



HASWELL PARISH COUNCIL

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Date Approved by Haswell Parish Council:	25/01/2023
Date Reviewed:	
Reviewed By:	

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Scope

- 1.1 Haswell Parish Council values all members of staff and their health and well-being is important. There are occasions when health related circumstances cause sickness absence and this Attendance Management policy and procedure enables staff to be appropriately supported within a procedural framework that provides for best management practice.
- 1.2 Proactively managing sickness absence also helps employees return to work quickly after illness and sets out the standards of attendance required by Haswell Parish Council.
- 1.3 Whether it be persistent short term sickness, unacceptable patterns of absence or long term sickness absence, effective and proactive management using some general rules can also assist managers in securing a culture of attendance.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all employees of Haswell Parish Council.
- 1.5 Employees within their probationary period are excluded from this policy and their attendance will be managed under the probationary procedure.

2. Purpose

- To be consistent and fair in the application of the attendance management policy and procedure;
- To provide appropriate support to employees during an absence and when returning to work;
- To prevent where possible sickness absence caused by or as a result of accidents/injuries at work;
- To set and review targets for employees to improve attendance;
- To regularly monitor and review action taken by managers within this policy; and
- To provide adequate support to managers to manage attendance effectively.

3. Procedure

- 3.1 Employees must be aware that all sickness absence has an impact on the provision of services by Haswell Parish Council.
- 3.2 The line manager will ensure that sickness absence records are kept and attendance levels monitored to ensure that employees are appropriately supported whenever they are absent, or upon return to work following an absence.

Managing Short Term Sickness Absence

- 3.3 Upon returning to work following every sickness absence the manager will conduct a return to work interview to ensure that the employee is appropriately supported. This allows the manager to obtain information quickly as to the reason for absence, the nature of the illness, the duration of the illness, whether the employee is fully recovered and whether the illness is part of an ongoing condition. If the employee is suffering from an ongoing medical condition, especially one which potentially amounts to a disability, the manager should seek advice from the WorkNest HR Advisor before taking any action. Once the manager has completed the return to work interview the manager can then decide whether any further action is needed in relation to the absence management process. If the absence is part of an ongoing condition or a long term absence, the manager should obtain advice from the HR Advisor as to how to proceed.
- 3.4 Managers should record the outcome of any discussion with the employee detailing any reasonable adjustments.

3.5 Triggers

The attendance management procedure will be triggered where an employee's absence reaches a set "Bradford factor" score.

- 3.6 The Bradford factor formula is a method of assessing an employee's sickness absence. The formula is $(S \times S) \times D = BF$ where S is the number of separate periods of absence over a set period (a running year) and D is the number of days of absence over the same set period and BF is the Bradford factor score. The formula produces a higher score for repeated periods of short term absence: one period of five days off gives a Bradford factor of 5 ($1 \times 1 = 1$; $1 \times 5 = 5$), five periods of one day off gives a Bradford factor of 125 ($5 \times 5 = 25$; $5 \times 5 = 125$).

The scores are then applied using 5 scales:

- No concern (BF 0)
- Some concern (22)
- Action required (45)
- Consider implementing appropriate disciplinary action (100 +)

- 3.7 The action in relation to the 5 scales are as follows:

Score	ACTION	
BF 0 – 21 No Concern	Informal discussion with manager via the return to work interview Welfare discussion regarding reason for absence, the nature of the illness, the duration of the	No further action at this stage

