



Seaford Town Council

Seaford Town Council Personnel Agenda – 6 January 2026

To the Members of the Personnel Committee

Councillors S Markwell (Chair), O Matthews (Vice Chair), L Boorman, S Dubas, O Honeyman, R Honeyman and L Wallraven

A meeting of the **Personnel Committee** will be held in the **Council Chambers, 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG** on **Tuesday, 6 January 2026** at **7.00pm**, which you are summoned to attend.

Steve Quayle,
Town Clerk

19 December 2025

PLEASE NOTE:

- Public attendance at this meeting will be limited to 15 people although please note that in accordance with the Town Council's Public Participation Policy, there will be no agenda item for public participation.
- Public arrival time is between 6.45pm – 6.55pm, after which the front door will be locked and public will not be able to gain access to the meeting.
- Due to its confidential nature, the meeting will not be video recorded.
- See the end of the agenda for further details of public access.
- Councillor queries on agenda items should be reserved for the meeting so the answer and any subsequent points are shared with all councillors. If however a councillor has a question that officers may need to know in advance to prepare a response, please send this through the contact officer of the report so an answer can be prepared to be shared verbally at the meeting, rather than in advance of the meeting via email

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies for absence.

2. Disclosure of Interests

To deal with any disclosure by Members of any disclosable pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests, as defined under the Seaford Town Council Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011, in relation to matters on the agenda.

3. [Introduction of an Absence Management Policy](#)

To consider report 131/25 presenting the draft Absence Management Policy for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption (pages 5 to 17).

4. [Introduction of a Sexual Harassment Policy](#)

To consider report 134/25 presenting the draft Sexual Harassment Policy for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption (pages 18 to 32).

5. [Introduction of a Menopause Policy](#)

To consider report 133/25 presenting the draft Menopause Policy for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption (pages 33 to 45).

6. [Review of Staff Handbook](#)

To consider exempt report 135/25 presenting the revised Staff Handbook for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption (pages 46 to 60).

7. Exclusion of the Press & Public

The Chair will move that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion on the next item of business for the reasons as set out below.

The resolutions of the item will be recorded publicly in the minutes of this meeting.

The Proper Officer considers that discussion of the following items is likely to disclose exempt information as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 and Data Protection legislation and may therefore need to take place in private session. The exempt information reasons are shown alongside each item below.

Furthermore, in relation to paragraph 10 of Schedule 12A, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

8. General HR Update - January 2026 EXEMPT

To consider exempt report 132/25 providing the Committee with an update on HR matters within the Town Council (exempt pages).

Reason for exemption: to provide confidential updates surrounding the Human Resources functions of the Town Council.

Explanation of Reason: under Data Protection legislation, information about an individual member of staff / groups of staff is confidential between the Town Council and staff member/s.

AGENDA NOTES

For further information about items on this Agenda please contact:

Steve Quayle, Town Clerk, 37 Church Street, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1HG

Email: meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 01323 894 870

Circulation:

All Town Councillors and registered email recipients.

Public Access:

Members of the public looking to access this meeting will be able to do so by:

1. Attending the meeting in person.

Due to health and safety restrictions, the number of public in attendance will be limited. The Town Council therefore asks that you contact

meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk or 01323 894 870 to register your interest in attending at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Spaces will be assigned on a first come, first served basis.

Please note that if you don't register and just attempt to turn up at the meeting, this could result in you not being able to attend if there is no space.

Public Access to the Venue:

If you are attending the meeting in person, please arrive between 6.45 – 6.55pm where you will be shown into the meeting for a 7.00pm start.

Public Participation:

In accordance with the Town Council's Public Participation Policy, there will be no public participation at this meeting.

Public Comments

Members of the public looking to submit comments on any item of business on the agenda can do so in writing ahead of the meeting and this will be circulated to all councillors.

Comments can be submitted by email to meetings@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk or by post to the Town Council offices.



Seaford Town Council

Report No:	131/25
Agenda Item No:	3
Committee:	Personnel
Date:	6 January 2026
Title:	Introduction of an Absence Management Policy
By:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Purpose of Report:	To present the draft Absence Management Policy for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption

Actions

Full Council is advised:

1. To review and discuss the Absence Management Policy document presented within this report.
2. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations

Full Council is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Absence Management Policy.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The introduction of the Deputy Town Clerk & RFO and the Policy & Risk Officer posts to the Town Council's staff structure was done, in part, to ensure dedicated and focussed work could be carried out, at pace, on the Town Council's suite of policies.
- 1.2** As such, a review of the Town Council's policy systems has recently been completed and the programme for policy reviews created. A result of this programme of work will be more policy reviews coming through committees and Full Council for consideration, especially during the next two years as

these officers work to review every individual policy and introduce those new policies that have been identified as being required.

- 1.3 As part of the recent system review, officers identified areas of risk with policies that were outdated or where required / advisable policies were not in place.
- 1.4 One such policy that was identified as needing to be introduced is a policy to set out the Town Council's approach with absence management. As such, this report is presenting a draft Absence Management Policy for consideration by this Committee and subsequent recommendation to Full Council for adoption.

2. Information

- 2.1 The draft Absence Management Policy can be found in Appendix A.
- 2.2 The creation of an Absence Management Policy ensures that officers are given clear guidance on the parameters of reporting and management of absence whilst adhering to employment legislation and guidance.
- 2.3 The policy deals with all absences and reporting, aside from sickness absence, which is covered by the Sickness Absence Policy.
- 2.4 The introduction of this policy both formalises arrangements that are currently in practice (such as Bereavement Leave), and clarifies arrangements that must be available to employees (such as Carer's Leave and Disability Leave). As such, upon adoption of the Policy, guidance will be issued to all employees about its implications, prompting them to discuss this with their line manager or HR & OD Manager should they need any further clarification or guidance.
- 2.5 As per section 3.3 of the policy, this will also be shared with those councillors that take on line management representation for the Town Clerk – namely the Chair of Personnel and Chair of the Committee Chairs' Management Group – so they fully understand their responsibilities and duties within the policy.

3. Financial Appraisal

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

4. Contact Officer

- 4.1 The Contact Officer for this report is Darryl Keech Deputy Town Clerk & RFO.



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ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

This policy outlines the Council's approach to managing absences (not sickness absence) and, in doing so, prioritising the wellbeing of its staff

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.1	Last Review Date	N/A
Adopted Date	TBC	Next Review Date	One year from adoption
Review Period	TBC	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
n/a – new policy			

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
HRP7	Disciplinary Policy
C7	Health and Safety Policy
HRP21	Sickness Absence Policy
PE9	Family Friendly Policy (<i>yet to be created – due to supersede the Maternity, Paternity & Adoption Leave Policy</i>)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council prioritises the wellbeing of its staff and seeks to protect their health and wellbeing by creating a safe working environment. In return, the Council expects all officers to take reasonable steps to attend work on a regular basis.
- 1.2. The Council acknowledges that unforeseen circumstances or other reasons may result in absence.
- 1.3. The Council recognises that absence impacts not only the individual officer, but also their colleagues who must cover for them.
- 1.4. Thus, the Council attaches great importance to managing absences while maintaining accountability for fair allocation of staffing.
- 1.5. This Absence Management Policy outlines the Council's approach to managing absences arising from specific reasons (not sickness absence).
- 1.6. The Council employs appropriate measures and actions to address prolonged periods of absence as necessary.

2. Aim and Scope

- 2.1. This policy aims to promote best practice in absence management, ensuring all Council officers adhere to the appropriate procedures during their absence, and supporting a safe and effective return to work for all.
- 2.2. Thus, this policy is designed to provide guidance to the Council's officers and managers to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's standard operations and business practices.
- 2.3. By managing absence, the Council seeks to minimise the amount of staff work time lost through health or other conditions, whilst also providing support to those absent for legitimate reasons.
- 2.4. To comply with its aim, the Council will:
 - Provide a supportive working environment for officers who are absent
 - Ensure that all managers and officers adhere to this policy and procedures
 - Acknowledge that absence levels are routinely monitored in line with this policy
 - Investigate unreasonable, persistent and unjustified absences or patterns of absence and take necessary actions to prevent their continuity.

3. Who This Applies To

- 3.1. This policy shall apply to all officers of the Council, irrespective of their employment status, i.e., whether they are engaged on a full-time, part-time, temporary or permanent basis.
- 3.2. It does not apply to councillors or third parties, such as contractors or service providers.
- 3.3. The only exception to 3.2 is with those councillors that take on the role of line manager representatives for the Town Clerk – those councillors will undertake the duties within this policy that are assigned to line managers. Should those councillors require any support with interpretation or delivery of this policy, they should in the first instance speak with the Deputy Town Clerk.

4. Legal Framework

- 4.1. The Council is committed to promoting equality and combating unfair treatment.
- 4.2. Therefore, the Council will endeavour to ensure equal access to its policies and procedures and will eliminate discrimination or less favourable treatment on the grounds of any irrelevant consideration by embracing the principles of the Equality Act 2010.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1. It is the responsibility of all officers to attend work regularly and to report any absences in line with the Council's established procedures.
- 5.2. Line managers are responsible for recording daily absences within their teams, while the HR & OD Manager holds responsibility for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of this policy.
- 5.3. Officers should seek guidance from their line manager whenever they need further explanation or clarification on any aspect of this policy.
- 5.4. The Council acknowledges that achieving the aims of this policy (see Section 2) requires collaborative effort between managers and their staff. Accordingly, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined below to reflect the Council's commitment to this policy.

