



DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

EPR 1 - Grievance

To be used in conjunction with the [People Policy Statement](#)

Employee Performance & Rewards (EPR)

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1. Purpose & Definition

- 1.1. This procedure has been developed in accordance with the principles of the [ACAS Code of Practice](#), specifically for dealing with grievance issues.

- 1.2. This procedure supports the Service’s commitment to fair working practice and gives staff the opportunity to raise and discuss individual employment issues, which may cause grievances. Examples include:
- interpretation or implementation of policy
 - Health and Safety
 - work relations
 - new working practices
 - working environment
 - equal opportunities and fairness.
- 1.2.1. This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive.
- 1.3. This procedure deals with any workplace related issue where there is not a separate and specific process in place. Where separate procedures exist for dealing with grievances on issues, these procedures should be used instead of the Grievance Procedure.
- 1.4. This procedure should only be used if a process or procedure itself has not been followed correctly.
- 1.5. This procedure is **not** intended for use where the grievance:
- involves a disciplinary issue; this will be dealt with in accordance with the [Disciplinary procedure](#).
 - involves a medical matter, which must be dealt with by an independent Medical Appeal Panel appointed by DWFRS and identified by the National Joint Council (NJC) for this purpose.
 - relates to an issue regarding salary grade, in which case refer to the [Pay & Grading procedure](#)
 - relates to pay over which DWFRS does not exercise discretion
 - relates to bullying and harassment; refer to the [Bullying and Harassment procedure](#).
 - covers any personal matter that is not directly related to conditions of service or the terms and conditions of DWFRS members of staff.
 - concerns management decisions which introduce new or change to existing policies or procedures as they will normally apply to more than one person and therefore are a collective matter. These issues should be pursued via the established negotiating mechanism between DWFRS and representative bodies.

2. Procedure Principles

2.1. Grievances

- 2.1.1. This procedure is designed to incorporate the principles of natural justice and good employment practices and operate in such a way that staff can expect fair

consideration, a consistent approach and for grievances to be dealt with in a timely manner.

- 2.1.2. These are applied to cover the following principles. Members of staff can:
- air their grievance without fear of retribution
 - state their grievance
 - be made aware of the nature of any accusations against them.
 - have the opportunity to state their case if allegations are made against them
 - consider their grievance is being treated seriously and in confidence.
- 2.1.3. All parties involved in a grievance meeting and/or subsequent meeting(s) will act in good faith.
- 2.1.4. The emphasis of this procedure is to reach a resolution and good communication and honesty are essential to its success.
- 2.1.5. This procedure must not be viewed as a means of questioning or reversing management decisions.
- 2.1.6. If a member of staff feels they have a genuine grievance, they should seek advice from their line manager, Trade Union Representative or HR Business Partner (HRBP). In most cases, where early advice is obtained and appropriate interventions agreed, it prevents a set of circumstances escalating and can significantly reduce any damage to staff/management relations.
- 2.1.7. It is not necessary for the person raising a grievance, or persons against whom a grievance might be lodged, to prove their position beyond all reasonable doubt. Often an issue centres on the perception of one person against another with little or no supporting evidence. Therefore, those considering the grievance will make reasonable decisions based on the specific circumstances of the case, giving the grievance careful consideration before responding.
- 2.1.8. Any member of staff can initiate this procedure, including those on short-term, fixed term, casual or temporary contracts including agency staff, or any other form of paid work. Consultants or contractors working at the request of DWFRS should seek advice from their line manager and refer to the Compliments and Complaints procedure if they want to lodge a complaint. Further advice can be sought from their HRBP.
- 2.1.9. Wherever possible, a grievance should be dealt with before a member of staff leaves employment of the Service. A modified grievance procedure may apply if the standard procedure has not been started or completed before the member of staff leaves and both parties give written consent to its use.
- 2.1.10. If a member of staff resigns and it is felt that their letter of resignation constitutes a grievance, this will be investigated.
- 2.1.11. At no time will any member of staff pursuing or participating in this procedure be challenged by management on related matters, unless there is clear evidence that their action is malicious. In such cases, consideration will be given to invoking the

[Disciplinary procedure](#). In all cases, initially the grievance will be dealt with informally before resorting to the formal stages of this procedure.

