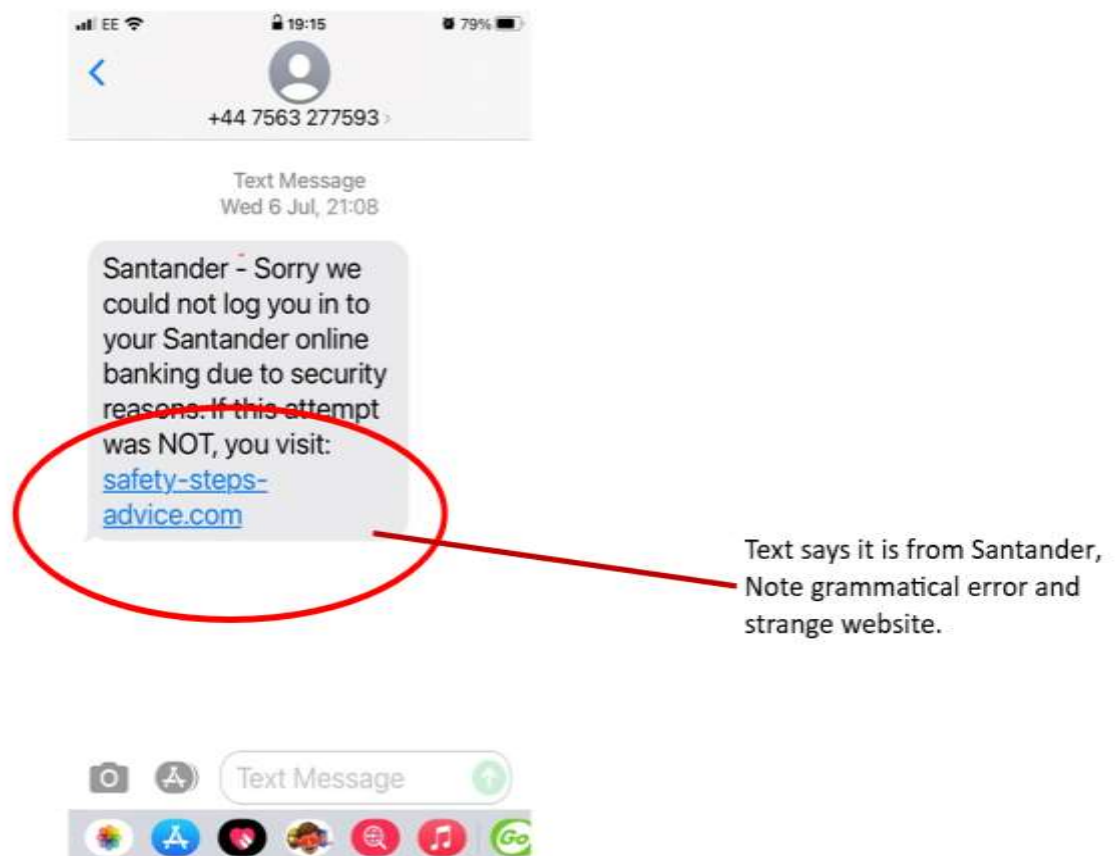
These emails and texts all contain an element of urgency or say that immediate action is required (such as to prevent losing access to contacts or expiring bank details). They may be related to current news, for example a government scheme or grant.

Criminals take advantage of workers' busy-ness. They rely on the recipient scanning information quickly and not noticing discrepancies and other warning signs.

So, with emails, always take time to check:

- the sender's email address. Don't rely on the display name; it could be fake
- the salutation. Be particularly wary of emails not addressed to you (e.g., 'Dear colleague/customer')
- the signature. Legitimate senders always include full contact details that are checkable
- hyperlinks. Never click on a link in any work email without first hovering over to check the link address
- spelling/grammar. Mistakes are a common giveaway in phishing emails.

4.3. Examples of scam emails and texts

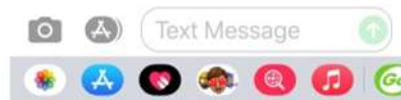




Text Message
Sun 20 Mar, 04:46

Snapchat: You have a new Chat! Tap to view:
link.snapchat.com/feed/
To unsubscribe:
w.snapchat.com/e4iLRS7x

Text supposedly from snapchat – note the strange website it directs you to – incorrect format.



Text Message
Mon 1 Aug, 14:46

Covid track and trace had been contacting people but had stopped by this date. Website looks official and valid and by referring to Covid scammers are causing an elen fear and anxiety.

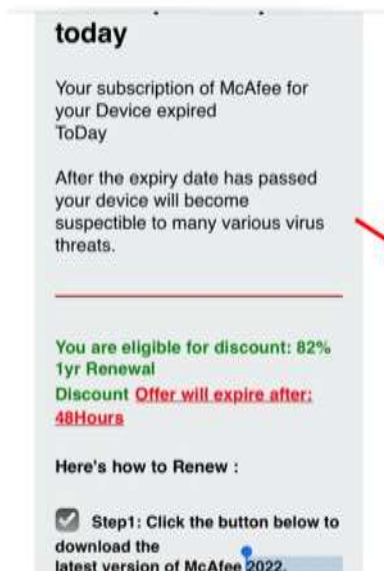
You've been exposed to someone who contracted Omicron sub-variant BA.2. You

MN McAfee Confirma... Friday
To: [REDACTED]

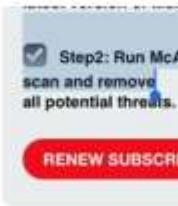
**Your computer is infected with (93) viruses! ,
Reactivate your McAfee
Anti - Virus Protection Fri,
14 Oct 2022 17:24:43
-0400**

Sender's email appears legit but actual email address is great@servators.jp.net





Email content requires immediate action, and instills fear. Discount offered to encourage purchase but again time critical. Grammatical errors – use of capital letters.



If you wish to no longer receive emails from McAfee, click [here](#) to unsubscribe. To unsubscribe by email, please send to: 2821 Mountain Boulevard, San Jose, CA 95051.

- Please note vague sender and incorrect email address

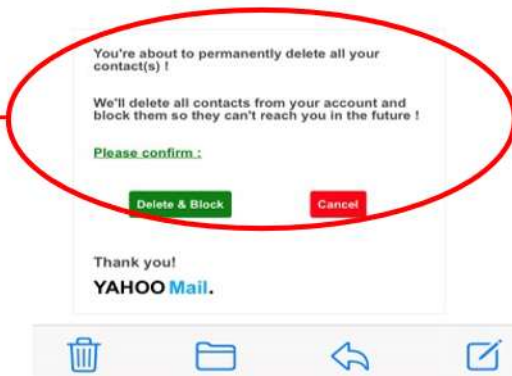


Info Sunday
To: fid5hn@yahoo.com >

- Email supposed to be from Yahoo, personalised so increases trust.

sconnolly2005, You're about to permanently delete all your contact(s) !

- Requires urgent action and threatens to delete email contacts.



4.4 To protect yourself from scams

Be wary of every email or call, especially if it is unsolicited. If in doubt, ask for an opinion from a colleague. Ensure your antivirus is up to date, if 2FA 2 Factor Authentication is an option ensure it is enabled, never download any new programs or software and if in doubt refer to your IT support company.

In particular:

- don't click on links from an email that asks for personal information– if it is a genuine link to complete a form or send information then open a new browser window and find the website from there.
- address errors can be as subtle as extra hyphens, a slight spelling mistake or a very subtle change in a name e.g. The Garden Shed Company instead of Garden Shed Company – so check carefully.
- when checking the email address the email has been sent from (as opposed to the display name which may look genuine) be aware that it could be a random/strange domain name, but equally it could be very close to what you expected.
- if you get an email supposedly from your manager/colleague that seems out of the ordinary, then double check with them (e.g., an email asking you to spend your own money to make a purchase or buy a gift for someone in work - phishing emails can be sent if someone's email has been hacked).
- if you get a call saying the caller is from your bank, hang up and call back on another line/phone if you can, to check if they really were contacting you. No one genuinely working in customer service will have an issue with this. Even if it is a genuine call never supply your password, pin number, etc.

4.5 What to do if you have been scammed

If you have made a PayPal payment, shared your bank details or bought a gift card – act quickly. Try to stop the payment with the bank or cancel a card. Change logins or passwords. Contact the company customer service to ask what their policy is.

Hopefully they may be able to help!

Inform your manager as soon as possible.

5. Dress Code and Uniforms

Deeping St James Parish Council does not seek to inhibit individual choice in relation to your appearance. However, you are expected to dress appropriately at all times in relation to your role, and to ensure that your personal hygiene and grooming are properly attended to prior to presenting yourself at work.

If we have supplied you with uniform or other apparel such as safety equipment, then you must wear this at all times when required to do so; it is your responsibility to ensure that this is clean and presentable.

If your work brings you into contact with the general public you must ensure your dress and grooming standards reflect the values of your employer.

6. Bullying and Harassment Policy

6.1 Introduction

We are committed to providing a work environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We do not tolerate bullying and harassment.