- **Line managers** will:
 - Ensure that officers are aware of the Council's Absence Management Policy and what is expected of them regarding regular attendance at work.

- Identify unacceptable levels of absence, including but not limited to sickness absence, paid sick leave, and holiday or parental leave in a prompt and sensitive manner.
- Ensure that all of their staff understand the procedures to be followed if they are unable to attend work.
- Ensure that all health, safety, and wellbeing matters are addressed wherever possible, providing support as needed, including maintaining regular contact with officers during extended periods of absence.
- Be responsible for recording daily absences of their direct reports, ensuring an up-to-date record is kept.
- Be responsible for conducting return-to-work meetings with their direct reports at the earliest opportunity, ideally on the officer's first day back.

- **HR & OD Manager will:**

- Monitor officer absences and report them through the appropriate channels, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Support line managers to investigate claims where individuals believe that they are being treated unfairly or unreasonably under this policy.
- Manage the absence process in an efficient and timely manner ensuring that all return-to-work processes are conducted by line managers.
- Support line managers in investigating absence-related claims.
- Advise both line managers and staff members in the application of this policy.

- **Officers will:**

- Take full responsibility for their own wellbeing to maintain good attendance at work and seek timely advice from relevant professional bodies, when required.
- Comply with the requirement to report sickness absence by informing their line manager when they are unable to attend work.
- Attend return-to-work meetings regarding their absence.
- Seek clarification from their line manager if they are unsure of the absence reporting procedures.
- Consider what help and support they may need to facilitate a return to work.
- Be aware of the standard of attendance expected of them such as sickness leave and the consequences if they reach or exceed the maximum limit of absence.
- Return to work as soon as they are able.

6. Absence Reporting Procedure

6.1. Unplanned Absences

6.1.1. Officers must inform their line managers as soon as possible if they are unable to attend work for any reason. In the absence of their line manager, the officer must inform the HD & OD Manager or another manager available at the time. If the officer is unable to contact either, they should leave a message for the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk by calling or sending an email.

6.1.2. When reporting absence, officers should provide the following information:

- The reason for absence
- The start date of the absence
- The expected return-to-work date
- Whether there are any immediate work commitments that need completing or reassigning during their absence

6.1.3. Absences should be reported by a phone call or email on the first day of the absence. During the initial contact, officers must provide the details above. In this case, it is not acceptable for officers to leave messages on voicemail only i.e. if the phone call is not answered, an email must be sent.

6.1.4. Absence notifications should be made by the officers themselves, except in exceptional circumstances such as hospitalisation or incapacitation due to injury or accident (see Sickness Absence Policy).

6.1.5. If an officer is unable to report their own absence, they must ensure that another person notifies the Council on their behalf.

6.1.6. Officers are expected to maintain contact with their line manager until their return e.g. with any significant changes to their expected return to work date.

6.2. Unplanned Absences

6.2.1. Time Off for Dependants

6.2.1.1. The Council acknowledges that all officers have a right to time off to address unforeseen circumstances and emergencies affecting a dependant (e.g., a child's severe illness, a parent's medical emergency, a dependant's accident or injury).

6.2.1.2. The Council will grant a reasonable amount of time to allow for alternative arrangements in the event of unexpected issues or emergencies. This leave is normally granted for one (1) or two (2) days and will be treated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the severity of the situation. All such leave will be unpaid.

6.2.1.3. Officers are required to notify their line manager at the earliest convenience by providing the reason for the leave, the steps they will take to address the issue, and the anticipated duration of the absence.

6.2.2. Carer's Leave

6.2.2.1. All officers who provide care for a dependant with a long-term care requirement are entitled to a period of unpaid Carer's Leave.

6.2.2.2. This Policy acknowledges a dependant as any individual who reasonably relies on the officer for care, including a spouse, civil partner, child, parent, or any person residing in the same household as the officer, excluding tenants, lodgers, and boarders.

6.2.2.3. The leave may be taken in full-day or half-day periods, with a maximum duration of one week within any twelve (12) month period.

6.2.2.4. The request for leave should be submitted to the officer's line manager as far in advance as possible. Ideally, the notice period should be at least twice the requested leave duration. The line manager will review the request and confirm approval in writing, taking into account operational requirements.

6.2.3. Holiday Leave

6.2.3.1. The Council acknowledges that officers are entitled to annual leave, which may be taken as holiday leave in accordance with their entitlement.

6.2.3.2. Officers will receive the same pay during their holiday leaves as they do on their regular working days.

6.2.3.3. It is the responsibility of officers to manage their annual leave and to notify their line manager promptly and properly. Ideally, the notice period should be at least twice the requested leave duration.

6.2.3.4. Officers are required to request their exact days off to their line managers via email or phone.

6.2.3.5. The Council encourages officers to submit their holiday leave requests as soon as possible to allow line managers sufficient time to make any necessary adjustments to the team.

6.2.3.6. The Council reserves the right to decline all or part of a holiday leave request where there are clear business reasons for doing so. Line managers will not unreasonably reject requests for holiday leave.

6.2.4. Bereavement Leave

6.2.4.1. Most people will experience the death of a person close to them during their working lives. Grief is a natural response people have when they experience a death (a bereavement). It can affect someone in several ways and can impact on their ability to undertake their work.

6.2.4.2. The Council acknowledges the sensitive nature of bereavement and grief. Thus, the Council prioritises supporting its officers in practical and reasonable ways.

6.2.4.6. In the event of the loss of a close relative or family member, an officer may be granted up to five (5) working days of paid bereavement leave, if required. Close relatives or family members include the following:

- Spouse or civil partner
- Parent or parent-in-law
- Sibling, including half-, step-, adoptive and foster siblings
- Grandparent or grandchildren

6.2.4.3. Bereavement leave allows an officer time off to deal with their personal grief and related practical arrangements, primarily but not limited to the funeral of a family member.

6.2.4.4. However, the Council understands that some officers will need additional time away from work, depending on their relationship with the individual(s) who has passed.

6.2.4.5. In these circumstances, additional time off may be taken as annual leave or unpaid leave.

6.2.4.7. An officer who suffers a stillbirth or the loss of a child will be entitled to two (2) weeks paid parental bereavement leave. Officers are entitled to take this leave over a two-week period or may choose to take it over two separate occasions, in one-week blocks.

6.2.4.8. In the event that a distant relative or a non-family member passes away, officers may be granted one (1) day of paid leave to attend the funeral. If additional time is required, for example, due to funeral arrangements or travel abroad to attend the funeral, the officer should request annual leave or unpaid leave.

6.2.4.9. In the event of multiple deaths of dependants, such as in a single incident or accident, any request for leave should be handled with the utmost sensitivity. In this situation, the officer will be entitled to bereavement leave for each individual loss.

6.2.4.10. In these unfortunate circumstances, officer should inform their line manager and/or the HR & OD Manager of their need to take leave as soon as possible, and at the latest, on the first day of the absence. Otherwise, the officer's next of kin or family member can notify the Council on the officer's behalf.

6.2.4.11. Officers may use their annual leave in the usual manner if they have used all their bereavement leave or are not eligible for any other leave under this policy.

7. Failure to Comply with Any Absence Reporting Procedures

- 7.1. If any officer fails to follow the Council's procedures for reporting or confirming their absence, and/or misuses the Absence Management Policy in any way (including false declaration), they may be subject to a thorough investigation, which may lead to formal processes being undertaken, with possible disciplinary action being taken against them.
- 7.2. In this case, the absence will be treated as unauthorised and will not be paid.

8. Regular Communication throughout the Absence

- 8.1. The Council expects that officers will remain in regular contact with their line manager and/or HR & OD Manager throughout any unplanned or planned absence, when possible.
- 8.2. The means and frequency of this contact should be agreed with the line manager when the officer notifies them of their initial absence, taking into account the seriousness of the reason for the absence.
- 8.3. This approach enables the Council to manage officers' workloads during their absence while providing appropriate support and adjustments as needed.
- 8.4. In exchange, the line manager will ensure that the officer is kept suitably up to date with any significant updates from the Town Council e.g. the departure or welcome of any members of staff, significant changes in policy that directly affect staff or any situations that officers are to be consulted on. The HR & OD Manager can offer guidance to the line

manager as to what is considered a suitable update for officers who are absent.