- 2.1.12. A written record is produced giving the outcome of all grievances and includes (where appropriate) conclusions and/or recommendations for action. A file will be held securely by HR Delivery for each grievance. These will be held in accordance with the Service's retention schedule and confidentially disposed of at the appropriate time.
- 2.1.13. All meetings required throughout this process will be conducted with respect and in accordance with Service [RESPECT values and behaviours](#).
- 2.2. **Management Authority**
- 2.2.1. This procedure recognises a manager's right to manage. The existence of this procedure does not remove or interfere with management responsibilities or a manager's authority to undertake or implement appropriately considered management decisions, interventions or actions.
- 2.2.2. Where clear cause for concern regarding the validity of a management decision is apparent at [Stage 2 – Formal Stage](#) of this procedure, the HR Case Manager will make immediate enquiries with the relevant line manager. This would be the exception and would only be considered if there was clear evidence in the submission that immediate intervention was necessary and warranted.
- 2.2.3. There is no right of 'status quo' under this procedure, for example, management decisions can be implemented even where these decisions are subject to further stages of this procedure. However, consideration will be given to delaying the implementation of change where the grievance involves difficulty in reconciling, for example, work and caring responsibilities.
- 2.3. **Scheme of Delegation**
- 2.3.1. To ensure a fair and consistent approach to all grievances, it is important that this procedure and related matters are dealt with by an HR Case Manager and investigated where appropriate. Investigating Officers will be trained to deal with grievance issues. For that reason, and to ensure all members of staff receive the statutory requirement set out in the [ACAS Code of Practice](#), it is expected that every grievance will be resolved using the [Scheme of Delegation](#).
- 2.4. **Time Limits**
- 2.4.1. A grievance should be raised in a timely manner and no longer than **three** months after the decision that adversely impacted upon the member of staff.
- 2.4.2. Grievances are dealt with as a matter of priority and completed without unreasonable delay. The Service will not allow continual delaying of time limits. Any time limits set out in this procedure may be varied by mutual agreement.
- 2.4.3. Where cases are not concluded within 28 days or expect to be concluded in the very near future, the HR Case Manager will carry out a mid-case review on a monthly basis thereafter to ensure the case stays on track.

2.5. **Disability or Additional Needs**

- 2.5.1. The Service is positive about supporting people with a disability. If the member of staff or their representative has a disability or additional needs which requires the Service to make reasonable adjustments, they should inform HR Services as soon as possible and in advance of any interviews or meetings so that reasonable adjustments can be made.

2.6. **Special Considerations**

- 2.6.1. If either the Service or the recognised Trades Union determine that the matter is a collective issue, it may be transferred to Stage 1 of the local negotiation procedure set out in the Scheme of Conditions of Service Sixth Edition.

2.7. **Culture and Management Style**

- 2.7.1. Grievances will normally be raised with the line manager. Grievances relating to issues such as allegations of bullying, harassment, racism or other unlawful discrimination, are managed under the appropriate procedure, such as [Respect at Work](#). The HR Case Manager will determine which process is the most appropriate.

2.8. **Risk Assessment before Suspension**

- 2.8.1. Before making the decision to suspend a member of staff, the HR Case Manager will carry out a risk assessment.
- 2.8.2. The decision to suspend is not a disciplinary sanction; it is used as a protective measure for parties involved with the grievance and for the Service. For example, in exceptional circumstances, where there is cause to believe the aggrieved or other involved parties may cause harm to others, themselves or the organisation, the line manager will make an early disclosure to the HR Case Manager who will determine any appropriate additional action, including suspension on full pay.

2.9. **Confidentiality**

- 2.9.1. All Grievance forms and any other papers, documents or accounts connected with a grievance issue will always be treated in confidence.
- 2.9.2. It must be accepted that in the process of resolving grievances, disclosure may be made to nominated individuals to ensure appropriate monitoring for training, development and performance/procedural issues.
- 2.9.3. If any person involved in this procedure fails to maintain reasonable confidentiality or seeks to unduly influence any party involved in the grievance, their action may be interpreted as harassment (particularly if this results in victimisation). This is considered as Gross Misconduct and will result in disciplinary action under the [Disciplinary procedure](#), not excluding dismissal.
- 2.9.4. All correspondence, including e-mails, relating to a grievance must be marked as Confidential.

2.10. Disclosure of Information

- 2.10.1. In accordance with [Information Security Management procedure](#), only information which is appropriate, and which can be disclosed at any time must be held by all involved parties.
- 2.10.2. Under the [Data Protection Act 1998](#), staff can request access to information about them that is held on file, whether manually or on computer. For example, if a member of staff is not satisfied with the outcome of a formal grievance, they may request copies of the written evidence on which the decision was made, which may also include statements obtained from witnesses. Members of staff who have had a grievance made them may also request evidence relating to the complaint.
- 2.10.3. Any request for access to this information should be sent in writing to the HR Case Manager in the first instance
- 2.10.4. The Service can refuse to disclose the document(s) in question if disclosure would also reveal information about a third party who can be identified from the information, unless the third party has consented to the disclosure, or it is reasonable in all the circumstances to comply with the request without their consent.
- 2.10.5. The Service will not automatically refuse to disclose a document if a third party, for example a colleague who has given a witness statement, does not consent to it being released. The Service will consider taking steps to anonymise the document before disclosing it, which might involve:
- blanking out (redacting) the witness's name and any other information from which they could be identified
 - editing the statement to conceal the identity of the witness
 - where there are several witness statements from different staff members, preparing a summary of the information contained in the statements.
- 2.10.6. In all cases, the Service will take a reasoned decision about whether it would be reasonable in the circumstances to disclose a witness statement or other document. This will involve balancing the witness's right to privacy against the member of staff's right to know what information is held about them and its source.