Score	ACTION	
	illness, whether the employee is fully recovered and whether the illness is part of an ongoing condition.	
BF 22-44 Some Concern	<p>Informal discussion with manager following the return to work interview</p> <p>Welfare discussion regarding reason for absence, the nature of the illness, the duration of the illness, whether the employee is fully recovered and whether the illness is part of an ongoing condition.</p>	<p>Flagged as a concern with possible informal targets and support for improvement.</p>
BF 45-99 Action Required	<p>Formal Attendance Management Meeting with manager.</p> <p>Welfare discussion regarding reason for absence, the nature of the illness, the duration of the illness, whether the employee is fully recovered and whether the illness is part of an ongoing condition and the potential impact of their absence on their employment.</p> <p>Formal targets for improvement will be discussed with the employee at this stage.</p>	<p>The manager will set a formal improvement plan with clear targets to be met over a three-month review period to help the employee improve their attendance.</p> <p>If the employee has not sufficiently improved their attendance measured against the targets set in the initial review period, a formal notification will be issued to allow the employee a further three months review period to improve their attendance.</p> <p>If the employee does not meet the targets set in the formal notification period, or there are further lapses in attendance within three months of ending the formal period, a final notification will be issued, with a further three months review period, with targets and support to improve their attendance.</p> <p>If these are not met, consideration will be given to implementing the Parish Council's disciplinary procedures.</p>

Score	ACTION	
BF 100 + Consider implementing appropriate disciplinary action	Formal Attendance Management Meeting with manager & HR Advisor Discussion regarding reason for absence, the nature of the illness, the duration of the illness, whether the employee is fully recovered and whether the illness is part of an ongoing condition and the potential impact of their absence on their employment	Consideration will be given to implementing the Parish Council's disciplinary procedures as appropriate. Potential for terminating the employees contract.

- 3.8 When considered necessary to implement disciplinary procedures this will be referred to an Attendance Panel comprising Members of the Personnel Sub Committee.
- 3.9 Before disciplinary procedures or dismissal is discussed with an employee advice must be sought from the HR Advisor.
- 3.10 There is a right of appeal against a decision to dismissal.
- 3.11 This absence management process will require formal notice of meetings in advance, with the right to be accompanied, with clear detailed information as to the number of absences and/or the absence pattern and documentary evidence in support. In some cases, especially where there is evidence that absences are related to a common cause, medical evidence may be required from a GP or Occupational Health Advisor, in particular to enable the manager to consider whether the employee is 'disabled' in law and may require reasonable adjustments to the policy. Further advice on this can be obtained from the HR advisor.

Managing Long Term Sickness Absence

- 3.12 Where an employee is absent for a prolonged period in excess of four working weeks this is considered as long term sickness absence.
- 3.13 Advice from HR must be sought when dealing with an employee who is on long term sickness absence, so that they can advise on any disability discrimination implications of dealing with the employee.

- 3.14 It is important to note that the procedure for addressing frequent short term sickness absence will not be appropriate when dealing with an employee on long term sickness absence.
- 3.15 Where an employee is away from work for a long period of time because of sickness, the manager should try and maintain regular contact with the employee through welfare meetings/visits to keep the Parish Council updated with the employee's progress, new medical information and generally to find out how the employee is doing.
- 3.16 The manager should ensure that the long term absent employee still receives all the usual employer updates, is included in any consultations and is invited to any social events (although they may be too ill to attend). By taking these two actions, the Parish Council is ensuring that the employee is not being treated any differently because of their illness and that avenues of communication are kept open and stress free ready to facilitate either a return to work or in the worst situation, termination of employment.
- 3.17 One of the key requirements in dealing with an employee who is absent due to long term sickness is to obtain up to date medical evidence in order to assist in determining the employee's medical condition and prognosis; the medical evidence can also confirm whether they are able to return to work and how soon.
- 3.18 The medical evidence may suggest adjustments that the manager can consider to facilitate a speedy return or any permanent changes that need to be made in the workplace.
- 3.19 Prior to obtaining this report, the manager will usually need the employee's written consent, especially if the report is to be obtained from their GP or the consultant treating them or an Occupational Health Advisor. This should only be obtained once the employee has been informed of their rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act (AMRA).
- 3.20 At the same time it is useful to obtain the employee's own opinion on what they believe their likely return to work date may be and whether any 'adjustments' can be made to facilitate a more speedy return. The employee may have some good ideas as to how to facilitate their return, and these can be checked with the medical adviser. The manager should also consider whether there are any adjustments which they believe may assist the employee back to work.
- 3.21 Once the medical report has been obtained, it is usual to hold a meeting with the employee to ascertain whether they agree with the content of the report. If the employee agrees with the contents of the medical report, then the manager can follow any recommendations in it. If the employee does not agree with the report,

it would be wise to return to the medical professional asking questions and pointing out the employee's disagreement with the contents