9. Return-to-Work Meetings

- 9.1. Effective absence management depends on the availability of relevant information; thus, the Council acknowledges a return-to-work meeting following each period of absence.
- 9.2. Therefore, when the officer returns to work after any period of absence, the line manager will be responsible for arranging a return-to-work meeting with their staff member.
- 9.3. Return-to-work meetings provide an informal opportunity to establish the cause of the absence, indicate to the officer that the Council is interested in their welfare, and determine whether the officer requires any further help or support. With these meetings, the Council also aims to:
 - Provide line managers with an opportunity to assess whether officers are fit to return to work.
 - Alert the Council to any concerns regarding situations where an unsatisfactory absence recording is developing.
 - Ensure that the officer is updated about work-related matters, duties and tasks that have occurred during their absence.
 - Provide appropriate support and encouragement for officer's reintegration into their working routine upon their return.
- 9.4. This meeting will occur on the first day back or as soon as possible thereafter.
- 9.5. Line managers will arrange the return-to-work meeting at a reasonable time for the officer to attend, and this will be held in a private, face-to-face setting where possible.
- 9.6. For short-term absences, the meeting may be an informal verbal conversation. However, for medium- to long-term absences, an in-depth formal conversation/meeting will be initiated to ascertain if any support is needed for the officer to return to the workplace and their normal work pattern and/or duties, and maintain good attendance at work.
- 9.7. In exceptional circumstances, the meeting may be held by telephone if a face-to-face or online meeting is not possible.
- 9.8. The Council recognises that this meeting is intended to support the officer's return to work and to discuss any assistance they may require. It is not intended to imply any mistrust regarding the absence. However, if there is any reasonable doubt, the Council will objectively investigate the reason and circumstances of the absence.

10. Monitoring and Absence Recording

- 10.1. The HR & OD Manager will ensure that all absence records are maintained for all officers. These records will provide the base data for the compilation, as required, of statistics showing the level of sickness absence across the Council.
- 10.2. The absence monitoring system will also enable the HR & OD Manager to identify individual cases where frequent absences occurred, or where patterns of absence have been identified.
- 10.3. Line managers should ensure that records of contact during and after absence are completed thoroughly and accurately and stored on the officer's personnel files or records.

These records should be treated as confidential at all times. Officers will be entitled to access these records on request



Seaford Town Council

Report No:	134/25
Agenda Item No:	4
Committee:	Personnel
Date:	6 January 2025
Title:	Introduction of a Sexual Harassment Policy
By:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Purpose of Report:	To present the draft Sexual Harassment Policy for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption

Actions

The Committee is advised:

1. To review and discuss the Sexual Harassment Policy document presented within this report,
2. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Sexual Harassment Policy

1. Information

- 1.1** The introduction of the Deputy Town Clerk and the Policy & Risk Officer posts to the Town Council's staff structure was done, in part, to ensure dedicated and focussed work could be carried out, at pace, on the Town Council's suite of policies.
- 1.2** As such, a review of the Town Council's policy systems has recently been completed and the programme for policy reviews created.

- 1.3 A result of this programme of work will be more policy reviews coming through committees and Full Council for consideration, especially during the next two years as these officers work to review every individual policy.
- 1.4 As part of the recent system review, officers identified areas of risk with policies that were outdated or where required / advisable policies were not in place.
- 1.5 One such policy that was identified as needing to be introduced is a policy to set out how the Town Council meets its requirements with regards to preventing sexual harassment. As such, this report is presenting a draft Sexual Harassment Policy for consideration by this Committee and subsequent recommendation to Full Council for adoption.

2. Information

- 2.1 The draft Sexual Harassment Policy can be viewed in Appendix A.
- 2.2 In October 2024 a new duty under the Equality Act 2010 required employers to take “reasonable steps” to prevent sexual harassment of their employees. New guidance was produced for employers on how they can protect their staff. The requirement also covers other parties, such as councillors, contractors, consultants and third parties whose staff carry out duties for the Council.
- 2.3 Employers now have a duty to anticipate when sexual harassment may occur and take reasonable steps to prevent it. If sexual harassment has taken place, an employer should take action to stop it from happening again. This sends a clear signal to all employers that they must take reasonable preventative steps against sexual harassment, encourage cultural change where necessary, and reduce the likelihood of sexual harassment occurring
- 2.4 One of the most significant changes is that if an employment tribunal has found an employer liable for sexual harassment, it can also consider whether the employer has failed in its duty to prevent it, and if so, the tribunal can order an uplift in compensation paid to the employee. A breach of the duty may lead to an uplift in compensation by up to 25%. The amount awarded should reflect the gravity of the breach. A breach of the duty is also enforceable by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) under its existing enforcement powers.

- 2.5** The Technical Guidance provided under the changes to the Equality Act 2010 state, “as part of the measures to prevent harassment, sexual harassment and victimisation it is reasonable to expect that employers have in place effective and well-communicated policies and practices which aim to prevent harassment and victimisation. This will not only encourage reporting of any unlawful conduct but also communicate the consequences of engaging in unlawful conduct.”
- 2.6** The creation of the Sexual Harassment Policy is the first step to this process. It gives clear guidance on the types of harassment and what to do if officers, councillors or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council are subject to harassment from any internal or external person or party.
- 2.7** Another requirement of the Technical Guidance recognises the need for training to be provided to identify and recognise types of harassment. As part of ongoing training Town Council officers complete online sexual harassment training that further educates and develops officers’ understanding of this subject.
- 2.8** Officers have also completed a risk assessment identifying and assessing harassment risks to the Council’s workforce ahead of the production of this policy as recommended in the Technical Guidance.
- 2.9** Upon adoption of the policies, guidance will be issued to all officers, councillors and relevant third parties about the implications of the policy and reminding them of the opportunity to discuss this with their line manager or HR & OD Manager should they need any further clarification or guidance.

3. Financial Appraisal

- 3.1** There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

4. Contact Officer

- 4.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & RFO.



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SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

This policy sets out the Town Council's commitment to providing a supportive, inclusive, and respectful working environment, where unacceptable behaviour is immediately identified, challenged, and addressed, and offers guidance on how to raise and handle a complaint about sexual harassment that occurs within, or is associated with the Council

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.1	Last Review Date	TBC
Adopted Date	TBC	Next Review Date	One year after adoption
Review Period	TBC	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
n/a – new policy			

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
HRP6	Dignity at Work Policy
HRP7	Disciplinary Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council recognises that all officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council (see section 3 for who this policy applies to) have the right to work in an environment where the dignity of individuals is respected and is free from harassment. Thus, the Council is committed to providing a workplace without any forms of harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment.
- 1.2. The Council expects all of its officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council to maintain high standards, ensuring safety across all areas of the Council, and to act at all times in accordance with the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy.
- 1.3. The Council is committed to preventing sexual harassment and any victimisation associated with it, to ensure that all officers feel a sense of belonging and protection.
- 1.4. Apart from this understanding, all officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council are entitled to:
 - Be treated with dignity, respect and courtesy
 - Experience no form of unlawful discrimination
 - Be valued and regarded for their skills and abilities

2. Aim and Scope

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to maintain a supportive, inclusive, and respectful working environment within the Council, where unacceptable behaviour is immediately identified, challenged, and addressed.
- 2.2. The policy includes guidance on how to raise a complaint about harassment that has occurred and is associated with the Council.
- 2.3. It is intended that the Policy will enhance staff safety, boost morale, and reduce stress to support officers' commitment to the Council and its standard operating procedures.
- 2.4. The Policy applies to sexual harassment on any grounds related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 2.5. This policy also ensures that any allegation of harassment at work is taken seriously and investigated.

3. Who This Applies To

- 3.1. This Policy shall apply to all officers of the Council, irrespective of their employment status i.e., whether they are engaged on a full-time, part-time, temporary or permanent basis.
- 3.2. The provisions of this Policy shall also extend to all individuals associated with the Council, including, but not limited to, elected members and contractors acting on behalf of the Council. These groups are hereafter referred to within this policy as 'other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council'.
- 3.3. This policy shall also apply to any third parties engaged in work on behalf of the Council, including, but not limited to, agency personnel, consultants, and providers of services or supplies whose staff carry out duties for, or in association with, the Council. Also, referred to within this policy as 'other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council'.

4. Legal Framework

- 4.1. On 26 October 2024, the Worker Protection Act 2023 (Amendment to the Equality Act 2010) came into effect, making a significant change to the law regarding an employer's obligations to protect its employees from sexual harassment. The Equality Act 2010 now places a legal duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.
- 4.2. In accordance with the Act, the Council commits to taking necessary actions to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. These steps include:
 - Developing a culture of respect and inclusion through practices such as the Council's Staff Skills Training program for Bullying and Harassment.
 - Providing a clear understanding and communication between the Council and officers through the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy
 - Taking proactive steps to identify and mitigate risks of sexual harassment under the guidance of the HR & OD Manager.
 - Ensuring that other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council are aware, and have a clear understanding, of the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy and how this applies to them.