2.11. Malicious Complaints

- 2.11.1. There is no intention to deter any genuine grievance raised but the possibility exists whereby the procedure may be used maliciously. Where, after initial enquiries, this is perceived to be the case then this matter is referred to the HR Case Manager. This may lead to disciplinary action.
- 2.11.2. Use of this procedure (which is not malicious) will not prejudice current employment or future career prospects.

2.12. Involved Parties

- 2.12.1. Where a grievance is raised against an individual or group of individuals, they will be informed about the grievance and the issues raised as soon as practicable and

will be required to give their response to the issues raised as part of any investigation. They are regarded as **involved parties** throughout the process.

- 2.12.2. The need to inform the involved parties as soon as practicable will be the responsibility of the Line manager, HR Case Manager or Investigating Officer assigned to the case.

2.13. **Counter Claims/Allegations**

- 2.13.1. All related issues, counter claims/allegations from any of the involved parties may be dealt with as part of one investigation. A determination of this is made by the HR Case Manager. Attempts by those parties involved, to submit the same or intrinsically linked issues under a different procedure will not be accepted, other than in cases of malicious allegations which will be considered under the [Disciplinary procedure](#).

2.14. **Employment Tribunal**

- 2.14.1. This procedure is based on the [ACAS Code of Practice](#) and should a member of staff take their case to an Employment Tribunal, the Tribunal will expect to have seen an attempt at resolution through this grievance process prior to any application to it.

3. **General Duties and Responsibilities**

3.1. **All members of staff**

- 3.1.1. A copy of this procedure is issued to all new members of staff on induction and is available on the staff intranet (CONNECT). All members of staff should make sure they fully understand this procedure.
- 3.1.2. All members of staff must understand the distinction between this procedure and the [Disciplinary procedure](#). When an individual has a personal grievance or complaint against the Service or another member of staff, this procedure applies. If management considers that a member of members of staff has not met the accepted standards of behaviour, then the [Disciplinary procedure](#) applies.
- 3.1.3. This procedure also applies to members of staff due to leave and in certain circumstances, those who have left employment. It will not be possible in all cases for members of staff who have left employment to use the [Notification of Grievance Form](#) specifically indicating they are raising a 'grievance' or invoking the grievance procedure. Instead, a written submission may be made in its place. In such cases, the member of staff should consult with an HRBP.

3.2. **Line Managers**

- 3.2.1. Line managers should make sure they read the sections for all members of staff in addition to the following information.
- 3.2.2. In all normal circumstances line managers will be, responsible for:
- the application of this procedure at the [Stage 1 - Informal stage](#)
 - the application of this procedure at [Stage 2 – Formal Stage](#)

- consulting with an HRBP at the [Stage 2 – Formal Stage](#), to ensure fairness and consistency.

3.2.3. If a member of staff withdraws a grievance, a line manager must make sure:

- this is provided in writing and acknowledged
- that there are no unresolved issues that require further action
- all involved parties are advised of the withdrawal (if they had been previously notified of an intention to submit a grievance).

3.2.4. There are occasions when it is not appropriate for line managers to deal with the grievance at the informal stage, such as, in cases of bullying and harassment and/or if the grievance is a complaint against them. In these circumstances, the member of staff may raise the issue with the next level of line manager or with an HRBP.

3.3. **HR Case Manager**

3.3.1. The HR Case Manager is responsible for:

- making sure all grievances raised comply to the guidance set out in this procedure.
- at each formal stage of this procedure, providing confidential advice, support and guidance in the application of the procedure for each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency at all times.
- appointing an alternative officer with support from area teams to deal with a grievance if appropriate, for example, if a previous relationship/grievance exists.
- appointing an Investigating Officer within 5 days, where necessary, in line with the [Scheme of Delegation](#), to investigate and resolves grievances. The HR Case Manager may appoint an external Investigating Officer if this is considered appropriate.
- monitoring the use and effectiveness of this procedure and providing any necessary reports for management.
- determining any appropriate measures to be put in place prior to involved parties being informed of a grievance.
- determining any additional actions required surrounding involved parties.
- recommending action to be taken when a grievance relates to an alleged criminal or serious disciplinary offence.
- maintaining the Grievance procedure.

3.3.2. The HR Case Manager is not responsible for resolving or investigating issues raised under this procedure; that process should be carried out at the nearest appropriate level to where the grievance originates.