- 3.22 If the employee remains absent for a considerable period of time and the Parish Council cannot sustain the absence, and if a return to work is not foreseeable, then the manager should consider whether medical redeployment is applicable or available, and whether ill health retirement should be considered and discussed with the employee.
- 3.23 It is important to note that the action taken in relation to long term sickness absence will depend on the nature of the sickness, previous absences and the likelihood of the employee returning to work and may ultimately necessitate termination of the employees' contract.
- 3.24 The stages in relation to long term sickness are as follows:

Trigger	ACTION
Trigger 4 working weeks absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welfare review meeting• Refer to medical advisors /occupational health advisors
Regular attendance reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update medical information• Discuss support options• Address potential return to work and reasonable adjustments (if necessary)• Carry out relevant risk assessments• Discuss attendance policy and next steps
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Return to work (with adjustments if necessary)• If return to work is unlikely consider redeployment or medical ill health options• Review medical advice and seek further advice if necessary• If a return to work date remains unclear or absence is unsustainable consideration will be given to implementing the Parish Council's disciplinary procedures as appropriate. Potential for terminating the employees contract.

- 3.25 This long terms sickness absence management process will require formal notice of meetings in advance, with the right to be accompanied, followed up be a letter to the employee outlining the outcome of the discussions. Advice regarding correspondence can be obtained from WorkNest HR.
- 3.26 In every case the manager should speak to the HR adviser before taking any final decision in relation to long term sickness absence.

Returning to work following long term sickness absence

- 3.27 Upon returning work following long term sickness absence the manager will carry out a return to work interview and ensure that any necessary adjustments, risk assessments and attendance targets are in place.
- 3.28 The employee's subsequent attendance will be managed in line with Bradford factor taking into account any other relevant factors.

4. Exclusions to attendance management policy and procedure

The following appointments are not classed as sickness for the purposes of the attendance management policy:

- GP appointments;
 - Dental appointments;
 - Hospital appointments;
 - Medically prescribed treatment appointment; and
 - Any form of absence that is not related to the sickness of the employee.
- 4.1 Where these prevent attendance at work, evidence of appointments must be seen and approved by managers. It is expected the employee will take all reasonable steps to attend the above appointments whilst avoiding disruption to the workplace, subject to circumstances e.g. in the employees own time or at the start or end of their working day/shift.
- 4.2 Sickness absence which is as a direct consequence of pregnancy will be recorded as absence, but will not be included in calculating absence for the purpose of attendance management procedures.
- 4.3 Sickness absence which is a direct consequence of a disability is still recorded as absence, but managers must consider reasonable adjustments in individual cases.
- 4.4 Absences arising out of an accident, assault, injury or disease whilst undertaking the duties of the post will be recorded as absence and will only be excluded in calculating absence for the purpose of attendance management where Haswell Parish Council acknowledges liability. However, all such absences will be subject to investigation in accordance with the health and safety policy, along with related terms and conditions and recommended HR advice.

5. Statutory obligations

- 5.1 This policy recognises the requirements to comply with the following legislation where applicable:
- Equality Act 2010;
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
 - Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999;
 - RIDDOR - Reporting of Incidents, Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (as revised 1999);
 - Human Rights Act 1998;
 - Employment Rights Act 1996;

- General Data Protection Regulation.
- 5.2 In application of this policy it is expected that managers will follow the principles of the above legislation regardless of the reason for absence.
- 5.3 This policy and procedure is not intended to replace or undermine the provisions contained in any contractually agreed documents.