5. Defining Sexual Harassment

- 5.1. Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- 5.2. Sexual harassment can happen to men, women, and people of any gender identity or sexual orientation. Anyone who sexually harasses someone at work is responsible for their own actions, regardless of their sex or gender.
- 5.3. A single incident can be considered sexual harassment without systematic repetition. It also includes treating someone unfairly because they have previously accepted or rejected unwanted sexual conduct.
- 5.4. Types of behaviours which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - 5.4.1. Physical conduct:
 - Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing and hugging
 - The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours
 - Physical violence, including sexual assault and rape
 - Fondling and inappropriate touching
 - 5.4.2. Verbal conduct:
 - Coercion
 - Sexual banter
 - Sexual advances, flirting
 - Making sexual jokes or comments
 - Sexual comments about someone's sexual orientation or gender identity
 - Spreading sexual rumours about a person or their sexual conduct outside of work
 - Addressing colleagues by using inappropriate nicknames
 - Unwelcome comments on someone's appearance, body shape, age or private life
 - Gossiping and speculating about someone's sexual orientation, including spreading malicious rumours.
 - Intrusive questioning or suggestions about someone's personal life
 - Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates, meetings or physical intimacy
 - 5.4.3. Non-verbal conduct:
 - Sexually suggestive gestures that act as a sexual intent

- Sending, sharing, or displaying sexually explicit materials such as improper messages, images, and videos by any medium, or posters and calendars that expose nudity
 - Sending inappropriate emojis while emailing or messaging
 - Inappropriate facial expressions such as whistling, winking, licking lips, or raising eyebrows in a suggestive manner
- 5.5. The complainant(s) refers to any officer(s) or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council who raise a concern about sexual harassment. Equally, a respondent refers to any officer(s) or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council who are the subject of the complaint.
- 5.6. Sexual harassment is usually directed at an individual, but it might not always be the case. Sexual harassment in the workplace can sometimes occur as generalised behaviour that is not directed at a specific individual but may be witnessed or overheard. In such cases, any officer or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council who observes or is affected by this behaviour is entitled to raise a concern or make a formal complaint.
- 5.7. Intent is not required for behaviour to be considered sexual harassment. Any unwelcome conduct may still be deemed harassment regardless of the respondent's intention. For instance, an officer may experience harassment, even if they were not the intended target e.g., when pornographic images are displayed on a colleague's computer in the workplace.
- 5.8. Sexual harassment can take place at any time and any location, including the workplace or at any workplace events (e.g., while travelling with colleagues to an event or online work events). Incidents occurring within these environments remain subject to the provisions of this policy.

6. Statement of the Council

- 6.1. Seaford Town Council is committed to providing a safe and trustworthy environment for all officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council by adhering to the Policy, while fostering a culture of mutual respect.
- 6.2. In order to foster a culture of respect and dignity in the workplace, the Council shall:
- Maintain a zero-tolerance approach for sexual harassment of any kind.
 - Ensure that all complaints are considered promptly and that appropriate proactive action shall be taken where necessary.

- Confirm that this Policy applies to all officers of the Council and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council, irrespective of their role or status.
 - Investigate cases fairly, sensitively and confidentially.
 - Ensures that all officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council are informed of, and will follow, the procedures for raising concerns and the complaint process as set out in this Policy
- 6.3. All officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council are responsible for ensuring that they behave in an appropriate manner, showing respect for colleagues and individuals engaged with the Council's standard operations. Therefore, where possible, the Council expects its officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council to challenge inappropriate behaviour that they witness or that is directed towards them.
- 6.4. The Council emphasises that complainant(s) are not required to negotiate with respondent(s) to resolve the issue informally and personally. Instead, respondent(s) are solely obligated to report the matter (see section 8 below).
- 6.4.1. The Council confirms that the complainant(s) will not be discriminated against or victimised for raising a complaint. Furthermore, any information relating to a raised concern shall remain confidential and will only be disclosed where necessary to address a safeguarding risk.

7. Roles & Responsibilities

- 7.1. The Council acknowledges that achieving the purpose of this Policy (see Section 2) requires collaborative effort between managers and officers. Accordingly, the roles and responsibilities are defined to reflect the Council's commitment to this Policy and the principles outlined herein:
- **Line managers** are responsible for ensuring that they:
 - Monitor the workplace to ensure that zero-tolerance boundaries regarding any sexual harassment are in effect.
 - Be proactive in implementing any reasonable adjustments as necessary.
 - Support the creation of a culture where officers feel confident to work, raise concerns, and feel listened to.
 - Be a role model for promoting appropriate and professional behaviours in the workplace.

- Support the implementation of the Policy in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.
- **The HR & OD Manager** is responsible for ensuring that they:
 - Ensure that appropriate immediate actions are identified and implemented upon receipt of a complaint
 - Provide guidance and advice throughout the complaint and investigation process
 - Ensure that a person is not targeted or mistreated for making, or being involved in, a complaint of sexual harassment.
- **Officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council** will:
 - Take accountability for raising any concern about sexual harassment in the workplace.
 - Co-operate with the Council and the overall harassment investigation process, whether a complaint has been filed against them or they have submitted a complaint.

8. Reporting Process

- 8.1. The Council recognises that complainants may feel uncertain about how to proceed when faced with a distressing issue. In this case, an informal discussion with their line manager or HR & OD Manager may help them to understand the situation clearly.
- 8.2. Any complaint may be formally reported by either:
 - Officers or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council who have been sexually harassed, in the workplace or relating to their work or duties for the Council.
 - Officers or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council who have witnessed sexual harassment, in the workplace or in relation to their work or duties for the Council.
- 8.3. Any concern regarding sexual harassment needs to be reported immediately.
- 8.4. For officers, ideally the report should be submitted to the Council's HR & OD Manager, who is responsible for and trained in managing the process properly and accurately. Alternatively, complainant(s) can raise the issue with their line managers.
- 8.5. If the complaint relates to the conduct of the complainant's manager, the complainant may choose to discuss the matter with the HR & OD Manager or senior management.

- 8.6. Reporting can be made verbally or in writing. The complainant(s) should keep a record of any incidents, detailing when, where, what occurred and who witnessed.
- 8.7. The Council encourages its officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council to raise their concerns in a transparent manner. If a person does not feel comfortable or safe raising a complaint, they can do so anonymously. However, reporting sexual harassment anonymously may cause a delay in conducting a thorough investigation and gaining a clear understanding of the situation.
- 8.8. Any concern raised shall be managed in accordance with the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy and, where appropriate, the Council's Disciplinary Policy.
- 8.9. Upon receiving a concern of sexual harassment, the Council will promptly and impartially investigate the allegations. The related investigation will be conducted by the HR & OD Manager with the support of the Town Clerk or a member of the strategic management team. Where not appropriate, the HR & OD Manager can be substituted by the Deputy Town Clerk or other suitably experienced individual e.g. an external HR professional.
- 8.10. Both the complainant(s) and respondent(s) shall be offered appropriate support under the guidance of the HR & OD Manager. Following meetings with the complainant(s) and respondent(s), additional interviews or investigations may be conducted if further information is required to assess the allegations.
- 8.11. Following the investigation, the Council will provide a report outlining its decision on the outcome of the complaint(s).
- 8.12. The Council prioritises confidentiality throughout the investigation process. Thus, any information received during the investigation meetings will be kept securely to ensure the safeguarding of individuals. However, the Council reserves the right to seek advice from, or share information with, appropriate external authorities (e.g., police) if it believes it is under an obligation to do so.
- 8.13. While the Council encourages the reporting of genuine concerns, making a false accusation of sexual harassment may be investigated as a potential disciplinary offence in line with the Council's disciplinary policy.
- 8.13.1. In the case of other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council, this may result in the termination of a works contract held with the Council.
- 8.13.2. In the case of councillors, this may result in a complaint being submitted to the Monitoring Officer.

9. Outcomes

- 9.1. The Council may reach one of the following conclusions to complete the investigation process:
- There is insufficient evidence to support the complaint; accordingly, no action will be taken, and the complaint is not upheld.
 - A sexual harassment incident has occurred thus, appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Council's formal disciplinary process depending on the severity of the offence.
 - The complaint is upheld. The outcome and recommendations are communicated, including referral for disciplinary action depending on the severity of the offence and additional support to complainant(s).
- 9.2. A complainant(s) who is not satisfied that their complaint against an officer has been taken seriously must raise a formal Grievance outlining their concerns and this will be investigated following the formal processes in the Council's Grievance Policy.
- 9.2.1 In the case of other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council, this may result in the termination of a works contract held with the Council.
- 9.2.2 In the case of councillors, this may result in a complaint being submitted to the Monitoring Officer.

10. Dealing with Third-Party Sexual Harassment

- 10.1. The Council acknowledges that it carries the responsibility to protect its officers other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council from any third-party harassment.
- 10.2. Third-party sexual harassment can result in legal liability and will not be tolerated by the Council. Therefore, all officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council are encouraged to report any third-party (e.g., contractors, consultants, service suppliers, customers or clients) harassment they are victim of, or witness, in accordance with this policy.
- 10.3. If any third-party harassment of officers or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council occurs, the Council will take necessary steps to receive any complaints and to prevent it. The steps including, but not limited to, warnings to respondent(s) about their behaviour, banning them from the Council premises, reporting any criminal acts to the police, and sharing further information with other teams, units and services of the Council.