3.4. HR Delivery

3.4.1. HR Delivery will hold data in accordance with data protection legislation and make it accessible only to a small number of appropriate key management members of staff.

3.4.2. HR Delivery will:

- record and monitor all grievance cases in the Service to highlight:
 - type
 - frequency
 - outcome
 - any issues with discrimination.
- provide administrative assistance to managers and investigating officers during this procedure
- make sure all records are held securely and disposed of confidentially at the appropriate time
- liaise with the appropriate line manager/investigating officer over any decisions, including letter writing
- notify line managers within three months of an informal grievance being resolved to schedule and arrange a follow up meeting.

3.5. **HR Business Partners (HRBP's) will:**

- advise line managers on whether a formal grievance is accepted or rejected providing a justification and grounds for the grievance being accepted/rejected
- attend meetings with Investigating Officers (as required by the I/O)
- provide confidential advice, support and guidance in the application of the procedure for each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency at all times
- follow up any recommendations or actions.

4. How to raise a grievance

4.1. **The Grievance Procedure**

4.1.1. There are three stages to this procedure. Each stage and action under the procedure is taken without unreasonable delay from receipt of a [Notification of Grievance Form](#).

4.1.2. Normally grievances will be investigated by the line manager at the informal stage and the formal stage. Where this is not possible, or not appropriate, an Investigating Officer will be appointed. Management and staff representatives who may be involved in grievance matters are trained and familiar with the provision of this procedure and know how to conduct or represent at grievance hearings.

4.1.3. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to use a trained Investigating Officer external to the Service and the decision to do so will be made by the HR Case Manager.

4.2. **Stage One – Informal Stage**

4.2.1. In the first instance members of staff should raise all grievances relating to their employment by way of an informal discussion with their Line manager by submitting the [Notification of Grievance Form](#). If the grievance relates directly to their line manager, then they should raise the issue with that person's line manager.

4.2.2. The first course of action should always be a concerted effort to resolve the grievance through discussion without resorting to the [Stage 2 – Formal Stage](#) of this procedure.

4.2.3. The member of staff's line manager, or where applicable the next level of line management will arrange a stage one – informal grievance meeting to take place which will be an informal, confidential discussion (free from interruption) to discuss any issue(s) that concern the member of staff as soon as is practicable. The aim is to identify options for amicable resolution. They should encourage the member of staff to fully discuss the issue and ascertain what their expectations are to reach a reasonable outcome.

4.2.4. At this meeting the member of staff can request to be accompanied by a Trades Union Representative or member of DWFRS staff and they are encouraged to contact their Trade Union Representative at this initial stage.

4.2.5. The line manager is responsible for establishing the initial facts and background to the grievance, including establishing the reasons why specific decisions have been made.

4.2.6. Before any discussion, it is the line manager's (or next level of line management's where applicable) responsibility to make it clear that if any information comes to light of a serious nature, for example; issues which may involve the Police or criminal activity, or an issue requiring specialist advice, they will have to divulge this information to the HR Case Manager for guidance.

4.2.7. Both parties must be given adequate opportunity to explain their points of view.

4.2.8. Line managers are expected to make and retain their own notes regarding the informal stage one meeting which remain confidential. Line managers are required to sign the [Notification of Grievance form](#) to confirm that an informal meeting has taken place. Where there is insufficient evidence that such discussions have taken place, the [Notification of Grievance form](#) will be returned to the line manager's Manager. The member of staff will be advised to make their own confidential record.

4.3. **Outcome of Stage One Informal Grievance Meeting**

4.3.1. If the grievance is resolved in the stage one informal grievance meeting, the line manager will arrange a review meeting within 3 months of the informal meeting to ensure the resolution has been achieved.

4.3.2. If the grievance is not resolved in the stage one informal grievance meeting, or the member of staff is not satisfied with the response, their Line manager will advise them that [Stage 2 – Formal Stage](#) of this procedure can be activated. However, informal grievances should not be protracted and the member of staff must therefore submit [Notification of Grievance Form](#) within one month of the informal stage should they wish to proceed to a formal investigation.

4.4. **Withdrawing a Grievance**

4.4.1. If the member of staff wishes to withdraw their grievance, they must confirm this in writing to the line manager or the Investigating Officer.

4.5. **Stage Two – Formal Stage**

4.5.1. A formal grievance must be set out in writing using the [Notification of Grievance form](#). The member of staff's submitted statement should clearly set out a summary of the issue with a detailed description of events relating to the grievance (if appropriate). All information should be clear and legible.

4.5.2. This must be sent to the line manager who the member of staff held the informal stage one meeting with along with a record of the stage one informal meeting notes, and any supporting evidence/ information. The member of staff should retain a copy for their reference.