This Policy:

- a) Explains the concepts of 'bullying' and 'harassment'
- b) Sets out our expected standards of behaviour
- c) Sets out the process you should follow if you have a bullying or harassment complaint
- d) Explains how we will deal with any complaints

This Policy applies to everyone who works for us, including employees, workers, agency workers, consultants, casual workers, volunteers and interns.

This Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this policy.

6.2 What is 'bullying'?

2.2.1 Bullying is unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is one of the following:

- a) Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting
- b) An abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or causes physical or emotional harm

Bullying can take many different forms. Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- a) Spreading malicious rumours about someone
- b) Consistently putting someone down and undermining them
- c) Deliberately giving someone a heavier workload than everyone else
- d) Excluding someone from team social events

Bullying could involve a pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident. It could happen face-to-face, online, by phone or in writing. It can be verbal and non-verbal. It is not always obvious to others.

Although bullying is often connected to a power imbalance, that does not mean that it always involves a more senior person bullying a more junior person. It can also be directed at someone more senior than the bully. It may take the form of spreading rumours, refusing to follow instructions, undermining authority, making fun of or mocking the more senior person or spreading rumours about them.

Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management functions.

6.3 What is 'harassment'?

When bullying or unwanted behaviour is about certain protected characteristics under discrimination law, then we refer to it as 'harassment'. The protected characteristics which apply are:

- a Sex
- b Sexual orientation
- c Race
- d Religion or belief
- e Gender reassignment
- f Age
- g Disability

Discrimination law also recognises sexual harassment as something separate to sex (i.e. female or male) harassment. Sexual harassment occurs when someone is subjected to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or when a person is treated less favourably because they have accepted or rejected unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.

Behaviour can still be harassment even if the person being harassed does not complain or ask for it to stop.

We define harassment as behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic. Name-calling, lewd comments, excluding colleagues, making insensitive jokes and displaying pornographic material are all examples of harassment.

Even if you did not intend to harass someone, if your behaviour has this effect on someone else, then you may be found to have harassed them. They may only be a bystander to behaviour you directed at someone else, but they may still have been harassed.

The law protects people who are harassed because they are thought to have a certain protected characteristic when they do not or they are linked to someone who has a certain protected characteristic even if they don't have it themselves.

6.4 Third-party harassment

We want to create a workplace which is free of harassment. This objective extends beyond acts of harassment by those working for us to harassment by third parties such as (customers, visitors, clients, suppliers)

You are encouraged to report any third-party harassment you are a victim of, or witness, in accordance with this Policy.

We will take active steps to prevent third-party harassment of staff. Action may include for example, warning notices to customers or recorded messages at the beginning of telephone calls.

We will assess the risk of third-party harassment in the workplace and undertake to keep our risk assessment under regular review. We encourage you to come forward with any areas in which you believe our third-party harassment protection could be improved. Please let your Manager or the Parish Clerk know.

If any third-party harassment of staff occurs, we will take steps to remedy any complaints and to prevent it happening again. Action may include warning the harasser about their behaviour, banning them from our premises, reporting any criminal acts to the police, and sharing information with other branches of the business.

6.5 Our position

Deeping St James Parish Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment by anyone working for us.

We expect you to treat people with respect and dignity in all communications you have with them, whether face-to-face, over the phone or in writing.

Our managers are trained to recognise behaviours which may amount to bullying and harassment and to intervene.

We will assess the risk of harassment in the workplace and keep our risk assessment under regular review. We encourage you to come forward with any areas in which you believe harassment protection could be improved. Please let your Manager know.

You are encouraged to report any harassment you are a victim of, or witness, in accordance with this Policy.

As a business, we are guided by our core values. These values impact the way we view workplace behaviours and our expectations of you. Our managers are trained to recognise behaviours which may amount to bullying and harassment. We will provide regular training to everyone on what our values mean and explain how you must 'live' these values in your interactions with others.

We have clear and universal standards of workplace conduct:

- a) Bad and/or offensive language or gestures of any nature should not be used in the workplace, whether directed at a particular person or not.
- b) Inappropriate images or other content should not be viewed or shared at work.
- c) You should always think before making a joke in the workplace – could anyone be upset or offended by what you say?
- d) You should never invade colleagues' personal space.
- e) You should not exclude colleagues unfairly from discussions or events.
- f) You should not use crude humour.
- g) You should not use an aggressive tone or aggressive language when speaking with colleagues.
- h) You should not be physically aggressive towards colleagues.
- i) You should not make sexually suggestive comments
- j) You should not mock, mimic or belittle colleagues in relation to any protected characteristic or otherwise
- k) You should not gossip about your colleagues.

Our standards of workplace conduct and zero tolerance of harassment in the workplace apply equally:

- a) at work; or
- b) during any situation related to work such as at a social event with colleagues; or
- c) against a colleague or other person connected to the employer outside of a work situation, including on social media; or
- d) against anyone outside of a work situation where the incident is relevant to your suitability to carry out your role.

6.6 Raising a complaint

Ideally, complaints may be dealt with internally and informally. Solutions can be reached quickly, with minimum risk to confidentiality, as well as reducing personal embarrassment and suffering, avoiding disruption to work and working relationships.

If possible, an employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of harassment should, in the first instance, ask the person to stop the behaviour and make it clear what aspect of their behaviour is offensive and unacceptable and the effect it is having. This can be done either verbally or in writing. If the harassed

person feels unable to approach the person responsible directly, a friend or colleague can make this initial approach.

If you do not feel comfortable approaching the person yourself, or a direct approach has not worked, then you should refer to our Grievance Policy which sets out a clear process for raising complaints (both informally with an appropriate manager, and formally, if you prefer).

We may, if we think it necessary, separate you from the person you are complaining about whilst we investigate. This is not a prejudgment of your complaint. It is simply a way to stop things from getting worse during the investigation.

If you notice behaviour of others which may be in breach of this Policy, then you should first consider whether it is appropriate to challenge the behaviour yourself. Only do so if you feel comfortable. If you don't feel comfortable, or a direct approach has not worked, then please report the matter to your Line Manager who will investigate.

If we decide that your complaint is not upheld, we will always tell you why in accordance with our Grievance Policy. Regardless of the formal outcome, if your complaint related to a colleague, we will consider ways of improving your relationship with your colleague[s] and may, for example, suggest mediation or offer training.

Anyone who raises an allegation of bullying or harassment with us in good faith will not be subjected to any detriment as a result.

We will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of harassment or victimisation we receive to make sure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and workforce training is targeted where needed.

6.7 Confidentiality

To protect the interests of the person complained about, the person who has raised the complaint and any others who may be involved as witnesses or otherwise, confidentiality will be maintained during any investigation process as far as is possible.

If you fail to maintain confidentiality when you are involved in some way in a bullying and harassment complaint, then you may face action under our Disciplinary Policy.

We may place information and documents about a complaint raised by or about you on your personnel file. These will be processed in accordance with data protection rules.

6.8 Breaches of this Policy

Any breaches of this Policy will be handled under our Disciplinary Policy and may result in action including dismissal for gross misconduct or the termination of your contract with us.

Aggravating factors such as abuse of power over a more junior colleague will be taken into account in deciding what disciplinary action to take.

6.9 Administration of the Harassment & Bullying Policy

The Parish Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Harassment & Bullying Policy.

7. Holidays and holiday entitlement

7.1 Holiday Entitlement

The calculation of your annual leave commences from the first day of your employment. You are entitled, in addition to the normal bank and public holidays, to twenty-two working days' leave in each leave year (pro rata for part time employees). The leave year runs from 1st April to 31st March.

You will be paid your normal rate of pay during such holidays.

Your leave entitlement will increase to twenty-five working days per year (pro rata for part time employees) when you have completed not less than five years of continuous service immediately prior to the commencement of the leave year.

In addition to normal bank and public holidays, you will be entitled to two extra statutory days (the timing of these extra-statutory holidays will be by mutual arrangement and must be taken at times convenient to the Council).

If you join the Council from another authority or other qualifying public body, your previous service will be taken into account in calculating your holiday entitlement.

If your employment commenced or terminates part way through the leave year, your holidays during that year will be assessed on a pro rata basis.

7.2 Requesting holidays – giving notice

A minimum of two weeks' notice should be given for a day's holiday and a minimum of one month's notice should be given for a week or more.

7.3 Other rules relating to holiday bookings

- By mutual agreement no more than five days leave may be carried forward to the next leave year
- On termination of your employment you will normally be entitled to be paid in lieu of accrued but untaken holiday, except in specific circumstances. You will receive an explanation of how any payments relating to holiday entitlement have been worked out.
- If you have taken more holiday than your accrued entitlement at the date of termination of your employment, we shall be entitled to deduct the appropriate amount from any payments due to you
- We may require you to take any accrued but unused holiday entitlement during your notice period.
- In the event that you fall sick during the period of your annual leave you will be regarded as being on sick leave from the date of your self-certification or the date on your medical certificate and further annual leave will be suspended from that date.

8 Bad Weather Policy

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring employees' health and safety in getting to and from the workplace and client site, especially during bad weather conditions.

All reasonable efforts should be made to attend work including allowing extra time for your journey in adverse conditions or in the event of transport strikes.

Should it not be possible for you to carry out your normal duties the Parish Council has the right to ask you to work from home or your nearest office if circumstances permit.