- 10.4. Any sexual harassment concern from a third party towards an officer or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council must be reported immediately as per section 8 of this policy. The HR & OD Manager should assist the respondent officer or other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council as a part of the support mechanism within the Council.
- 10.5. The Council prioritises preventing third-party sexual harassment to maintain a safe workplace. To ensure this, the Council has:
- A clear Sexual Harassment Policy that outlines third-party sexual harassment in addition to verbal, non-verbal and physical harassment
 - A training mechanism for recognising and responding to third-party harassment and outlining the responsibilities of line managers and the HR & OD Manager to assist officers in case of any concern.
 - Confidential reporting channels
 - A working culture where officers and other parties carrying out work or duties on behalf of the Council feel supported in reporting any misconduct

11. Handling Time-Off

- 11.1. The Council adheres to its policies and legal requirements regarding any time off connected to sexual harassment issues or concerns.
- 11.2. If an officer requests time off after experiencing harassment, the Council will respond promptly and with empathy towards the request.
- 11.3. If needed, the Council will consider legal requirements regarding paid leave (e.g., sick leave for experiencing emotional distress or mental health issues or paid leave to allow the investigation to proceed while protecting the complainant(s) from harassment-related situations.
- 11.4. The Council ensures that taking leave for reasons related to harassment will not negatively affect the position or standing of the complainant within the Council.
- 11.5. The Council also commits to helping the complainant(s) feel secure and safe upon their return, including possible changes to working schedules or working environment arrangements.

12. Assessing and Managing Risks of Sexual Harassment

- 12.1. The Council acknowledges that sexual harassment is a risk that can occur in the workplace.

- 12.2. Therefore, the Council undertakes a Sexual Harassment Risk Assessment to assess and eliminate the possible risks.
- 12.3. In addition to this assessment, the Council employs the following measures to prevent and address sexual harassment:
- Having a process for reviewing policies and training
 - Having managerial level oversight (e.g., Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk) to make sure the Council is taking necessary actions to eliminate sexual harassment
 - Implementing preventive controls such as proper supervision and a clear code of conduct.

13. Further Support

- 13.1. The Council is open to providing additional information and guidance to its officers on how to address concerns and complaints of sexual harassment in the workplace, upon request.
- 13.2. The Council understands that concerns regarding sexual harassment may cause stress, anxiety, and mental health problems. The Council will consider reasonable adjustments to encourage its officers to seek help and be supported.
- 13.3. Under these circumstances, the Council also attaches importance to its officers having access to free counselling and advice. All council officers can contact Care First on 01179342121 who provide a 24-hour counselling helpline for additional mental health support.
- 13.4. For further support and contact, the following channels are also suggested by the Council:
- Sussex NHS Partnership for accessing resources and signposts for local mental health support by www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/your-mental-health/getting-help website.
 - The Samaritans to access free listening services by calling 116 123 or by messaging jo@samaritans.org email address.



Seaford Town Council

Report No:	133/25
Agenda Item No:	5
Committee:	Personnel
Date:	6 January 2026
Title:	Introduction of a Menopause Policy
By:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Purpose of Report:	To present the draft Menopause Policy for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption

Actions

The Committee is advised:

1. To review and discuss the Menopause Policy document presented within this report.
2. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To recommend that Full Council adopts the draft Menopause Policy

1. Information

- 1.1** The introduction of the Deputy Town Clerk and the Policy & Risk Officer posts to the Town Council's staff structure was done, in part, to ensure dedicated and focussed work could be carried out, at pace, on the Town Council's suite of policies.
- 1.2** As such, a review of the Town Council's policy systems has recently been completed and the programme for policy reviews created.

- 1.3 A result of this programme of work will be more policy reviews coming through committees and Full Council for consideration, especially during the next two years as these officers work to review every individual policy.
- 1.4 As part of the recent system review, officers identified areas of risk with policies that were outdated or where required / advisable policies were not in place.
- 1.5 One such policy that was identified as needing to be introduced is a policy to set out the Town Council's commitment to supporting officers experiencing menopause symptoms. As such, this report is presenting a draft Menopause Policy for consideration by this Committee and subsequent recommendation to Full Council for adoption.

2. Information

- 2.1 The draft Menopause Policy can be found in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Women will experience menopause symptoms that can, in some cases, be debilitating and have a significant impact on everyday activities. Without appropriate care these symptoms can have severe impacts on women's physical and mental health, workplace participation and personal relationships.
- 2.3 Under the Equality Act 2010, workers are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics including disability, age and sex.
- 2.4 If menopause symptoms have a long term and substantial impact on a woman's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, these symptoms could be considered a disability. If menopause symptoms amount to a disability, an employer will be under a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments. They will also be under a legal obligation to not directly or indirectly discriminate because of the disability or subject the woman to discrimination arising from the disability.
- 2.5 Women experiencing menopause symptoms may also be protected from direct and indirect discrimination, as well as harassment and victimisation, on the grounds of age and sex.
- 2.6 Under health and safety legislation, employers also have a legal obligation to conduct an assessment of their workplace risks.

- 2.7** The introduction of the Menopause Policy into the workplace ensures that officers understand their responsibilities and support those impacted by menopause.
- 2.8** At this stage, this policy only applies to officers. There are some isolated examples of councils introducing measures / policies to support councillors experiencing menopause. Should the Council wish to, this can be researched and included in the next review of the policy, which is due to take place one year after its adoption.

3. Financial Appraisal

- 3.1** There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

4. Contact Officer

- 4.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & RFO.



SEAFORD
TOWN
COUNCIL



MENOPAUSE POLICY

This policy sets out the Town Council's commitment to supporting officers experiencing the menopause and the procedures in place to deliver this support

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Policy Status

Version	0.1	Last Review Date	TBC
Adopted Date	TBC	Next Review Date	One year from adoption
Review Period	TBC	Approving Body	Full Council

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
n/a – new policy			

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
C7	Health and Safety Policy
HRP6	Dignity at Work Policy
HRP7	Disciplinary Policy
HRP11	Flexible Working Policy
HRP16	Performance Management Policy
HRP20	Sexual Harassment Policy
HRP21	Sickness Absence Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Seaford Town Council is committed to safeguarding the health, safety, and wellbeing of its officers and ensuring all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.
- 1.2. The Council recognises that some officers may need additional support and consideration to improve their work experience, particularly during menopause.
- 1.3. By acknowledging this, the Council is committed to creating an open and supportive culture in which officers feel comfortable discussing, without embarrassment, how menopause-related symptoms may be affecting them at work.
- 1.4. Thus, the Council is dedicated to supporting officers experiencing menopause and ensures that managers are informed of the need to provide reasonable adjustments where necessary to minimise the impact of symptoms on officers' ability to perform and undertake their duties and workload.
- 1.5. This policy provides guidance for both officers and managers on how to support individuals who are experiencing perimenopause, menopause, or post-menopause.

2. Aim and Scope

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on supporting Council officers who raise menopausal issues, not only for individuals experiencing menopause, but also for those indirectly affected, including managers and colleagues.
- 2.2. To achieve this, the policy also addresses:
 - Providing clarity and direction on how the Council will manage and support menopause-related issues.
 - Reducing potential absenteeism related to experiencing menopause and supporting officers to remain effective in their work.
 - Raising awareness and understanding of menopause among all colleagues, enabling officers to have open and supportive conversations and feel confident in using the policy.
 - Creating an environment where officers experiencing menopause feel confident to raise issues about their symptoms and request support and adjustments when needed.
 - Ensuring that managers are informed about the possible symptoms of menopause, their impact on officers, and the measures that can

be taken to support affected individuals, including implementing reasonable adjustments.

- 2.3. For the purpose of this policy, *menopause*, includes the perimenopause and post-menopausal stages.

3. Who This Applies To

- 3.1. This Policy shall apply to all officers of the Council, irrespective of their employment status, i.e., whether they are engaged on a full-time, part-time, temporary or permanent basis.
- 3.2. This policy shall not apply to councillors or any third parties engaged in work on behalf of the Council, including, but not limited to, agency personnel, consultants, and providers of services or supplies whose staff carry out duties for or in association with the Council.

4. Legal Framework

- 4.1. While no specific legislation directly addresses the impact of menopause in the workplace, employers are legally required under the Health and Safety at Work 1974 to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of officers.
- 4.2. Furthermore, the Council acknowledges that it is legally obliged under the Equality Act 2010 to consider making reasonable adjustments to an officer's role or working conditions to prevent discrimination or disadvantage arising from their sex or gender.
- 4.3. By adopting and applying this policy, the Council aims to promote equal opportunities for all and eliminate discrimination related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

5. Defining Menopause

- 5.1. Menopause is a biological stage in a woman's life that occurs when she stops menstruating and reaches the conclusion of her reproductive period.
- 5.2. Menopause includes three main stages:
 - **Pre-menopause** is the period before any menopausal symptoms occur,

- **Perimenopause** when menopausal symptoms occur due to hormone changes, but periods still happen, and,
 - **Post-menopause** is the period after 12 months with no periods but still experiencing the effects of the menopause symptoms.
- 5.3. Menopause is usually a natural, gradual process, though it can sometimes occur suddenly due to medical intervention, and symptoms typically appear between ages 45 and 55.
- 5.4. Menopause is best described as a transition, as symptoms typically last for several years rather than being a one-time experience.
- 5.5. Menopause may lead to a range of symptoms, which vary in nature, severity and duration for each individual. These symptoms may also interact with one another and include, but are not limited to:
- 5.5.1. Physical symptoms:
- Hot flushes (brief and sudden surges of heat usually felt in the face, neck and chest and often require fresh air to relieve)
 - Headaches
 - Dizziness, aches and fatigue
 - Joint stiffness, aches and pains
 - Heavy bleeding and irregular periods
 - Sleep disturbances that can make people feel tired and irritable, including night sweats (hot flushes that happen during the night)
 - Palpitations (heartbeats that become more noticeable)
 - Skin changes (dryness, acne, general itchiness) and hair loss
- 5.5.2. Psychological symptoms:
- Panic attacks
 - Mood disturbances, including anxiety and depression
 - Memory loss and brain fog
 - Loss of confidence and reduced concentration
- 5.6. Menopausal symptoms may worsen pre-existing conditions, potentially resulting in discomfort, distress, physical pain, and thus reduced effectiveness at work, and may create challenges for officers in performing their daily tasks.