4.5.3. The information will be sent to the next level of line management and HRBP to decide whether the formal grievance will be accepted or rejected.

4.6. **Stage Two Formal Stage Grievance Rejected**

4.6.1. If the grievance is rejected by the next level of line management in liaison with HRBP, the member of staff will be notified in writing by an HRBP, clearly setting out the reason(s) for rejection. In cases of rejection, the member of staff will not normally be required to attend a grievance resolution meeting.

4.7. **Stage Two Formal Stage Grievance Accepted**

4.7.1. If the grievance is accepted by the next level of line management in liaison with HRBP, the member of staff will be notified in writing by HR Delivery and the HR Case Manager will arrange for an Investigating Officer to be appointed.

4.8. **Stage Two - Formal Grievance Process and Meeting**

4.8.1. After reviewing initial findings and the written submission, HR Delivery will arrange for the Investigating Officer to interview other parties involved (particularly those identified in the written submission) as necessary.

4.8.2. The Investigating Officer will take a written account (or audio recording) from the involved parties or witnesses and ensure any such notes are held in strict confidence.

4.8.3. If the Investigating Officer cannot obtain these notes due to extenuating circumstances, such as annual leave or sickness absence, this should not delay the process unreasonably.

- 4.8.4. If the facts of the grievance are not clear after the initial investigation by the Investigating Officer and further evidence needs to be gathered and witness accounts taken, then involved parties are notified of potential delays.
- 4.8.5. The Investigating Officer will maintain regular contact with the member of staff and the HR Case Manager throughout the investigation.
- 4.8.6. When the Investigating Officer has completed the investigation, HR Delivery will write to the member of staff and/or other involved parties, including witnesses, to invite them to a stage two resolution grievance meeting. All parties must make all reasonable efforts to attend any meetings where required.
- 4.8.7. The grievance resolution meeting will be chaired by the Investigating Officer and an HRBP may attend in an advisory capacity if deemed necessary by the I/O. An audio recording of the meeting will be made.
- 4.8.8. The member of staff will be given the opportunity to explain their grievance and state how they feel the issue may be best resolved. They will be asked to explain their grievance as stated in their original [Notification of Grievance Form](#) and present any evidence without interruption.
- 4.8.9. The Investigating Officer will then set out DWFRS's position on the issue in question.
- 4.8.10. Both sides will then ask questions of each other and discuss the issue(s).
- 4.8.11. If a point is reached in the meeting where it is not clear how to deal with the grievance or if further investigations are necessary, the Investigating Officer will adjourn the meeting to obtain advice from the HRBP or make further enquires.
- 4.8.12. The Investigating Officer will reconvene the meeting with the member of staff and their representative as soon as possible.
- 4.8.13. If a judgement is required, this is determined by the Investigating Officer. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity to air issues not necessarily to prove them.
- 4.9. **Outcome of the Stage Two Formal Grievance Meeting**
 - 4.9.1. The Investigating Officer will make reasonable decisions based on the specific circumstances of the case and give the grievance careful consideration before responding.
 - 4.9.2. After a Grievance meeting, the panel's findings are confirmed to the member of staff in writing explaining the reason for the decision and any action required by either party.
 - 4.9.3. If the grievance is upheld, HR Delivery will write to the member of staff setting out the panel's findings, the reason for the decision, and any action required by either party. The member of staff can have a copy of the recording of the meeting on request.
 - 4.9.4. If the grievance is not upheld, HR Delivery will write to the member of staff setting out the findings of the grievance resolution meeting, the reason for the decision,

and any action required by either party. The member of staff will also receive a copy of the recording of the meeting.

4.10. **Stage 3 – The Appeal Stage**

- 4.10.1. If the member of staff is dissatisfied with the outcome at [Stage 2 - Formal Stage](#), they may appeal within ten days in writing to the HR Case Manager stating their reasons for the appeal.
- 4.10.2. **Please note, no new evidence or information will be considered at this stage and only initial submissions will be considered as part of any appeal process.**
- 4.10.3. Upon notification of an intention to appeal, HR Delivery will write to acknowledge the appeal.
- 4.10.4. The HR Case Manager will arrange for an independent manager to carry out an initial desk top review of the original decision.
- 4.10.5. The member of staff will be invited to attend the Appeal and they must take all reasonable steps to attend. They will be given a date, time and location of the meeting and informed of their right to be accompanied by a Trades Union representative or member of staff.
- 4.10.6. The HR Case Manager will form the Appeal Panel based on the [Scheme of Delegation](#). When convening a Panel, the HR Case Manager takes into consideration the parties involved, the issues under consideration, as well as the availability and need for specialist advice.
- 4.10.7. The Appeal Panel will consist of:
 - the Chair appointed by the HR Case Manager
 - a member of HR (where deemed necessary)
 - an optional third member, appointed by HR Case Manager, if appropriate for example, a specialist.
- 4.10.8. The Chair of the Panel will reach a decision based on the presentation of the facts and after consultation with the member of HR or other relevant specialist.
- 4.10.9. The Appeal Panel will consider all previously submitted evidence, as well as verbal submissions at the Appeal meeting.
- 4.10.10. It is not the intention that Appeal meetings should consider new evidence but, if the member of staff indicates new evidence is available and can provide a compelling reason why this could not be previously submitted at [Stage 1 – Informal Stage](#) or [Stage 2 – Formal Stage](#), the Appeal Panel will consider the following:
 - the reason(s) the new evidence was not previously available
 - does the new evidence make it likely that the line manager or Investigating Officer would have formulated a substantially different resolution?