You should inform your manager as early as possible but no later than 8.30am if you are unable to attend work due to bad weather conditions or in the event of a transport strike.

Employees who are unable to work practicably may agree with their Manager to take annual leave.

9. Sickness absence

Deeping St James Parish Council is committed to ensuring the health, wellbeing and attendance of all our employees. We value the contribution you make to the Parish

Council's success and if you are unable to be at work for any reason, we miss that contribution. This absence policy explains what you should do if you are unable to attend work due to illness or injury.

Key Principles

The Parish Council's absence policy is based on the following principles:

1. Regular, punctual attendance is an implied term of every employee's contract of employment – we ask each of you to take responsibility for achieving and maintaining good attendance.
2. We will support employees who have genuine grounds for absence for whatever reason. This support includes:
 - a. 'compassionate leave' for necessary absences not caused by sickness
 - b. a flexible approach to the taking of annual leave
3. The Parish Council's disciplinary procedures will be used if an explanation for absence is not forthcoming or is not thought to be satisfactory.
4. We respect the confidentiality of all information relating to an employee's sickness. This policy will be implemented in line with all data protection legislation and the Access to Medical Records Act 1988.

9.1 Notification Procedures

If you are absent from work on account of sickness or injury, you or someone on your behalf should inform the Council of the reason for your absence as soon as possible and in normal circumstances no later than 10am so that cover can be arranged, but no later than the end of the working day on which the absence first occurs.

Notification should be made by telephone – text messages and emails are not considered acceptable. If the Council office is not staffed you or your calling representative should contact your line manager on their home or mobile number.

In respect of absence lasting **up to** seven calendar days, you are required to inform your Line Manager and self-certificate your absence.

1. For an absence lasting more than seven calendar days you must, on the eighth calendar day of absence, provide a fit note stating the reason for absence which must be obtained at your own cost and supplied to the Company. A fit note replaces a sick note and will state if the employee is not fit for work or may be fit for work. If an employee is classed as maybe being fit for work, any allowances or changes e.g. hours or temporary changes of

duties may be required. In a change, fit notes can be signed by a number of different medical professionals – GP, hospital doctor, physiotherapist, registered nurse, occupational therapist, or pharmacist. You must then provide a certificate each week to cover any subsequent period of absence.

You will be paid your agreed basic remuneration in line with the scale of payment for any one year that runs from 1 April to 31st March.

Entitlement to payment is subject to notification of absence and production of medical certificates as required above.

The Council operates the Statutory Sick Pay scheme and you are required to co-operate in the maintenance of necessary records. For the purposes of calculating your entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay ‘qualifying days’ are those days on which you are normally required to work. Payments made to you by the Council under its sick pay provisions in satisfaction of any other contractual entitlement will go towards discharging the Council’s liability to make payment to you under the Statutory Sick Pay scheme.

Whilst on absence due to sickness or incapacity you are not permitted to undertake any paid work for another employer or for any business established by you without express permission from the Council.

Whilst off sick, you should not undertake or engage in any activity, which is incompatible with the illness or may delay recovery and you must keep in contact with Deeping St James Parish Council. This will help us to know how long your absence is likely to last and help them to arrange cover for you.

Important Note

Deeping St James Parish Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health of its employees, and of other persons who may be affected by its’ activities.

It is your duty as an employee not to put either yourself or others at risk by your acts or omissions. Should you feel concern over any health and safety aspects of your work, this should be brought to the attention of your line manager immediately.

An Accident Book is available and it is the responsibility of each individual employee to report and record any accident involving personal injury. Any accident or near miss occurrence (i.e. no one was injured but the incident had the potential to injure or kill) at work should be reported immediately to the Clerk.

9.2 Pay during sickness

There are two main types of payment, which may be made to you during sickness absence: Statutory Sick Pay and Occupational Sick Pay. Your entitlement to these is detailed below. It is important that you give full and correct information to Deeping St James Parish Council about your sickness absences to ensure that correct payments are made. Deeping St James Parish Council are entitled to withhold payment.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

This is paid by an employer to an employee who is away from work because they are sick. SSP is a Social Security benefit paid by employers and is normally paid for a maximum of 28 weeks.

If you are not entitled to SSP Deeping St James Parish Council will send you a form which you then send to the DSS to claim incapacity or other benefits.

When is SSP Due?

- If you are not excluded (see above) Effective 6th April 2026 SSP will be paid from day 1 if applicable – no waiting days.
- From April 2026 employees who earn less than the statutory rate for SSP in a week will be entitled to receive 80% of their normal weekly earnings as sick pay instead.

Occupational Sick Pay

Scale of Payment

Subject to the above conditions of this scheme, when absent from duty owing to illness (which term is deemed to include injury or other incapability or disability) you will be entitled to receive an allowance in accordance with the following scale:

during 1st - year of service	one month's full pay and (after completing 4 months service) 2 months half pay
during 2nd - year of service	2 months full pay and 2 months half pay
during 3rd - year of service	4 months full pay and 4 months half pay
during 4th & 5th - year of service	5 months full pay and 5 months half pay
after 5 years' service	6 months full pay and 6 months half pay.

N.B. For the purposes of calculating "half" pay, the rate of pay for the agreed salary month will be used.

9.3 Dental and Doctor's appointments

If you have to go to the doctor, dentist or optician, appointments should be organised in your own time. If impossible, time off will be granted on production of an appointment card. You must return to work immediately after your appointment or, if you are not able to, you must telephone us to let us know. We reserve the right to ask you to make up any time missed.

9.4 Medical Reports

The Council reserves the right to require you at any time to submit to a medical examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the Council, subject to the provisions of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 where applicable. Any costs associated with the examination will be met by the Council and you will be asked for your written permission in these circumstances.

9.5 Absences due to disability or maternity

Absence records relating to the disability of an employee or to pregnancy will be kept separate from sickness absence records.

9.6 Contacting you during your absence

On infrequent occasions, when you may be sick, absent or there is an urgent matter requiring the Parish Council to contact you, you agree that the Parish Council may call you briefly on your home telephone number, your mobile or email you.

10. Statutory Leave and Family Friendly Policies

Entitlements to leave and to request flexible working are always under review by the Government. The Parish Council is committed to complying with all statutory arrangements in force at the time that relate to maternity and paternity leave and time off for dependents. Please ask for details.

You may be entitled to certain kinds of leave, depending on your circumstances and the reasons for requesting time off. The tables below give an overview of the different kinds of leave that may be available. This is summary information only; additional information will be provided on request.

Depending on the situation, you may be entitled to take leave from your employment at the Council. Different types of leave apply to different situations and they do change from time to time in line with legislative updates.

Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave

To be granted in accordance with the current legislation.

Parental leave

If you have a child under the age of 18 who is registered disabled, you may be entitled to take parental leave. Parental leave is unpaid and it is for planned situations where you can give the right amount of notice to your employer. The total entitlement is 18 weeks for each child but the maximum leave that can be taken in one year is 4 weeks. If your child is under 18 and not disabled, you must take the leave in blocks of one week (for a disabled child leave can be taken in days rather than blocks of one week).

10.1 Statutory Paid Leave

Statutory Paid Leave

Type of Leave	Who is eligible?	Comments
Holiday	All employees	Must follow holiday booking procedure Paid at usual rate
Sickness absence	All employees	Only applies if you are sick (not anyone else in your family, for example) – statutory rates apply
Maternity and adoption leave	All employees who have or adopt a child	Entitlement to leave is automatic Minimum length of service required to qualify for paid leave (statutory rates apply) Up to 52 weeks may be taken
Paternity leave (Updated 6th April 2026)	All employees whose partner has a baby	Employee is entitled to request from day 1 – no minimum service required – effective April 2026 One or two weeks may be taken Statutory rates apply Can be taken before or after Shared Parental Leave
Shared parental leave (ShPL)	All employees who are having a baby	Specific arrangements which can allow parents to share leave when a child is born Statutory rates apply
Parental Bereavement Leave	All employees who lose a child under 18	Statutory rates apply
Neonatal Leave Effective 6th April 2025	All employees who have or adopt a child	Entitlement automatic from day 1 The newborn must be admitted to neonatal care within the first 28 days of birth and must remain in neonatal care for at least 7 continuous days. Minimum length of service required to qualify for paid leave (statutory rates apply)

Unpaid leave

Type of Leave	Who is eligible?	Comments
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Compassionate leave	All employees	Applies when a close family member dies or has a serious issue and urgently needs your help (may be paid but only at Company's discretion see below)
Dependants' leave	All employees who have people who depend on them for care	For emergencies only One or two days taken at a time
Parental leave (Updated 6th April 2026)	All employees with children up to 18	Employees entitled to leave from day 1 – effective April 2026 Only for planned leave Must be requested in advance For 1 or 2 week blocks (not odd days) Max 4 weeks in a year Up to 18 weeks for each child Business may postpone parental leave if necessary
Carer's leave (Effective 6th April 2024)	All employees who have people relying on them for care due to old age, a disability or a physical/mental illness or injury that will require care for over 3 months.	Employees entitled to leave from day 1 Week or day is based on normal working pattern 1 week unpaid leave may be taken every 52 weeks Can be taken 1 day at a time – minimum to be requested is 0.5 day Notice required either twice the amount of leave to be taken or 3 days, whichever longer, notice must state employee entitled to leave and days to be taken. Employer can forego need for notice.
Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave (BPPL) (Updated 6th April 2026)	You are entitled to take BPPL for the purpose of caring for a child where: The child's primary carer dies; and You are either the child's father; a civil partner of the child's mother/adopter; or married to the child's mother/adopter; and	Effective 6th April 2026 – BPPL is a single period of up to 52 weeks of unpaid leave. No specific amount notice required if starting within 8 weeks of the bereavement BPPL must generally be taken within 52 weeks of the child's birth, date of placement for adoption. You may be offered up to 10 days' work while you are on Maternity Leave, BPPL or Adoption Leave at a rate of pay agreed in advance. These days are intended for training or meetings and are called keeping in touch days. KIT