6. Statement of the Council

- 6.1. The Council is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion, embracing a culture in which every officer and member of the community is treated fairly, represented, and genuinely respected.
- 6.2. By adopting this policy, the Council supports a respectful and supportive environment for all officers and managers, where menopause-related distress and concerns can be managed through appropriate adjustments and mutual respect.

- 6.3. To foster this culture and environment, the Council attaches significant attention to avoiding:
- Lack of awareness about menopause
 - Unsympathetic management of menopause-related concerns
 - Increased emotional stress due to insufficient managerial support
 - Limited access to toilets and inflexible break times
 - Negative attitudes toward officers experiencing menopause
 - Poor access to drinking water
- 6.4. The Council has a zero-tolerance approach to any bullying or inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. Therefore, if an officer is mistreated by a colleague due to menopause-related matters, this behaviour will be investigated and where appropriate, treated under the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1. The Council recognises that achieving the objectives of this policy (see Section 2) requires collaboration between managers and their staff members. The following roles and responsibilities demonstrate the Council's commitment to these principles:
- **Line managers** are responsible for ensuring that they:
 - Familiarise themselves with the Menopause Policy and understand the support that they can provide to officers.
 - Promote open conversations and encourage a culture where officers feel able to talk about their symptoms, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, and treating the discussion sensitively and professionally.
 - Keep all information shared by the officer in the strictest confidence and do not share further without the officer's consent.
 - Consider support arrangements and implement accordingly for officers who are perimenopausal, post-menopausal, or who are currently going through the menopause and experiencing symptoms, ensuring all agreed reasonable adjustments are adhered to, recorded and reviewed regularly to evaluate their effectiveness.
 - **HR & OD Manager** is responsible for ensuring that they:
 - Provide support, advice and guidance to managers about how to handle and address absence and performance issues related to the menopause.
 - Maintain up-to-date knowledge of what is available to support officers experiencing menopausal symptoms.
 - Record adjustments agreed, and actions to be implemented.

- Ensure that officers are made aware of the support mechanisms available within the council and are signposted to further resources externally.
- Encourage officers to seek help and support for menopausal-related concerns to manage their wellbeing in the workplace.
- **Officers will:**
 - Put effort into understanding their responsibilities under this policy.
 - Take personal responsibility to prioritise their own health and wellbeing, and to speak to their GP for advice and regular check-ups.
 - Report any concerns they may have to their line manager if they are struggling with any aspect of their role because of symptoms associated with the menopause.
 - Report any instances of harassment, bullying, victimisation or discrimination related to menopause, whether experienced personally or witnessed.

8. Requesting Support

- 8.1. Officers who feel that menopause or associated symptoms are affecting their work or daily tasks are encouraged to discuss their concerns and/or needs with their line manager, allowing appropriate support to be provided and work performance maintained.
- 8.2. In cases where officers do not feel comfortable talking about it with their line manager initially, they are encouraged to liaise with the next senior manager (e.g., the line manager's manager) or the HR & OD Manager.
- 8.3. If, for any reason, an officer is unable to reach their line manager (e.g., due to annual leave or sickness absence), it is the officer's responsibility to raise the issue with the HR & OD Manager or the Deputy Town Clerk.
- 8.4. Requests may include temporary changes (e.g., adjustments to workspace arrangements) or seeking external supports such as guidance for accessing counselling services.

9. Council's Support

- 9.1. When support is requested, the Council will ensure every effort is made to address it.
- 9.2. The Council will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments required to comply with the aims of this policy (see Section 2).
- 9.3. The Council will maintain confidentiality regarding any personal information shared and will securely store any related documents or written statements.

10. Reasonable Adjustments

- 10.1. Reasonable adjustments are intended to help officers experiencing menopausal symptoms, enabling them to perform their duties as comfortably as possible.
- 10.2. Reasonable adjustments, as referred by the Council, refer to measures designed to remove or reduce any disadvantage experienced by officers going through menopause. These adjustments should be practical to implement, affordable, and not harmful to the health and safety of the officer and other colleagues.
- 10.3. Adjustments will be implemented only if a clear need for additional support has been identified.
- 10.4. Adjustments will be applied in consideration of both the Council's operational requirements and the officer's needs.
- 10.5. The Council acknowledges that it is important to understand the barriers an officer may face. Therefore, line managers are expected to engage in discussions with officers to understand the barriers they face and determine the most suitable adjustments to reduce the impact of menopausal symptoms in the workplace.
- 10.6. Reasonable adjustments that may be requested or considered include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - **Flexible Working on a Temporary Basis** may include:
 - **Flexible hours or temporary shift** changes to accommodate difficulties.
 - **Additional short breaks** including being able to briefly access fresh air and return without having to explain.
 - **Allowing later start or earlier finish times** to provide additional time for treatments, hospital or GP appointments, if required, in accordance with the Council's Flexible Working Policy.
 - **Allowing early days-off** if officers feel unwell or experience severe bleeding.
 - **Updated start and finish times for the work-from-home option**, where daily tasks allow, to support officers in working more productively and managing the impact of their discomfort.
 - **Updates for Working Environment** may include:
 - **Facilitating an accessible working environment** by relocating a workstation closer to the toilet and drinking water units.
 - **Flexibility in work wear** to allow officers to use more comfortable clothing or fabrics while working.
 - **Providing additional temperature, ventilation and lighting controls** to allow officers to adjust heaters, fans or lighting as

needed and position themselves away from hot or cold spots in the office where they can get a breeze or have greater access to natural light.

- **Providing a quiet working environment** to support officer's focus and overall wellbeing.
- **Providing extra storage** for sanitary products and medicine.
- **Ergonomic adjustments** to ease joint pain and bodily discomfort.

- 10.7. Any absence or change to the working schedule must be agreed with the officer's line manager. Furthermore, any absence or change should be addressed in accordance with the Council's Absence Management Policy.
- 10.8. If an officer is experiencing sickness related to menopause symptoms and/or is unable to work, they must report their sickness immediately to their line manager or the HR & OD Manager, in the line manager's absence.

11. Failure to Comply with the Policy

- 11.1. While the Council encourages officers to report genuine concerns and support needs related to menopause, any officer who fails to follow the Council's procedures for reporting or confirming menopause-related sickness absence, or who misuses this policy (including providing false information about symptoms or abusing workplace adjustments), may be subject to a thorough investigation process, and treated as a serious matter. Where appropriate, and depending on the severity of the breach, the matter may lead to formal action under the Council's disciplinary or relevant conduct procedures.
- 11.2. In this case, the absence will be treated as unauthorised and will not be paid.

12. Further Support

- 12.1. Officers experiencing menopausal symptoms are encouraged to explore appropriate measures and options to help manage these symptoms effectively.
- 12.2. The Council therefore recommends external support channels to ensure that officers can access reliable information and guidance from accurate sources.
- 12.3. Officers can reach out to further support and contact through the following channels, which are as follows:
 - **NHS Information** to access useful and detailed information and guidance for individuals experiencing menopause or early

menopause <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/> or
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/early-or-premature-menopause/>
official website.

- **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidelines** to access guidelines on care and support offered to individuals by GPs at <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/> address
- **Menopause Matters** as the award-winning, independent website providing up-to-date, accurate information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms, and treatment options on the official <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/> website.
- **Women's Health Concern** as one of the charity organisations, aims to support women with their healthcare by providing unbiased, accurate information on its website, <https://www.womens-health-concern.org/>
- **Daisy Network** who provides information and support to women diagnosed with Premature Ovarian Insufficiency, also known as Premature Menopause by <https://daisynetwork.org/> official website.
- **The Menopause Exchange** as an independent advice service about the menopause, midlife and post-menopausal health. They send out a free quarterly newsletter with useful impartial help and support and it's accessible via <https://www.menopause-exchange.co.uk/> website.
- **My Menopause Doctor** aims to empower women with the information they need to make informed decisions about any treatment they may take to turn menopause into a positive experience that does not negatively impact their lives. Further information is available on the official <https://yourmenopausedoctor.co.uk/> website.