- If no, then for purposes of expediency, considering all the circumstances and the effects of delay on the parties concerned, it would be appropriate to determine a resolution at the Appeal Stage
- If yes, the issue should be referred back to the line manager or Investigating Officer to consider the new evidence.

4.10.11. After the Appeal meeting, the Panel's findings and decisions will be conveyed to the member of staff in writing following the conclusion of the meeting and no later than seven days after the decision is reached.

4.10.12. The Appeal decision may be to uphold the original resolution or provide an alternative resolution. There will be no further right to appeal following the outcome of the appeal.

4.11. **Accompaniment**

4.11.1. Members of staff have a statutory right to be accompanied by a companion at a grievance meeting which deals with a complaint about a duty owed by the employer to the staff member. This would apply where the complaint is, for example, that DWFRS is not honouring an employee's contract, or is in breach of legislation. The companion may be:

- a fellow member of DWFRS staff
- an official employed by a trade union (recognised by DWFRS)
- a workplace trade union representative, as long as they have been certified in writing by their union having had experience.

4.11.2. This right applies if a reasonable request has been made to be accompanied by a companion. DWFRS will consider each request individually to assess whether it is accepted as reasonable.

4.11.3. If the member of staff wishes to make a reasonable request to be accompanied, they will need to provide DWFRS with the name of the companion, and clarify if they are a colleague, trade union representative, or trade union official. They will also need to allow enough time for DWFRS to make the necessary arrangements to allow the companion to attend the meeting.

4.11.4. If the companion is not available to attend the meeting, the member of staff may request for the meeting to be postponed provided that the alternative time is reasonable and not more than five working days after the original meeting date.

4.11.5. There is no statutory right for the member of staff to defer further, although where practicable, reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate such requests. If the delay is regarded as being unreasonable, it is at the discretion of the HR Case Manager to proceed without representation.

4.11.6. Members of staff are encouraged to consider practicalities when selecting their companion, for example, they may choose a companion who is willing and available on site, rather than somebody at a geographically remote location.

4.11.7. If the member of staff makes a reasonable request to be accompanied, their companion can attend and address the grievance meeting in order to:

- respond on the member of staff's behalf to any views expressed at the meeting
- confer with the member of staff during the meeting.

4.11.8. The companion does not have the right to answer questions on the member of staff's behalf.

4.11.9. The member of staff may wish to seek help with setting out their grievance, for example, from representatives of Trades Unions.

4.11.10. At no stage in this procedure will persons acting in a professional capacity, such as a solicitor, take part in grievance proceedings except in very exceptional circumstances. If a member of staff wishes to make such a request, they must contact the HR Case Manager This also applies to the appeal meeting process.

5. Monitoring & Assurance

5.1.1. Any performance, management or training issues raised through this procedure will be recorded and fed into continuous training and development programmes.

5.1.2. To ensure that the Service is professional, ethical and effective, any performance, management and training issues raised through this procedure are captured and fed into continuous training and development programmes.

6. Document Reference

6.1. Supporting Information References

[ACAS Code of Conduct - Discipline & Grievances at Work](#)

[Grievance Scheme of Delegation](#)

[Respect Framework](#)

[Data Protection Act 1998](#)

6.2. Forms

[HR049 – Grievance Investigation Report](#)

[HR050 – Notification of Grievance Form](#)

6.3. Document References:

[EPR 2 – Disciplinary Procedure](#)