	You have main responsibility for the upbringing of the child.	
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Compassionate leave

We recognise the need to support you at the time of bereavement or serious illness of an immediate family member or partner. Paid compassionate leave may be given in the following circumstances:

- In the case of death of an immediate family member (for example, partner, parent) up to 5 days paid leave for full-time staff (pro rata for part-time staff)
- Where an employee has remaining annual leave entitlement, a request for this following compassionate leave will not be reasonably refused
- A maximum of 20 compassionate leave days in any holiday year are permissible (pro rata for part-time staff)

10.2 Neonatal Leave Policy

10.2.1 Introduction

The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 comes into force on 6th April 2025. This entitlement provides support for parents of babies born on or after this date who require neonatal care (for at least seven consecutive days) before the baby reaches 28 days of life. It is envisaged that this leave will allow parents to extend their time off with their baby at home when they are out of hospital instead of using their parental leave.

This leave is in addition to existing parental leave entitlements namely: maternity, adoption, paternity, shared parental, parental and parental bereavement leave, collectively known as “family leave”.

10.2.2 Definition of neonatal care

- a) medical care received in a hospital,
- b) medical care received in any other place which meets the following criteria—
 - i. the child was an inpatient in hospital and the care is received upon that child leaving hospital;

- ii. the care is under the direction of a consultant; and
- iii. the care includes ongoing monitoring by, and visits to the child from, healthcare professionals arranged by the hospital; and

c) (c)palliative or end of life care.

10.2.3 Neonatal Care Leave (NCL)

The right to NCL is a 'day one' right, meaning that it will be available to you no matter what your length of service is.

It applies to parents whose children spend at least one week (7 consecutive days) in neonatal care.

The maximum duration of the leave, as well as how and when it must be taken, will be set out in regulations.

In relation to NCL, the legislation sets out:

- you are entitled to at least one week's neonatal care leave
- that leave must be taken within a period of at least 68 weeks starting from the date of the child's birth
- you are entitled to leave only if the neonatal care continued without interruption for a period of at least seven days beginning the day on which the care started.

10.2.4 Neonatal Care Pay (NCP)

The right to neonatal care pay (NCP) during periods of related leave, such as maternity, paternity and adoption leave, is available to you if you have at least 26 weeks' continuous service and your earnings were above the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions.

The weekly rate of NCP will be in line with other statutory family leave.

You will be able to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave for every period of 7 days that the baby is in receipt of neonatal care without interruption. There is a minimum entitlement of one week, in addition to other leave entitlements such as maternity, paternity and shared parental leave.

Only employees with a minimum of 26 weeks' service will be eligible for Neonatal Care Pay. Any time off utilising the Neonatal Leave Scheme will not count towards sickness absence or detrimentally impact probation, although a probationary period may be extended to allow for the time you've been on leave.

In relation to NCP, the legislation sets out:

- the person had a prescribed parental or other personal relationship with a child who was receiving, or had received, neonatal care that continued without interruption for a period of at least seven days
- the employee had been continuously working for their employer for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 'relevant week'
- the person's normal weekly earnings over an eight-week period ending with the relevant week were not less than the lower earnings limit (which is specified in section 5(1)a of the 1992 act)
- the person must give notice to the employer in order to receive NCL

10.2.5 Process

Employees who may need to take neonatal leave must inform their Manager at the earliest opportunity.

Employees should regularly update their Manager insofar as is possible.

Once the period of Neonatal Care ends, the employee must inform their Manager in order for records to be updated and to confirm that ordinary maternity or paternity leave commences.

10.2.6 Contractual benefits

You are entitled to your normal terms and conditions of employment throughout your NCL, your continuity of service will be unaffected and you will continue to remain bound by any obligations arising under your contract of employment.

10.3 Parental Bereavement Leave

From 6th April 2020, the UK is the first country in the world to introduce a statutory entitlement to bereavement leave for parents who have suffered the death of their child.

On these occasions it is not easy for either party to discuss the practicalities and implications. Rest assured that the Parish Council will always deal with situations as sympathetically as possible and seek to be as helpful and supportive as we can.

Summary of key points you need to know

- Parental bereavement leave can be taken for one week or two weeks
- It's paid at statutory rates.
- Other options include requesting paid holiday or taking some holiday plus a week or two bereavement leave
- All parents and caregivers are eligible if the child was under the age of 18 years old

Eligibility

You will be eligible for parental bereavement leave if:

- You are the parent or have parental responsibility of the child*;
- You have lost a child from 24 weeks of pregnancy onwards. In this instance, female employees will still be entitled to up to 52 weeks of maternity leave and/or pay, as will a mother who loses a child after it is born;
- the child was under the age of 18 years old.

*Adults with 'parental responsibility' include adopters, foster parents and guardians. It's also expected to apply to those classed as Kinship carers, who may be close relatives or family friends that have assumed responsibility for looking after a child in the absence of parents.

To be entitled to statutory pay, you must have worked for the Parish Council for a minimum of 26 weeks by the notification of the child's death. If you have not worked 26 continuous weeks, you are entitled to up to two weeks' unpaid leave.

Length of bereavement leave

You can choose to take either one week or two weeks' bereavement leave (not occasional days) and you can choose to start your leave:

- from the date of the child's death or up to 56 weeks after the date of the child's death;
- you may request more time off and it is at our discretion as to what type of leave can be taken;
- The two weeks' leave can be taken either in one block of two weeks, or as two separate blocks of one week each. It must be taken within 56 weeks of the date of the child's death. This is to allow for time to be taken off for difficult events such as birthdays or anniversaries.

Pay

Parents and primary carers who have been employed for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks prior to when the child dies, and have received pay above the lower earnings limit (£118 per week for 2019-20) for the previous eight weeks, are entitled to at least two weeks' statutory paid leave (statutory rate of £148.68 per week [for 2019-20], or 90% of average weekly earnings, where this is lower). The rate of pay will be what is in force at the time.

Notice

The Parish Council understands that this is a difficult time and will treat the situation sympathetically. To make sure we support you as much as we can, we ask that you inform us as soon as you are able to following the death of a child. This way we can support you in any way possible and ensure you that you do not have to worry about working during this difficult time. If you would prefer to split the two weeks bereavement leave and take one week at another time, please discuss this with your manager.

Notice requirements for taking leave as specified by the Government require the employee to state how many weeks they will be taking. If you will be taking one week at the time of the child's death or up to 56 days afterwards, you can take this leave on the day at short notice. If you choose to take the second week after 56 days of the child's death, you are required to give one week's notice in order to take this and /or change the dates.

Contractual benefits

You are entitled to your normal terms and conditions of employment throughout your bereavement leave and you will continue to remain bound by any obligations arising under your contract of employment.

Additional bereavement leave

If you do not feel ready to return to work after two weeks, the Parish Council may offer other forms of leave such as Compassionate leave, annual leave or unpaid leave. This is at our discretion and it will be discussed with you first to make sure the arrangement suits. We will support you and try to make reasonable adjustments if necessary.

Support for bereaved parents

The Parish Council recommends that you seek support from charities and organisations that offer guidance for bereaved parents and families. These organisations will be able to help you grieve the loss of your child and support you throughout the mourning process. We will endeavour to also support you in this challenging time, and we would encourage you to be open and frank as it is only then that we can understand your needs. Any information will, understandably, be treated in the strictest confidence.

- A Child of Mine - www.achildofmine.org.uk
- Child Bereavement UK - <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>
- The Compassionate Friends - <https://www.tcf.org.uk/>
- SLOW (Surviving the loss of your world) - <https://slowgroup.co.uk/>
- Cruse - <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>
- SANDS (stillbirth and neonatal death)- <https://www.sands.org.uk/>

11. Equality and Diversity

11.1 Introduction

Deeping St James Parish Council is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our team. Our aim is that each employee feels respected and able to give their best.

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and not to discriminate on grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age. **We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.**

All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

11.2 Our commitment

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

The Chair has overall responsibility for this policy but it is also the responsibility of every Deeping St James Parish Council employee to respect and act in accordance with our Equal Opportunities policy. Any member of staff wishing to raise a complaint relating to fairness and discrimination should do so via the Parish Council's grievance procedure.

12. Grievance Procedure

12.1 Introduction

The primary purpose of this grievance procedure is to enable you to air any concerns that you may have about practices, policies or treatment from other individuals at work, and to produce a speedy resolution where there are genuine problems. It is designed to help all employees to take the appropriate action, when they are experiencing difficulties, in an atmosphere of trust and collaboration.