Seaford Town Council

Report No:	135/25
Agenda Item No:	6
Committee:	Personnel
Date:	06 January 2026
Title:	Review of the Staff Handbook
By:	Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
Purpose of Report:	To present the revised Staff Handbook for consideration by the Personnel Committee and recommendation to Full Council for adoption

Actions

The Committee is advised:

1. To review and discuss the Staff Handbook document presented with this report
2. To consider the proposal to disapply the Staff Handbook from being considered as a 'Policy', meaning that the document can be updated as required without the need to then refer this to Personnel Committee and Full Council for adoption.
3. To move to a vote on the motions below.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To recommend to Full Council the adoption of the updated Staff Handbook
3. To recommend to Full Council that, with immediate effect, the Staff Handbook is no longer to be treated or considered as a 'policy'.
4. To recommend to Full Council that ongoing delegated authority is granted to the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk to update the Staff Handbook as required.

1. Background

- 1.1** The introduction of the Deputy Town Clerk and the Policy & Risk Officer posts to the Town Council's staff structure was done, in part, to ensure dedicated and focussed work could be carried out, at pace, on the Town Council's suite of policies.
- 1.2** As such, a review of the Town Council's policy systems has recently been completed and the programme for policy reviews created.
- 1.3** A result of this programme of work will be more policy reviews coming through committees and Full Council for consideration, especially during the next two years as these officers work to review every individual policy.
- 1.4** As part of the recent system review, officers identified areas of risk with policies that were outdated or where required / advisable policies were not in place.

2. Information

- 2.1** A review of the Staff Handbook has been requested by the Personnel Committee, after noting that a number of policies did not align to the Staff Handbook.
- 2.2** Officers have worked on an updated Staff Handbook which is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.3** Whilst recommending that this is no longer considered a policy document, the policy format has been applied to this document – allowing for clear branding and ease of tracking version history, for example.
- 2.4** The intention is to provide a shorter more user-friendly handbook that provides an overview and references up to date policies directly via hyperlinks within the document. This is instead of the former version which, in some places, laid out a lot of detail about the policy lifted directly from the policy wording itself, and meant the document ran the risk of becoming out of date if the underlying policy was changed.
- 2.5** Officers believe that the Staff Handbook should no longer operate or be considered as a policy in its own right, and should instead become a reference document for employees signposting them to the relevant policies.
- 2.6** Officers are aware that with the review of policies coming forward at pace the Staff Handbook runs a real risk of becoming quickly out of date and

contradictory to the policies themselves. As an example, several HR-related policy updates appear elsewhere on this agenda.

- 2.7** By disapplying the Staff Handbook as a Policy this means it can be kept up to date at all times and link to the most up to date policies as they are updated and approved by Full Council. The alternative would mean officers needing to repeatedly revisit the Staff Handbook at Personnel Committee followed by Full Council each time an underlying policy changes. This is considered to be ineffective and a disproportionate waste of officers' and councillors' time.
- 2.8** For the assurance of councillors, officers propose to reference any changes to the Staff Handbook in the HR update report brought to each Personnel Committee, for committee to note.

3. Financial Appraisal

- 3.1** There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

4. Contact Officer

- 4.1** The Contact Officer for this report is Darryl Keech, Deputy Town Clerk & RFO.



SEAFORD
TOWN
COUNCIL



Staff Handbook

This Staff Handbook is a guide to Seaford Town Council's culture and sets out the expectations and practical procedures for all Town Council officers

"Working with our community to secure Seaford's best future"

Handbook Status

Version	0.2	Last Review Date	March 2019
Adopted Date	March 2019	Next Review Date	TBC
Review Period	TBC	Approving Body	Officers – with updates on changes reported to the Personnel Committee for noting

Version History

Date	Version	Approval	Status
March 2019	0.1	Full Council	Adopted

Related Policies and Other References

Policy Reference Code	Policy Name
C7	Health and Safety Policy
CE5	IT & Cyber Security Policy
CE7	Press and Media Policy
HRP2	Additional Hours Policy
HRP4	Appraisal Policy
HRP7	Disciplinary Policy
HRP8	Display Screen Equipment Policy
HRP9	Equal Opportunities Policy
HRP10	Family Leave Policy
HRP13	Grievance Policy
HRP17	Probationary Period Policy
HRP21	Sickness Absence Policy
HRP22	Expenses Policy
HRP23	Training and Development Policy

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1. Welcome note from Steve Quayle, Town Clerk

On behalf of Seaford Town Council, I am pleased to welcome you to the team. This handbook has been designed as a practical guide to support you in understanding your employment with the Council, the standards we uphold, and the policies and procedures that guide our work.

Seaford Town Council values its employees and recognises that our staff are fundamental to delivering high-quality services to the community. This handbook sets out the framework within which we work, promoting fairness, consistency, and transparency in all aspects of employment.

While this handbook provides an overview of key policies and practices, it is intended as a guide rather than a contractual document or a statement of policy. For more detailed information, reference is made to specific policies, which can be accessed via the hyperlinks provided.

I encourage you all to familiarise yourselves with its contents, as it will help you understand your responsibilities, your entitlements, and the support available to you. Together, we can continue to make Seaford Town Council an excellent place to work and a strong, trusted organisation for our community.

Steve



Seaford Town Council

2. Using the Staff Handbook

The Staff Handbook has been written to provide you with key information about Seaford Town Council (STC), our culture, and important details relating to your employment. The handbook includes links to Council policies and procedures, which all employees are expected to follow as part of the STC team.

While some policies are also referenced in your contract, the Staff Handbook itself is not part of your contract. The Council may update or amend the handbook at any time, and any changes will be communicated to all staff.

You are expected to read the handbook carefully. If you have any questions or require clarification, please speak with your line manager or the Town Clerk.

3. Thriving in your role at STC

Seaford Town Council is committed to ensuring that employees enjoy their work while achieving their full potential. We believe that a positive and motivated workforce delivers the high-quality services our residents rely on and this is central to our purpose.

To support this, we aim to provide excellent working conditions and a range of employee benefits, outlined below. We also encourage and empower staff to perform at their best and welcome suggestions on how we can continue to improve the workplace for everyone.

Your wellbeing and job satisfaction are important to us, and we want you to feel valued and enjoy coming to work each day.

4. Employee Benefits

The Council offers its employees a number of benefits which includes:

- Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), a defined benefit pension scheme which includes life insurance cover
- Time off in Lieu (TOIL) for extra hours worked

- Flexible working where possible
- Generous holiday entitlement
- Corporate membership rates at Wave Leisure
- Reduced price meals at The View, Seaford, with 20% discount on food, and 10% on drinks.
- Excellent working environment and conditions
- Free car parking, subject to availability of spaces
- Free uniform where applicable
- Access to free online training
- Availability of vocational qualifications where appropriate
- Free counselling service for all employees

5. Becoming part of STC

Induction

The Council is committed to providing you with all the support you need to settle into your role quickly and confidently.

Our induction programme will outline what to expect on your first day and subsequent weeks and months. During this time, you will meet your colleagues and receive important information about the Council, your terms and conditions of employment, relevant policies and procedures, and health and safety requirements.

Your manager will review the program with you as part of your induction therefore if there is anything you need to know about the Council or your role, please do not hesitate to ask your line manager.

Probationary period

On joining the Council, you will normally serve a six-month probationary period (unless stated otherwise in your contract). During this time, both you and your line manager will assess your suitability for the role.

Please refer to full policy [here](#). The ACAS Code on Disciplinary, Dismissal and Grievance Procedures do not apply during the probationary period.

Personal Details

To ensure we can support you, particularly in emergencies, it is essential that your personnel records are complete, accurate, and up to date in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Please notify the HR & OD Manager of any changes to your personal details or circumstances by completing the Change to Personal Details Form and emailing it to the HR & OD Manager.

Your personal information is treated confidentially and will not be shared with third parties without your consent. Personnel files are securely maintained by the HR & OD Manager and managed in line with the Council's Document Retention Policy.

Secondary Employment

The Council recognises that employees may have opportunities to work with other organisations. However, your role with the Council is considered your primary employment and should not be adversely affected by any additional work.

You must obtain written permission from the Town Clerk before undertaking any secondary paid employment. This approval may also be granted by the Council's Personnel Committee by resolution.

The Council reserves the right to ensure that any other employment you undertake does not conflict with your duties, the standards required in your role, or the proper performance of public office. Employees must also ensure that all work, including secondary employment, complies with the Working Time Regulations, to avoid exceeding the maximum weekly working hours or compromising rest periods.

6. Pay

Salary Scales

Seaford Town Council operates a salary scaling system, which will be clearly stated within your contract of employment. Any variations to this will be communicated to you appropriately. All job roles are independently assessed and graded by an external provider to ensure equal pay rates for equal roles across the organisation. This process is currently contracted to East Sussex County Council's Job Evaluation Team

Please refer to your contract for clarity.

Payment of salaries

Salaries are paid by BACS transfer on or by the 25th day of each calendar month or the final working day before 25th if this falls on a weekend or Bank Holiday. An individual payslip will be provided, detailing all elements of your pay and any deductions.