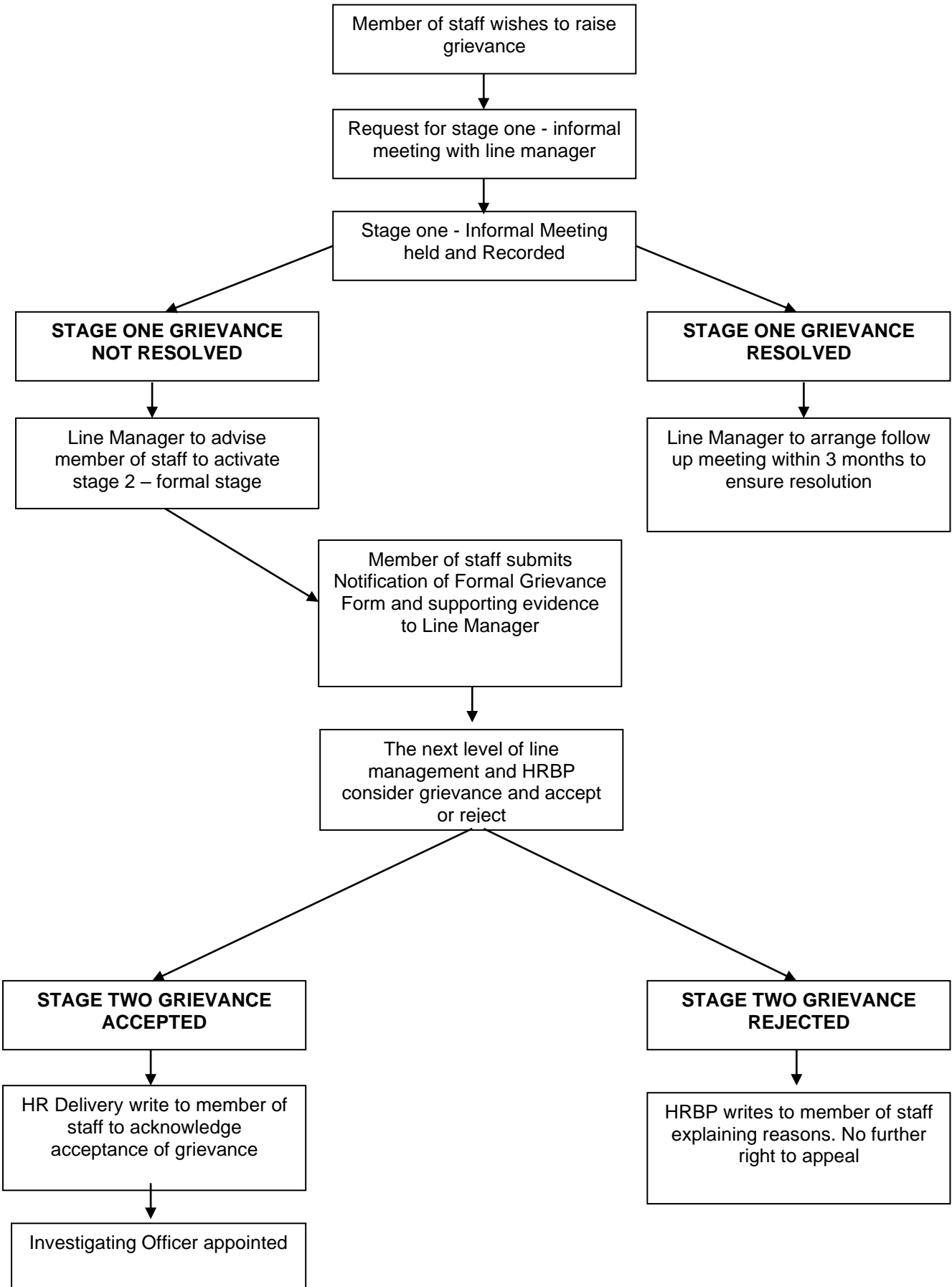
[EPR 9 – Pay & Grading – Corporate staff](#)

[HW 1 – Bullying & Harassment](#)