Although it may not be possible to solve all problems to everyone's complete satisfaction, this policy forms an undertaking by the Parish Council that it will deal objectively and constructively with all employee grievances, and that anyone who decides to use the procedure may do so with the confidence that their problem will be dealt with fairly. Due to the size of the Parish Council, it would not be possible for different people to hear the grievance and any subsequent appeals. However, the Parish Council is committed to dealing with all employee grievances objectively and constructively.

This grievance procedure is not a substitute for good day-to-day communication in the Parish Council where we encourage you to discuss and resolve daily working issues in a supportive atmosphere. Most problems can be solved on an informal footing very satisfactorily if everyone is prepared to keep the channels of communication between themselves open and working well. This procedure is designed to deal with those issues that need to be approached on a more formal basis so that every route to a satisfactory solution can be explored and so that any decisions reached are binding and long lasting.

12.2 Procedure

If you cannot settle your grievance informally, you should raise it formally, following the steps detailed below.

Stage 1 – Statement of Grievance

If you have a formal grievance relating to your employment you should, in the first instance, put your complaint in writing and address it to your Line Manager. The Parish Council may carry out preliminary investigations at this point. You will be invited to attend a grievance meeting to discuss your grievance and you have the right to be accompanied at this meeting by a trade union official or a fellow employee of your choice. The Parish Council will make every effort to arrange the meeting at a time convenient to you and your companion to attend, usually within five working days of receipt of your grievance. Should your chosen companion not

be available within this timeframe, we may ask you to make arrangements with another colleague who is available to attend. Any employee who is chosen to accompany another in a grievance hearing is entitled to take paid time off for this purpose.

We ask that you take all reasonable steps to attend the grievance meeting.

Stage 2 – Grievance Meeting

At the meeting you will be given a full opportunity to state your case and explain your grievance. Following the meeting, the Parish Council will carry out all appropriate investigations and respond to your grievance as soon as possible. You will be notified in writing of the Parish Council's decision on the grievance and notified of your right to appeal against that decision if you are not satisfied with it.

Stage 3 – Appeal

In the event that you feel your grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, you may then appeal in writing to the Chair within five working days of the grievance decision.

On receipt of your appeal letter, arrangements will be made for your grievance to be heard at an appeal meeting and at this meeting you may again be accompanied, if you wish, by a trade union official or a fellow employee of your choice.

You must take all reasonable steps to attend the grievance appeal meeting.

Following the meeting, the Parish Council will respond to your grievance as soon as possible. You will be informed in writing of the Parish Council's decision on your grievance appeal.

This is the final stage of the grievance procedure and the Parish Council's decision shall be final.

13. Disciplinary Procedure

13.1 Introduction

The Parish Council depends upon its employees to carry out instructions and abide by acceptable and established rules of conduct and behaviour.

If the Parish Council considers that you have been guilty of a minor breach of duty, misconduct or incompetence then we will hold an informal discussion with you. This meeting will be documented and a copy of the notes will be made available to you if you want to see them. It is hoped that this will resolve the issue. However, if there is a repetition within an agreed period, if the required improvements are not seen,

or the matter is considered to be of a more serious nature, which could lead to more disciplinary action being taken (including dismissal), then a three-stage process will take place. The Parish Council undertakes to carry out a full and fair investigation to determine the facts and to decide if further action is necessary at each stage of the disciplinary procedure. All matters relating to any disciplinary process will be kept confidential.

13.2 Why do we need a disciplinary procedure?

Disciplinary procedures are needed:

- So, you know what is expected of you in terms of standards of performance or conduct (and the likely consequences of continued failure to meet these standards).
- To identify obstacles to you achieving the required standards (for example training needs, lack of clarity of job requirements, additional support needed) and take appropriate action.
- As an opportunity to agree suitable goals and timescales for improvement in your performance or conduct.
- To try to resolve matters without recourse to an employment tribunal.

Deeping St James Parish Council aims to encourage improvement in individual conduct or performance. This procedure sets out the action which will be taken when disciplinary rules are broken.

Examples of breaches of the Parish Council's disciplinary rules which can lead to disciplinary action include:

- (a) failure to comply with a reasonable order, instruction or contractual requirement;
- (b) failure to comply with a Parish Council work rule or procedure;
- (c) failure to comply with a health and safety requirement;
- (d) failure to wear protective clothing provided for your safety;
- (e) any act which may result in an action against the Parish Council for negligence or for breach of duty of care;
- (f) conduct which is likely to bring discredit to the Parish Council;
- (g) discussing or disclosing to a third-party confidential information handled during the course of your employment without the prior permission of the Parish Council;
- (h) improper, disorderly or unacceptable conduct at, during or when arriving for work;
- (i) late attendance and/or poor timekeeping;
- (j) absence from work without authorisation or certification;
- (k) while purporting to be absent sick, working or indulging in activities inconsistent with the reason for absence or not conducive to recovery;
- (l) corrupt or improper practice;

- (m) committing an act outside work, or being convicted for a criminal offence, which is liable adversely to affect the performance of the contract of employment and/or your relationship with the Parish Council;
- (n) a breach of trust which may damage the interests of the Parish Council;
- (o) loss, damage to or misuse of the Parish Council's facilities, equipment, property, assets or funds through wilfulness, negligence or carelessness;
- (p) use of the Parish Council's property or equipment for personal use without prior permission;
- (q) theft of, misappropriation of, or failure to account for, or falsely claiming entitlement to the Parish Council's property, assets or funds;
- (r) providing false information orally or by the falsification of records or documents;
- (s) unauthorised alteration, mutilation, destruction or retention of the Parish Council's records or documents;
- (t) unauthorised use of the Parish Council's business, computer or telephone systems;
- (u) harassment on sexual, religious or racial grounds;
- (v) failure to observe any requirement of the Parish Council's equal opportunities policy;
- (w) failure to report or record any matter which it is the employee's duty to report or record;
- (x) rudeness or abusive behaviour to clients, colleagues or managers; or
- (y) any act of misconduct other than or coming within one or more of the above rules or stated elsewhere in the Statement.

The Parish Council reserves the right to add, amend or delete the disciplinary rules and you will be advised appropriately.

13.3 Disciplinary Procedure

The Company may at any time suspend from duty an employee during any period in which the Company is carrying out a disciplinary investigation into any alleged acts or defaults of the Employee. During any period of suspension the employee shall continue to receive their full basic pay pending the outcome of any investigation or disciplinary procedure.

Step 1

We will write to you explaining why disciplinary action is being taken and invite you to a meeting to discuss the situation. You will have the right to be accompanied by a colleague of your choice, assuming that colleague is willing, or a trade union official. The meeting will be scheduled for a mutually convenient time but it is important that this happens as quickly as possible to ensure matters are resolved swiftly whilst memories of incidents are fresh.

Step 2 – The Meeting

During the meeting we will put forward the case for Deeping St James Parish Council. You will then have the opportunity to respond. The accompanying colleague will be allowed to put your case, sum up your case and/or respond on your behalf to any view expressed during the meeting.

After the meeting and within a reasonable period of time, the decision will be given.

Step 3 – The Appeal

You will then have the right to appeal if you do not agree with the decision and you will have the right to be accompanied in the same way as in stage 2.

13.4 Dismissal Without Prior Warning

We reserve the right to dismiss you without previous warning in cases of gross breach of duty, gross misconduct, or gross negligence.

Some examples of such conduct would be:

- a) theft or misappropriation of funds, assets or property from colleagues, the Parish Council or clients;
- b) other offences of dishonesty or corrupt or improper practice;
- c) sexual misconduct at work;
- d) sexual, racial, religious or other harassment or bullying;
- e) fighting, physical assault or other violent, dangerous or intimidatory conduct;
- f) falsification of reports, records, claims for personal or financial gain or self-certification forms;
- g) deliberate damage or misuse of the Parish Council's property, assets or equipment;
- h) intoxication by reason of alcohol or drugs at work;
- i) possession of illegal drugs while on the Parish Council's premises;
- j) unauthorised or uncertificated absence;
- k) gross negligence or incompetence;
- l) refusal to carry out duties or reasonable instructions or serious breach of the Parish Council's rules;
- m) sending abusive, scandalous, obscene or defamatory communication of any kind including by e-mail, on the Internet or any other media;
- n) accessing or downloading any rude or obscene images or other material from the Internet or by e-mail or otherwise being in possession or rude or obscene material or publications or images in any media at your place of work or during working hours; or
- o) un-authorised alteration, mutilation or destruction of the Parish Council's records or documents.

(this list is non-exhaustive)

In this event the reasons for the dismissal will be provided in writing and you will have the right of appeal.

14. Capability and Performance Improvement

Policy Statement

The success of the Parish Council depends on the effective performance of all its employees. We are committed to providing employees with appropriate training, supervision and support to enable them to meet Council objectives. Where employees experience problems in attaining the appropriate standards, the Parish Council will endeavour to support them in order for them to reach the required standard.

14.1 Introduction

The Employment Rights Act 1996 defines capability as “capability assessed by reference to skill, aptitude, health or any other physical or mental quality.”

