



Grievance Policy and Procedure

Purpose and Scope

It is St Michael's Parochial Church Council's (PCC) intention to create an environment that promotes open communication, enabling free and informal discussion of any work related problems. Occasionally however, problems will arise which may only be resolved through a more formal process and this is outlined below in this Grievance procedure. It is also the church's intention to ensure that colleagues with a grievance relating to their employment can apply this procedure to help to resolve issues as quickly and as fairly as possible from the point of origin.

A grievance has been defined by ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) as 'a concern, problem or complaint that employees raise with their employers'. This policy applies to all permanent and temporary employees who have a grievance relating to their employment with the PCC of the Parish of Waddington.

Responsibilities

The Priest in Charge and the PCC have the responsibility to uphold the policy by:

- ensuring that they attempt to resolve informal grievances raised by employees and relating to the employee's employment, as quickly and as fairly as possible so as to avoid any unnecessary formal action
- ensuring that any grievances raised by employees which have failed to be resolved informally are resolved as quickly and as fairly as possible following the formal steps.
- informing colleagues of their right to be accompanied to any scheduled grievance hearings

Employees have the responsibility to adhere to the policy by:

- discussing any grievance that they may have relating to their employment in the first instance with their line manager or a member of the PCC as soon as is possible in an attempt to resolve the issue informally
- taking all reasonable steps to attend any scheduled grievance hearings
- identifying an accredited trade union representative (who will be required to provide the appropriate identification as such) or a work colleague to join them whilst attending any scheduled grievance hearings if they so wish.

Complaints and grievances against clergy are handled through the Clergy Discipline Measure. Complaints or grievances against clergy should be addressed to the archdeacon or the area bishop.

Complaints and grievances against licensed or commissioned ministers (e.g. Readers) are handled through a separate Diocesan procedure. These complaints or grievances should be addressed to the incumbent of the parish.

Procedure

Informal Discussions

If an employee feels that they have a grievance regarding their employment, they should discuss this in the first instance informally with their line manager or a member of the PCC. Hopefully the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage.

If, however, a complaint or grievance relates to or includes an allegation that a child or adult who may be vulnerable has been harmed or is at risk of harm, or that an adult or another child may have caused harm to a child or adult who may be vulnerable, it must be responded to through the Diocesan procedures for handling allegations of abuse.

If the complaint or grievance does not concern a child or adult who may be vulnerable, and the person bringing it is not satisfied with the outcome at the problem-solving stage, s/he may then invoke this formal procedure.

Step 1

- If an employee feels that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions then they should put their grievance in writing to the Rector.
- Should the grievance concern the Rector then the grievance should be raised in writing with another member of the clerical staff or a member of the PCC.

Step 2

- Before any grievance hearing it may be appropriate for the employee to attend an investigatory meeting where those investigating the grievance may discern further information from the employee. There is no right of accompaniment at an investigatory meeting. The investigatory meeting will not occur in lieu of a formal grievance meeting and no outcome will be determined at an investigatory meeting.
- The employee will be invited in writing to a grievance meeting and be given at least 48 hours' notice. The employee has the right to be accompanied to this hearing by an accredited trade union representative (who will be required to provide appropriate identification of such) or a work colleague. The letter of invitation to the meeting will notify them of this right. The meeting will be held by a panel of three members of the PCC. At least one of which will be a member of the clerical team or a churchwarden.
- After due consideration the panel will give the employee a decision in writing, where possible, within 5 working days of the formal meeting. The panel will inform the colleague of their right to appeal against this decision and the process to be followed.

Step 3

- An appeal may be conducted by the different members of the PCC who have not previously been involved in the process and may be chaired by the Rector (if the appeal is about the Rector then someone else). The employee will be invited in writing to the appeal meeting and be given at least 48 hours' notice. The employee has the right to be accompanied to this hearing by an accredited trade union representative (who will be required to provide appropriate identification of such) or a work colleague. The letter of invitation to the meeting will notify them of this right. The meeting will be held by a panel three members of the PCC.
- After due consideration the panel will give the colleague a decision in writing, where possible, within 5 working days of the formal meeting. This decision will be final with no further right of appeal.

Cross References

- Further useful information can be found on www.direct.gov.uk
- Further useful information can be found on www.acas.org.uk
- Disciplinary Policy

Approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Dea". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Date: January 2024