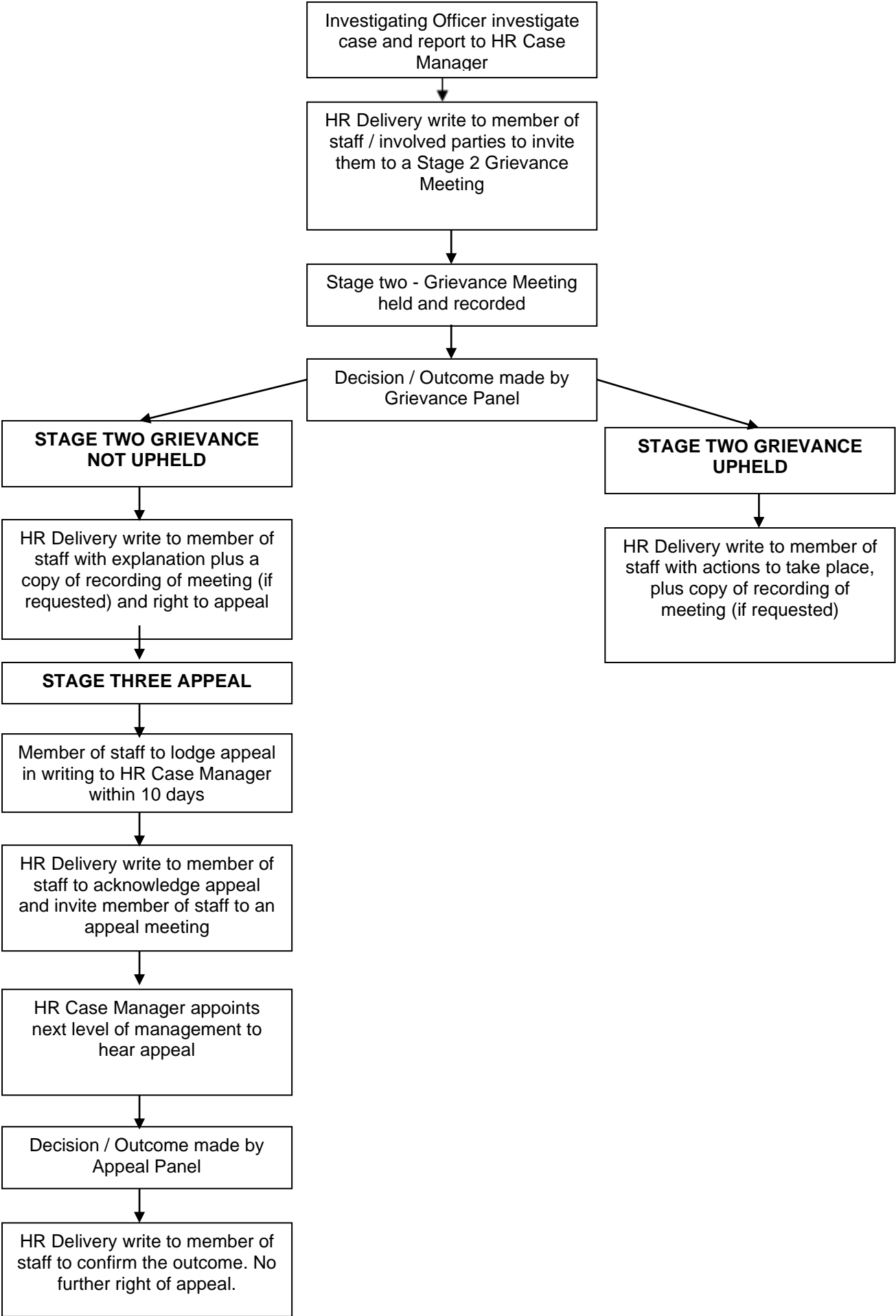
[IM 4 – Compliments & Complaints](#)

[IM 16 - Information Security Management Procedure](#)

Grievance Procedure Flowchart



Grievance Procedure Flowchart (Continued)



7. Document Management

Policy Statement Reference: People			
Owner:	Review Date:	Author:	Status:
Carol Swan	01/07/2022	Carol Swan	Published

7.1. Version Control:

Version:	Page & Par Ref:	Date:	Changes Made:	Authorised By:
V8.0	Page 1	20/05/2020	<p>Changed Title of procedure to Grievance.</p> <p>Jo Lock to gradually update the relevant HR procedures with the new Grievance link</p> <p>Via Weekly Updates news, advise staff of the new link and where applicable, they need to update the link within their procedure(s) – repeat on Weekly Update news for 3 consecutive weeks.</p>	Tonya Saben / Carol Swan / Jo Lock
V7.0	Entire document	12/05/2020	Final check prior to publication.	Tonya Saben
V6.1	Entire procedure	31/10/2019	<p>Terminology changed: Senior Point of Contact (SPOC) and replaced with HR Case Managers</p> <p>Timescales updated - Appointment of investigating officer to be appointed within 5 days</p> <p>Mid case reviews updated to every 28 days instead of every six weeks</p> <p>Responsibilities for HRBPs amended</p> <p>Grammatical changes throughout</p>	Carol Swan
V6.0	Entire procedure	25/06/2018	Review of procedure to remove the 2 nd appeal	Felicity Williams/ Carol

			stage from the process and update sequence of procedure.	Swan
V5.0	Page 1 &19	18/06/2018	Updated Policy reference in accordance to new framework.	Tonya Saben
V4.0	Page 10/ 4.4 Page 18/ 7	02/11/2017	Updated informal and formal stages process and process flowchart to clarify who does what in the process. Added Policy Statement to first page as original did not have.	Felicity Williams / Tonya Saben
V 3.0	Entire document	26/10/2016	Added supporting information and forms and flowchart. Added hyperlinks to relevant procedures	Felicity Williams
V2.0	Page 1 Page 17 / 6.3 Page 17 / 6.32	03/06/2016	Added link to EPR Policy. Added Section 6.3. Completed links where available.	Tonya Saben
V1.0	Final published document	01/04/2016	First draft of entire document created for combined fire authority.	Carol Swan

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