This Policy and Procedure is designed to be used where employees are not achieving the required standards of work due to poor performance, lack of capability either because they lack the skills and/or aptitude to do the job or because their performance has deteriorated. Negligent work usually involves a degree of personal blame for which disciplinary action is more appropriate. If the main cause of poor performance is the changing nature of the job, then consideration should be given as to whether the matter should be treated as a redundancy matter.

Poor performance, which is due to negligence, lack of care or other misbehaviour should be dealt with as a disciplinary matter under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

14.2 Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies equally to all employees of the Parish Council. However, the Council reserves the right to discharge, without exhausting the full procedure, employees with less than six months service if their level of performance within the Parish Council is not satisfactory.

14.3 Principles

The following principles will apply to all cases:

- Employees who are having difficulty in carrying out their duties to the required standard will be treated with sympathy and understanding by their manager and will be given help and appropriate support.
- No employee will be dismissed on grounds of poor performance / lack of capability unless and until the programme of improvement and assistance has been completed without achieving satisfactory results and there is little likelihood of an improvement within a reasonable timescale.
- An employee will have the right to appeal against any decision to dismiss for poor performance.
- At every stage in the procedure the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.
- Employees may also obtain advice or assistance from external bodies as appropriate

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and the contents of interviews, as part of the Procedure will only be disclosed on a “need to know basis.”

14.4 Overview

It is the responsibility of Managers that they will ensure that each employee is trained to carry out his or her duties and receives the necessary supervision and support. Managers continuously monitor performance and advise and encourage employees as necessary. Unless clearly inappropriate, Managers are encouraged to deal with inadequate performance on an informal basis initially before resorting to this procedure which would include clearly indicating the performance issues with the employee and highlighting any training or development issues and addressing them.

Stage One

When an employee’s performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory and the Line Manager has been unsuccessful in improving the employee’s performance through informal action, the Line Manager will ask the employee to attend a meeting to discuss the problem.

Notice of the meeting will be given in writing and give details of the inadequate performance and the nature of the proposed discussion. A work colleague or trade union representative may accompany the employee at the meeting. However, the meeting should not be unduly delayed by the non-availability of the representative or colleague at this stage.

At the meeting, the manager will explain the problem in clear and unambiguous terms. The employee will be given the opportunity to respond and to raise any matter that may have a bearing on his/her performance. The manager in a

sympathetic, understanding and constructive atmosphere should conduct the meeting.

A programme of constructive action will be drawn up to help the employee improve their performance. The manager in full consultation with the employee will do this. The employee should also be informed that if his/her performance does not improve further action will be taken in accordance with this procedure which could eventually result in the employee being dismissed from the Parish Council.

The outcome of the meeting should be recorded in writing and include:

A statement giving details of the inadequate performance;

- The standard to be achieved;
- details of action to be taken by both manager and employee to help the employee;
- a realistic timescale within which an improvement is to be achieved, with due regard to the particular problem. The timescale for improvement will depend on the individual circumstances of the case;
- the consequences of failure to improve to the required standard, that is if the required standard of work is not achieved, the next stage of the procedure will be invoked.

Progress will be continuously reviewed throughout the duration of the improvement programme and modifications made if necessary. At the end of the review period a formal review meeting will be held.

First Review Meeting

The employee will be notified of the time, place and date and purpose of this meeting in writing in advance. The employee will be reminded of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at this meeting. At the first review the manager will discuss and formally review the employee's performance.

If improvement is deemed to be satisfactory this will be confirmed in writing to the employee and no further action taken, provided the improvement is maintained. If there is no or insufficient improvement in performance, the review meeting will form stage two of the procedure.

Stage Two

At the stage two interview the manager will discuss and explain the specific areas where the employee's performance is still below standard and will outline and reiterate the standard required.

The employee will be given an opportunity to explain the reasons for the continuing poor performance.

The manager will consider what further action can be taken to help the employee to meet the required standard. The improvement programme will be amended and a further review period set. The employee will be formally warned that his/her performance must improve otherwise further action will be taken in accordance with this procedure which could eventually result in the employee being dismissed from the Parish Council.

The programme of action together with the warning will be confirmed in writing.

Progress will be continuously reviewed throughout the duration of the improvement programme and modifications made if necessary. At the end of the review period the second formal review meeting will be held.

Second Review Meeting

The employee will be notified of the time, place and date and purpose of this meeting in writing in advance. The employee will be reminded of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

At the second review meeting the manager will discuss and formally review the employee's performance.

If improvement is deemed to be satisfactory this will be confirmed in writing to the employee and no further action taken, provided the improvement is maintained.

If performance is still deemed to be unsatisfactory then the review will form the stage three review meeting.

Stage Three

The Manager will consider what action has been taken and what further action can be taken to help the employee to meet the required standard. The improvement programme will be amended and a further review period set.

The employee will be formally warned that his/her performance must improve otherwise further action will be taken in accordance with this procedure that will be dismissal.

The programme of action together with the warning will be confirmed in writing. Progress will be continuously reviewed throughout the duration of the improvement programme and modifications made if necessary. At the end of the review period a final review meeting will be held.

Final Review Meeting

The employee will be notified of the time, place and date and purpose of this meeting in writing in advance. The employee will be reminded of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at this meeting

At final review meeting line manager/director will discuss and formally review the employee's performance.

If performance is still deemed to be unsatisfactory then the manager will explain the specific areas where the employee's performance is below standard.

The employee will be given an opportunity to explain the reasons for the continuing poor performance.

If the Manager considers it unlikely that the performance will improve to the required standard and there has been no immediate suitable alternative work available, then the employee will normally be given full contractual notice of their dismissal.

The dismissal will be on grounds of capability and must be confirmed in writing. This written confirmation will remind the employee of their right to appeal against the decision and their right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing.

Unsustained Improvement

If an employee's performance improves but is not maintained for a period of 12 months, then the next relevant stage of the procedure will be followed. For example, if the improvement occurred at stage two but was not sustained and/or deteriorated then the next stage of the procedure would be stage three.

Right of Appeal

At each formal stage of the process, the employee has the right to appeal. All appeals must be made in writing to the Chair within 5 working days of the date of the letter confirming warning/re-deployment/dismissal.

The Chair will hear appeals and their decision will be final.

All employees are expected to comply with the policies in order to minimise the risk of claims against the company and individual employees. The policies will be revised on a regular basis to ensure compliance with current employment law.

15. Smoking Policy

Deeping St James Parish Council operates a "No Smoking" policy and smoking is not permitted anywhere on Council property. **Smoking is only permitted in designated smoking areas.**

The above policy has been re-enforced as a result of the requirement to comply with the Health Act 2006 which was designed to protect all employees, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second hand smoke. The act was fully

implemented from Sunday 1 July 2007. As a result, smoking is prohibited in all enclosed and substantially enclosed premises in the workplace.

Key points

- Any breaches of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include Gross Misconduct.
- All visitors are also expected to comply with this smoking policy.
- Please always ensure safe disposal of cigarette ends and other waste smoking materials.

16. Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy

The Parish Council operates a zero-tolerance policy in relation to the consumption of an inappropriate amount of alcohol or other intoxicating substances, at any time, which affects your safety and that of others around you and impairs your ability to do your job.

It is a requirement of the Parish Council that no employee shall:

- report or endeavour to report for duty having just consumed alcohol or under the influence of drugs.
- report for duty in an unfit state due to the use of alcohol or drugs.
- be in the possession of drugs of abuse in the workspace.
- consume alcohol or drugs whilst on duty.

16.1 Alcohol

The Parish Council's policy is to forbid the consumption of alcohol on the Parish Council's premises.

Any employee who is found consuming alcohol on the Parish Council's premises or is found to be intoxicated at work will face disciplinary action on the ground of gross misconduct under the Parish Council's disciplinary procedure.

If you are the designated driver at a Parish Council social event, you are reminded that no alcohol or other intoxicating substances are to be consumed.

16.2 Drugs

The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on Parish Council premises is strictly forbidden.

If you are prescribed drugs by your doctor which may affect your ability to perform your work you should discuss the problem with the Clerk and / or Chair in the strictest of confidence.

The Parish Council reserves the right to inform the police of any suspicions it may have with regard to the use of controlled drugs by its employees on the Parish Council's premises.

16.3 Misuse of alcohol or drugs

In the case of misuse of alcohol or drugs, we will try to deal with any issues in an informal manner where no danger or threat is posed to you as an individual or to your colleagues. However, where issues of misconduct or gross misconduct arise, these will be dealt with under the Parish Council's disciplinary procedure. If you choose to inform us of a problem, either with drugs or alcohol, any information you give will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

17. Work Related Road Safety Policy

Deeping St James Parish Council recognise the inherent risks associated to all who use public and private highways and it is our aim to reduce the exposure to potential injury and damage both to the general public and Parish Council employees. In applying the following controls and observations, the exposure to such risks should be significantly reduced. This Policy clearly outlines the message the Parish Council communicates to all employees, along with the responsibility entrusted to all employees.

17.1 Parish Council Policy

The health and safety of all staff is the ultimate responsibility of the Parish Council; however, all staff have a responsibility to act safely and responsibly in relation to all health and safety matters, including driving for work.