You are required to submit a monthly timesheet (Time, Attendance & Pay – TAP Form) to your line manager by the 15th of each month. This must include any additional hours worked, sickness absence, and/or TOIL, and be signed by both you and your line manager. Failure to submit your timesheet on time may result in underpayment of any overtime claimed, which may not be able to be corrected until the following payroll cycle.

Deductions from salaries

Seaford Town Council will make any deductions from your pay as required by law or as authorised by you in writing. In addition, the Council reserves the right to make salary adjustments to your pay where an overpayment has been made or in cases of malicious damage which could result in dismissal.

Pension Scheme

The Council offers all its employees access to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

A brief introduction to the LGPS is provided to you upon commencement of employment with STC or available upon request from either the Finance Manager or the HR & OD Manager.

In most cases, unless you opt out in writing, the Council is required by law to auto-enrol you in a workplace pension scheme. If you do not notify the Council of your wish to not opt-out before your first pay cycle, we will auto-enrol you into the LGPS scheme.

Hours of work

Your normal working hours are as stated in your contract. Although the Council does not encourage working beyond full-time hours, you will receive an opt-out form for the Working Time Regulations 1998, allowing you to work over the 48-hour weekly average at your discretion. For any shift of more than six hours, you must take at least a 30-minute unpaid rest break; this will be automatically deducted if not recorded on your monthly timesheet.

Time Off In Lieu

Where employees are authorised to work beyond their contractual hours, time off in lieu (TOIL) may be granted. Please refer to the Council's Additional Hours Policy [here](#) for details.

7. Holidays

Holiday entitlement

The Council provides at least 25 days of annual leave for all employees, in addition to public holidays per leave year (1 April – 31 March). Your exact entitlement depends on your contract type and your start date with STC, so please refer to your contract for details.

Unpaid leave is only approved in exceptional circumstances and must be authorised by the Town Clerk.

If you join the Council from another authority or qualifying public body, your previous service may be considered when calculating your holiday entitlement.

Holiday year

The holiday period runs between 1 April and 31 March. Annual leave should not be carried over to the next leave year unless specifically approved by your line manager, with a maximum of one week of leave being permitted to be carried over, unless approved in exceptional circumstances. Any untaken leave will be forfeited without such approval.

Public and Bank Holidays

Office-based employees receive all public holidays with pay, with pro-rata entitlement for part-time staff.

Golf Course employees are not automatically entitled to public or bank holidays but receive an equivalent allowance added to their annual leave, as outlined in their contract.

Holiday booking

All annual leave must be approved in advance by your line manager, taking organisational needs into account. Requests should be submitted as early as possible; legally, you must give at least twice the notice of the leave requested (e.g., 2 days' notice for 1 day off). If a request is refused, your line manager will provide timely notice and reasons. Please refer to your contract for details on holidays and contract termination.

Religious holidays

Seaford Town Council does not inquire about religion or discriminate against festival observances. Time off for these must be taken from your normal holiday entitlement.

8. Sickness Absence

Seaford Town Council is committed to employee wellbeing. If you are unwell, please follow the procedures outlined in the Sickness Absence Policy, which can be found [here](#).

9. Time off

Special Leave Arrangements

Compassionate leave may be granted for hardship or special circumstances, such as bereavement, funeral or serious illness of a close relative or dependent. While you should use annual leave for personal matters, additional leave beyond statutory entitlement may be approved at the Town Clerk's discretion. Each request is considered individually, and as much notice as possible should be given. Unpaid leave is generally only permitted in these exceptional circumstances.

Maternity, Paternity and Adoption

Seaford Town Council recognises this leave as an important time for parents. Please refer to the policy [here](#) for full details.

Time off to deal with a family emergency

All employees are entitled to reasonable unpaid leave or TOIL to deal with a dependant emergency, such as illness, injury, or care breakdown. You must notify your line manager as soon as possible.

Parental leave

To qualify for parental leave, you must have completed a year's service please see details in the policy [here](#).

Flexible working

Flexible working, available from the first day in the role, is a way of working that suits an employee's needs, for example having flexible start and finish times or working from home. To request for this, please email your line manager in the first instance, who will discuss with the HR & OD Manager to support the employee's request.

The Council has resolved that no officers should work from home for more than half their weekly working hours, except in special circumstances or due to temporary reasonable adjustments.

Time Off for Public Duties

Employees must inform the Council of any public positions when accepting a role or upon taking the position. Requests for time off for public duties may be granted with or without pay, at the Town Clerk's discretion, considering prior time off and organisational impact.

Employees are free to join a trade union. Recognised trade union representatives will be allowed reasonable paid time off to carry out industrial relations duties.

Studies/Training

The council is dedicated to developing its employees. The full Training and Development Policy can be found [here](#).

10. Supervision and Appraisal

Your line manager is responsible for coaching and guiding you. The appraisal policy provides key details on the employee appraisal process.

Please see the full policy [here](#).

11. Performance and Behaviour at Work

Conduct at Work

Employees are expected to always behave appropriately, including when representing the Council offsite or at external events. Professionalism and courtesy are essential, especially in customer-facing roles or when interacting with suppliers, contractors, councillors, and colleagues.

Any concerns about your conduct will be discussed by your line manager. If you have concerns about another employee, raise them with your line manager or HR & OD

Manager. Persistent or serious conduct issues may lead to the Council's Disciplinary Procedure being invoked following a thorough investigation.

Appearance

Seaford Town Council respects individual choice in appearance but expects employees to dress appropriately for their role and maintain good personal hygiene.

Golf Course staff must wear the correct uniform and name badge. Any Council-provided apparel must be worn when required and kept clean and presentable. Questions about appropriate dress should be directed to your line manager or the HR & OD Manager.

Council Premises

You may be issued with an identity badge or PIN for workplace access, which remains Council property. Any loss or accidental disclosure must be reported immediately to your line manager or the Town Clerk. Unauthorised persons must not be brought onto Council property without prior approval. If authorised, you are responsible for supervising visitors and ensuring they do not access restricted areas or property. Council property must not be removed from the premises without prior permission from your line manager.

Personal Property

Any personal property, including jewellery, cash, vehicles, or other valuables, left on Council premises or in Council vehicles is at your own risk. You are advised not to leave valuables unattended. Seaford Town Council accepts no liability for loss or damage to personal property.

Telephones and Correspondence

Council phones, mobiles, and postal services must not be used for personal purposes. Misuse may lead to disciplinary action.

Use of Computers

The Acceptable Use of Computer, Internet and email facilities can be found [here](#) and the Council's Display Screen Equipment policy is also available [here](#)

Data Protection and Confidentiality

The Council is responsible for safeguarding all personal data under the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Please see full policy [here](#)

Smoking

To ensure the health, safety, and comfort of employees and customers, the Council enforces a no-smoking policy, including electronic cigarettes. Smoking inside Council premises will be considered gross misconduct which may result in disciplinary action.

Consumption of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

The Council prohibits alcohol consumption and drug use or storage on its premises, and employees must not work under their influence. Breaches may result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal.

Professional Conduct and Public Statements

Employees must act in good faith, promote the Council's reputation, and always behave responsibly and trustworthily.

No employee may give media interviews or contribute to publications about the Council or its intellectual property without prior approval from the Town Clerk. See the Council's Press & Media Policy [here](#) for details.

Conflict of Interest

You must not engage in any outside business or activity that conflicts with your duties or the interests of Seaford Town Council. Any actual, apparent or potential conflict of interest must be reported immediately to the Town Clerk.

Conflicts may arise if an activity:

- Provides or receives products/services to/from the Council.
- Demands time that prevents you from fulfilling your Council responsibilities.
- Could negatively affect the Council's reputation.

If unsure whether an activity poses a conflict, discuss it with the Town Clerk.

Mobile Phones

To avoid disruption, personal mobile phones should only be used in emergencies and should be switched off or silenced during working hours. Work landline numbers may be provided to friends and family for emergency use.

Expenses

Seaford Town Council recognises that no member of staff, paid or unpaid, should be placed at financial disadvantage as a result of their work for the organisation. Please see the full policy [here](#).

12. Disciplinary Procedure

Seaford Town Council expects high standards of behaviour and performance from its employees. The Disciplinary Process can be found [here](#) which explains everything in more detail.

13. Grievance Policy

Seaford Town Council's aims to encourage its employees to have great relationship with both colleagues and line managers. Where this fails, there is a grievance process and policy [here](#) to address such matters.

14. Equal Opportunities

The policy of the Council is to promote equality, harmony and respect amongst individuals and to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation of all kinds. Please find the full policy [here](#).

15. Health and Safety

Seaford Town Council has a legal duty to protect the health and safety of its employees and others. Please refer to the full policy [here](#).

16. Termination of Employment

Termination

If you resign, you must give written notice as required in your contract. If the Council ends your employment, you will be notified in writing and pay in lieu of notice may be given in line with your contract.

The Council may place you on 'garden leave', during which you will not work but will retain all contractual benefits.

Retirement

The Council has no fixed retirement age. Regular appraisals provide an opportunity to discuss future plans, including retirement, if desired.

If you intend to retire, please try to inform your line manager at least six months in advance so necessary arrangements can be made.