

## **Grievance Tips**

### ***First Steps – Informal Approach***

1. Try to spot any potential for grievances among your staff before they escalate – by discussing concerns with them on a regular basis via one to ones and catch ups.
2. If an issue does emerge, try to deal with it quickly by talking to the individual informally:
  - Identify what lies at the root of the problem and how the employee thinks the matter can be resolved.
  - Form a quick assessment of whether there is a valid grievance.
  - If you think it may be valid – think about what information you may need to gather and then address it.
3. Try to find a solution that satisfies the employee without causing disproportionate difficulty for the Council or the employee's colleagues.
4. Think whether mediation may be appropriate but you should try to resolve any issue yourself first - try to act as a mediator if necessary.
5. If you think the grievance isn't valid though, tell the employee that - but do explain their right to take it further if they want.

### ***Gathering Information***

6. For help on what sort of information you might be looking for about the grievance, check out section 8 in the managers' guidance.
7. For hints on interviewing witnesses look at section 9 in the managers' guidance.
8. If you think the issue might be too trivial, frivolous, vexatious or repetitive to properly regard as a grievance, talk to Advice & Support Team about how to approach it. Equally if you think the complaint made may be false or malicious, contact Advice & Support Team.

### ***Formal Meeting***

9. If you are attending a formal meeting about the grievance at stage 1:

- Get to know the issues as much as you can before you go into the meeting
- Remember that this is still a forum for discussion and dialogue to try to reach a resolution.

10. At the grievance meeting an important task is to try to distinguish between matters of fact and matters of opinion. See if there's any room for compromise and challenge anything you think you need to.

11. Where possible make the decision at the end of the meeting but, if you want to reflect further on the issues or gather some more information, you don't have to make an immediate decision. Tell the employee what you intend to do in this respect.

### ***Appeal Hearing***

12. If you are presenting the Council's case at an appeal hearing, you can use the template statement of case available on the website.