You should make yourself familiar with the Council's Health & Safety Policy which is contained within a separate document.

17.2 Use of Mobile Phones

You must not make or receive calls from a mobile telephone whilst driving a vehicle on Parish Council business unless you are using a fully legal Bluetooth headset (the Parish Council does not provide these). Any fines or points received from such behaviour will be your responsibility and not the responsibility of Deeping St James Parish Council.

17.3 Accidents

If you have an accident while driving at work you must tell the Clerk and you will be instructed to complete an accident report form.

17.4 Your Licence

You must hold a full UK (requirements for foreign nationals is that their licence must be exchanged for a UK one within 12 months of entry to the UK) driving licence that covers the type of vehicle you are driving.

All drivers have their licences checked annually to ensure they are still valid. You will be asked to provide a photocopy of your licence for your personnel file. You must notify us of any endorsement or pending prosecution which may be added to your driving licence or affect your ability to drive. You should let us know of a change in your medical condition that may affect your ability to drive.

17.5 Insurance

When using your own vehicle on Parish Council business, you must ensure that your insurance policy covers business use. This does not normally affect your insurance premium but your insurance could be deemed void if you do not inform them that you will be driving for business purposes. The Parish Council will ask you to confirm that your insurance policy covers you for business use.

17.6 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all car users to observe the requirements of this policy and to continually consider the risks open to themselves, and other road users for every journey.

18. Anti-bribery policy

18.1 Definition

Bribery is the accepting of gifts, money, hospitality or other favours in return for providing something of value to the briber. The purpose of this policy is to set out the rules that must be followed in the Parish Council to ensure that no bribery occurs.

18.2 Unacceptable behaviour

The following behaviour is unacceptable, and must not occur:

- accepting any financial or other reward from any person in return for providing some favour
- requesting a financial or other reward from any person in return for providing some favour
- offering any financial or other reward from any person in return for providing some favour.

Business gifts

From time to time, suppliers or other persons might offer a gift to an employee. This could be a small item, or something of considerable value. All gifts, however small, must be reported to the Clerk and recorded. No gifts with a value of more than thirty pounds (£30) may be accepted. If a gift is offered and then refused because of its value, this must be reported to the Clerk.

Expenses

The Parish Council must authorise all expense claims from employees. Any items of expenditure that give rise to concern will be fully investigated.

Attempts to bribe

Any employee who is concerned that he or she is potentially being bribed should report this matter to the Parish Council immediately.

Donations to organisations

No donations should be made to charities, political parties or other organisations with the intention of gaining a business advantage.

Disciplinary action

Any employee found to have offered or accepted a bribe will face disciplinary action which could include dismissal for gross misconduct.

Raising concerns

If an employee is concerned that acts of bribery are occurring in the organisation they should inform the Clerk in the first instance. If this course of action is inappropriate, the employee should inform another member of the Parish Council

19. Termination of Employment

19.1 Terminating employment without giving notice

If you terminate your employment without giving or working the required period of notice, as indicated in your individual statement of main terms of employment (employment contract), you will have an amount (equal to any additional cost of covering your duties during the notice period not worked) deducted from any termination pay due to you. This is an express written term of your contract of employment. If you fail to give or work the required period of notice, you will also forfeit any contractual accrued holiday pay due to you over and above your statutory holiday pay.

19.2 Obligations on terminating your employment

On terminating your employment (however it has been terminated) you shall:

- (a) immediately deliver to the Parish Council all Parish Council property which is in your possession or under your control;
- (b) provide a signed statement that you have complied fully with your obligations as stated

20. Pension Policy

If eligible, the organisation will auto-enrol you into a pension scheme, in accordance with its pensions auto-enrolment obligations.

Full details of the scheme will be given to you when you are enrolled, including the minimum level of contributions that you will be required to make during your membership and your right to opt out if you do not want to be a member of the scheme. While participating in the scheme, you agree to worker pension contributions being deducted from your salary.

Membership of the scheme is subject to its rules as may be amended from time to time.

If you cease to be a member of the scheme for any reason, the organisation will re-enrol you automatically into a pension scheme as and when required by law.

Further details about the scheme can be obtained from the Parish Clerk.

21. Health and Safety Issues

As we are a small company, it is everyone's responsibility to identify a health and safety hazard or issue, correct it and make it safe or report it immediately.

For further information please refer to the Parish Council's Health and Safety policy

22. Whistle Blowing

22.1 Introduction

Under certain circumstances, employees have legal protection if they make disclosures about organisations for which they work. These employees are commonly referred to as "whistle blowers" and their activities have often received wide publicity in the media.

Employee's who blew the whistle on organisations, were often treated detrimentally by them or their engagements were terminated. The discouraged employees from whistle blowing even where such action would be for the good of the public. This legislation is designed to protect employees from suffering any detriment or termination of engagement for whistle blowing.

22.2 Qualifying Disclosures

Certain disclosures are prescribed by law as "qualifying disclosures". Disclosures are qualifying disclosures where it can be shown that the company commits a "relevant failure" by:-

- committing a criminal offence
- failing to comply with a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- endangering the health and safety of an individuals
- environmental damage
- concealing any information relating to the above
- Shows that sexual harassment has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur – effective April 2026

These acts can be in the past, present or future, so that, for example, a disclosure qualifies if it relates to environmental damage that has happened, is happening, or is likely to happen.

22.3 Raising Concerns

You should in the first instance report any concerns you may have to your Manager who will treat the matter with complete confidence.

If you are not satisfied with explanation or reason given to you, you should raise the matter with the appropriate organisation or body, e.g. the Police, the Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive or Social Services Department.

If you do not report your concerns to your Manager you may take them direct to the appropriate organisation or body.

22.4 General Notes

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 prevents you from suffering a detriment or having your contract terminated for “whistle blowing” and we take very seriously any concerns which you may raise under this legislation.

We encourage you to use the procedure if you are concerned about any wrongdoing at work. However, if the procedure has not been invoked in good faith (e.g. For malicious reasons or in pursuit of a personal grudge), then it will make you liable to immediate termination of employment or such lesser disciplinary actions may be appropriate in the circumstances

23. Training Policy

We are committed to the ongoing development of its employees whilst encouraging you to take responsibility for your own development. The aims of our Company training policy are to:

- help you develop the skills and give you the knowledge necessary to do the job for which you have been recruited
- help you develop the skills and give you the knowledge required in other jobs in the company, as appropriate
- equip you for promotion, should the possibility arise
- increase the effectiveness of everyone in the company, and therefore of the company as a whole

If you identify an opportunity for further training or development which will have a demonstrable improvement on your ability to carry out your job, you should discuss this with the Director in the first instance. The Company will give all due consideration to your suggestion. Equally, if the Company identifies an opportunity for you to undertake training or development, the various options available will be discussed with you as appropriate.

23.1 Recovery of training fees

If you undertake a training course paid for by the Company, you will be asked to sign a training fees agreement which allows us to recover a proportionate amount of the fees if you leave our employment within 12 months of undertaking the training course. Full details will be explained to you at the time of agreeing to attend the training course.

24 Menopause Policy

24.1 Introduction

The menopause is something that we are all affected by, either directly or indirectly. We want you to understand what the menopause is and how it might affect people. We want to remove any stigma associated with the menopause. This is the best way of making sure that everyone impacted by it feels supported and understood.

This Policy:

- a Sets out what the menopause is
- b Explains how it might affect people, both directly and indirectly
- c Provides a clear explanation of the support networks in place across our business to help those who may need support on this issue
- d Sets out expected conduct and behaviour towards colleagues who are affected, directly or indirectly, by the menopause

Please note that this Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

This Policy applies to all employees, contractors, agency workers, casual workers, interns and volunteers working for us.

24.2 What is the menopause?

Menopause occurs when a woman stops having menstrual periods. It is triggered by a reduction in the production of the hormone oestrogen. Menopause usually occurs between 45 and 55 years old. However, the timing and symptoms are different for everyone.

It's not only those who identify as women who will experience menopause. Some transgender men, non-binary people and intersex people or people with variations in sex characteristics may also experience menopause. In this Policy, reference to a specific gender should be taken to include all genders.

The menopause is split into perimenopause and postmenopause. Perimenopause marks the start of menopausal symptoms and may last several years. Postmenopause is the time after a woman experiences her last period.

24.3 What are the common symptoms of the menopause?

The menopause affects each person differently. Three out of four women will have symptoms and one out of four women will have severe symptoms. Symptoms are both physical and psychological in nature and can change over time.

Common symptoms include:

- Hot flushes
- Headaches
- Poor concentration
- Dry eyes
- Anxiety
- Low mood
- Lack of confidence
- Panic attacks
- Poor sleep
- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Poor memory
- Joint and muscle pain

24.4 The role of managers

We are committed to supporting you through the menopause. This process starts with creating an environment where discussion about the menopause isn't taboo – it is out in the open and understood. We do not want our employees to feel embarrassed or awkward.

For managers, recognising the symptoms of the menopause is vital to treating an affected employee fairly. It can explain certain behaviours that you might otherwise put down to a bad attitude or poor performance.

