ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Grievance Policy 2026

1. Purpose

Andover Town Council (ATC) is committed to maintaining a fair, supportive and inclusive working environment. This policy provides a clear procedure for employees to raise concerns (grievances) and for those concerns to be addressed promptly, consistently, and fairly.

This policy follows the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, which sets the minimum standard expected in UK workplaces. [acas.org.uk], [acas.org.uk]

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2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All ATC employees (including part-time and temporary staff)

It does not apply to:

- Complaints about councillors (these must be dealt with via the Members' Code of Conduct and the principal authority)
- Public complaints (covered by the Council's Complaints Procedure)

This reflects established SLCC/NALC practice in local councils.

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3. What is a Grievance?

A grievance is a concern, problem or complaint raised by an employee about their work, working conditions, or relationships at work.

Examples include:

- Terms and conditions (pay, hours, leave)
- Health and safety concerns
- Bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Working relationships or management decisions
- Changes to working practices

Some issues such as harassment, may also fall under whistleblowing protections.

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1.1 (26)	1 July 2026		Policy and Resources	Annual
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4. Principles

ATC will:

- Encourage issues to be resolved informally where possible
- Handle all grievances promptly, fairly, and consistently
- Allow employees to be accompanied at formal meetings
- Ensure a full and impartial investigation
- Provide a written outcome and right of appeal

These are core requirements under the ACAS Code.

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5. Informal Resolution

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns informally in the first instance with:

- Their line manager, or
- The Town Clerk

Many workplace issues can be resolved quickly through informal discussion.

If informal resolution is not appropriate or unsuccessful, the formal procedure should be followed.

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6. Formal Grievance Procedure

Step 1: Submission of Grievance

- The grievance must be submitted in writing
- It should clearly outline:
    - The nature of the complaint
    - Relevant facts and dates
    - The desired resolution

The grievance should normally be sent to:

- Town Clerk, or
- Chair of Policy & Resources Committee (if the grievance involves the Clerk)

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Step 2: Acknowledgement

- Receipt will be acknowledged promptly
- A meeting will be arranged without unreasonable delay

Step 3: Investigation

- A fair and proportionate investigation will be carried out
- This may include:
    - Reviewing documents
    - Interviewing witnesses
- An independent person may be appointed where appropriate

Step 4: Grievance Meeting

- The employee will be invited to a formal meeting
- The employee has the right to be:
    - Accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative
- The meeting will:
    - Clarify the issues
    - Review evidence
    - Allow the employee to present their case

Step 5: Outcome

- A written decision will be provided, including:
    - Findings
    - Any actions to be taken
    - Reasons for the decision

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Step 6: Right of Appeal

- Employees may appeal in writing within 5–10 working days
- Appeals must state the grounds (e.g. new evidence, procedural issue)
- The appeal will be heard by:
    - A different manager or
    - Councillors not previously involved (e.g. Staffing Sub-Committee)
- A final written outcome will be issued

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7. Roles in ATC Context

Role	Responsibility
Town Clerk	Primary grievance manager
Chair of Policy & Resources	Oversight, escalation
Staffing Sub-Committee	Appeal hearings
Mayor/Chair of Council	Only involved where senior escalation required

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8. Confidentiality

All grievances will be handled sensitively. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

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9. Record Keeping

The Council will:

- Keep written records of grievances, investigations and outcomes
- Maintain records in accordance with GDPR requirements

Maintaining records is strongly recommended under ACAS guidance.

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10. Protection from Victimisation

Employees will not suffer any detriment for raising a genuine grievance.

This includes:

- Protection under discrimination law
- Protection where concerns qualify as whistleblowing

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11. Grievances During Disciplinary Process

If a grievance is raised during disciplinary proceedings:

- The Council may pause the disciplinary process or run both processes at the same time
- Each case will be considered on its merits

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12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually by the Policy & Resources Committee
- Updated in line with legislation, ACAS guidance and SLCC best practice