We will give managers support in handling all menopause-related issues sensitively and with confidence. This is not just about legal compliance; good support at work leads to happier and better-performing employees who have valuable skills and experience. If you are a manager and think that someone who reports to you may be going through the menopause and it is affecting their performance, please speak to your line manager or HR for guidance. Women who don't get the right support can lose confidence in their ability to do their job (some even decide to leave) and may find that their mental health suffers.

24.5 Support through the menopause

We know that the menopause is a very personal matter, so we will not raise it with you even if we think you are displaying symptoms. We might ask how you are, in general terms. You can then decide whether to talk to us about the menopause or not. We encourage you to do so because we want to support you.

We have a four-step procedure that applies to discussions around the menopause and the action we'll take.

Step 1

You could start by speaking with your GP or medical specialist about your menopause-related concerns.

You could also talk to your line manager (see Step 2) if you feel comfortable doing that.

Step 2

Meet with your line manager. You should expect to be able to have a private, friendly, honest and constructive conversation.

We will discuss with you ideas that could make things easier for you. Adjustments will depend on different factors, but things you could ask us to consider include:

- Modifying your [uniform] [dress code]
- Installing a water cooler
- Giving you a desk fan

- Making a room available for rest
- Allowing you more frequent breaks
- Extending deadlines
- Agreeing a flexible working arrangement (a change in working hours or homeworking, for example)
- Altering some aspects of your duties

Your conversation with your line manager will be confidential. They will probably need to discuss issues and possible solutions with others, including HR, other managers your GP, occupational health. Those people are subject to duties of confidentiality.

We will work hard to balance your needs with those of your colleagues; however, on occasions, we may not be able to find a solution that works for everyone.

We will keep notes of the things we discuss and will comply with our data protection responsibilities in respect of the information that passes between us, in line with our Data Protection Policy.

After your initial meeting with your line manager, and periodically after that, we may carry out health and safety risk assessments and/or seek advice from occupational health.

Step 3

Taking account of any specialist advice, we will agree with you the adjustments that we will make.

We will meet with you to make sure that the adjustments are working for you and us. If any modifications are needed, or if anything new needs to be put in place, we will discuss that with you.

Step 4

We will meet with you on an ongoing basis to check that your symptoms are being managed effectively.

You may find that your symptoms change over time. Please tell us if that happens, so that we can look at making further or alternative adjustments. Once your symptoms

pass, we expect you to tell us, and we may discuss with you removing the adjustments in place.

We may need to consult with occupational health/your doctor at various points to make sure everything is being done that should be done.

24.6 Our expectations of our staff

We may not be able to tell you about any menopause-related issues that a particular colleague is experiencing. We need you to accept that and respect their privacy.

Employees must treat each other fairly. Any unfavourable treatment, harassment, teasing or inappropriate comments in relation to the menopause or a colleague's symptoms could constitute age, disability or sex discrimination. You are expected to treat each other with respect and compassion. We have a zero-tolerance policy on bullying and harassment (please see our *Harassment & Bullying Policy* for more information).

If you treat a colleague badly (including making unwanted comments or jokes) because of their menopause symptoms, you could be disciplined.

24.6 Useful links and contacts

There are lots of web-based resources where you can find support and information. Examples include:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause>

<https://www.themenopausecharity.org>

24.7 Administration of the Menopause Policy

The Parish Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Menopause Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact them.

25 Wellbeing Policy

25.1 Introduction

We have a legal duty to manage risks to the health and safety of our employees. This includes considering the wellbeing of all employees at work. 'Wellbeing' encompasses mental, physical, emotional and social health. We will support you in each of these areas.

Please note that this Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

This Policy:

- a Sets out our commitment to workplace wellbeing
- b Identifies the different aspects of wellbeing and how they might impact you at work
- c Provides practical advice on things that you and we can do to maintain your workplace wellbeing
- d Provides details of support available from us and others to assist with the promotion of wellbeing both in and outside of the workplace

1.1. This Policy applies to all those working for us at any location and in any capacity. It applies to all our employees, worker and contractors.

25.2 Our wellbeing principles

We are guided by the following general principles in our approach to wellbeing

- a We will give non-judgmental and proactive support to individuals who experience mental health problems.
- b We will give employees including managers information on, and increase their awareness of, wellbeing.
- c We will set you realistic targets so that you do not work unreasonable hours.
- d We will comply with our legal duties to consider reasonable adjustments in the workplace.
- e We will identify any wellbeing issues by asking about health and wellbeing in appraisals and at exit interviews.

- f We will treat all matters relating to individuals and their health problems in the strictest confidence in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

25.3 The different aspects of workplace wellbeing

There are several different aspects of health and wellbeing. We aim to provide a healthy and balanced workplace which supports each of these aspects.

Mental wellbeing

- a Mental wellbeing concerns your feelings and any health conditions which are not physical in nature. How you feel has a significant impact on your wellbeing. Mental health issues, such as stress, anxiety and depression, can dramatically impact your working life and your ability to work effectively.
- b We want to have an open dialogue with you regarding your mental wellbeing.
- c If your work affects your mental health, then you should raise this with your line manager. They will offer support to manage the issue, or point you in the right direction. For example, if you feel that your workload is unmanageable and is negatively impacting your mental wellbeing, then we can review your workload to ensure that adequate support is in place for you.
- d A healthy work-life balance is important. We encourage you to approach us informally with any requests you may have for flexibility, whether short-term or long-term, to support your mental wellbeing. We also have a Flexible Working Policy for formal requests.
- e We encourage you to take practical steps to safeguard your mental wellbeing at work on a day-to-day basis, for example, by taking you breaks during the working day.
- f Use your holiday entitlement effectively to help to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Do not work whilst you are on holiday.

25.4 Emotional wellbeing

- a Emotional wellbeing is an aspect of mental wellbeing which focuses on how you feel about the workplace. Do you feel supported by your colleagues and managers? Do you have a clear understanding of the expectations placed on you? Do you feel supported in your workplace development and career progression?

- b We will ensure you are clear about the expectations placed on you in your job role by providing a full job description and regular one-to-one discussions with your line manager regarding your performance.
- c We will discuss your career aspirations with you so that you feel happy and fulfilled in the role you are doing and the direction of your career.
- d We have in place a clear appraisal process which encourages discussion between us in relation to current performance and future work plans.
- e We encourage you to let us know if you experience emotional difficulties associated with your work so that we can provide you with support. You should raise issues with your line manager in the first instance.
- f We have a Grievance Policy which you can use if you believe that emotional wellbeing issues are not being handled effectively.

25.5 Physical wellbeing

- a Physical wellbeing relates to your body's physical health. This includes things such as diet, exercise, injuries and physical health conditions.
- b We will support your physical wellbeing in the workplace in several ways. We have health and safety procedures in place to minimise any risks to physical health posed by the working environment itself. For more details, please see our Health & Safety Policy.
- c It is important to stay hydrated during your working day. we encourage you to drink water regularly . NHS guidance recommends drinking a minimum of 1.2 litres of water per day.
- d You can make a difference to your physical wellbeing by making good health choices: healthy eating, undertaking regular physical exercise, refraining from smoking and avoiding excessive alcohol consumption.

25.6 Social wellbeing

- a The employment relationship is an interactive one. You work alongside colleagues. The workplace should be a place of collaboration and not isolation. Social wellbeing is focused on promoting healthy interactions in the workplace, preventing isolation and encouraging respect among colleagues.

- b We have a zero-tolerance policy on bullying and harassment in the workplace. See our Bullying & Harassment Policy for further information. If you have difficulties with workplace relationships, then this can be a source of stress and unhappiness at work, impacting your emotional and mental wellbeing. We urge you to reach out to *your* line manager for *support* with any issues you may experience. You can also utilise our Grievance Policy to ensure that workplace issues are handled and resolved appropriately.
- c **[If you have employees who work from home or are field-based:** If you work for us in a home-based role or a role which involves field-based working, then it is important to us that you do not feel isolated from the workplace. Isolation can be damaging to social wellbeing.
- d You can support the emotional wellbeing of your colleagues by reviewing our policies on Bullying & Harassment, Equality & Diversity to check that your own social behaviours are in line with our expectations of you.
- e **[If you have office/site-based staff:** If your role is office- or site-based, we encourage you to make an effort to make time during your working day for social interaction with your colleagues. This could mean taking a tea break with a colleague or taking the time to ask them a non-work related question. This is likely to improve your social wellbeing and that of others.

25.7 Return to work following absence

If you are absent from work because of ill health, then we will support you on your return to work, in line with our Absence Management Policy. If we believe that we will be assisted by medical input, then we may ask for your consent to get a report from your doctor and/or occupational health and/or a doctor nominated by us. Options such as a phased return or adjusted duties will be considered as part of any return-to-work process. We want to facilitate a positive, healthy and effective return to work, in line with our wellbeing principles set out above.

25.8 Administration of the Wellbeing Policy

Your manager is responsible for the administration of the Wellbeing Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact them.

25. Changes to this handbook

This document is intended to provide general guidance on Parish Council procedures and rules. If there is any conflict with the terms set out in the Contract of Employment, the terms in the Contract will be taken as correct.

Deeping St James Parish Council reserves the right to review, revise, amend or replace the contents of this handbook and introduce new policies from time to time in order to reflect the changing needs of the Council.