



MANAGING ATTENDANCE POLICY

Adopted by Brixton Parish Council – 26th February 2025

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This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis

Next Review – January 2027

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Brixton Parish Council Managing Attendance Policy

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Scope of policy

This policy applies to all staff employed by Brixton Parish Council.

It should be read in conjunction with other policies that may be relevant.

Introduction

BPC is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment and to supporting its employees to be present at work wherever possible.

BPC is further committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that staff health and well-being issues and any associated factors in the working environment are identified and addressed at an early stage.

The absence of staff due to sickness can have a direct impact upon the ability of BPC to deliver high quality services to its customers and communities and can have a negative impact on the well-being of colleagues faced with potentially increased workloads. It is therefore important that attendance at work is managed effectively.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of the policy are to:

- Acknowledge that good attendance is valued and is a major contributor to excellent service delivery to customer and communities
- Effectively manage non-attendance due to sickness in a responsible, consistent and fair manner
- Ensure support for staff who are experiencing ill health whilst minimising absence levels and their impact on service delivery and colleagues
- Provide Chair and Vice Chair with a framework for pro-actively dealing with sickness absence
- Encourage open communication between councillors and staff.
- Ensure all staff are fully aware of their obligations (including reporting requirements) both under the provisions of this policy and their terms and conditions of employment.
- Identify at an early stage any occupational health issues, whether relating to an individual or a workplace.

Work / Life Balance

- BPC is committed to ensuring, as far as is reasonably possible, that staff are able to manage their work/life balance effectively.
- In addition to flexible working through different contractual arrangements BPC have policies designed to address situations that can arise as part of everyday life (e.g. looking after dependents and compassionate leave). More information about flexible working, can be found in the flexible working policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Chair and Vice Chair have a strategic responsibility to ensure that appropriate conditions at work exist to ensure health, safety and well-being of the workforce and to ensure that employees are able to maintain regular attendance.

The Chair and Vice Chair are responsible for managing absenteeism and for treating employees who are unfit to work in a sensitive, fair and consistent manner and are expected to:

- Ensure that employees are aware of the notification and, where appropriate, certification procedures for absences of any kind.
- Ensure that accurate absence records are kept safely and securely for each employee, and that records are correct regarding sickness absence
- Deal immediately, fairly and sensitively with employees when they are unfit to work and providing support to encourage attendance.
- Maintain regular and appropriate contact with employees who are absent, especially those long-term sick.
- Conduct Return to Work meetings and, where appropriate, further meetings with employees in accordance with the Managing Attendance policy and associated procedures.
- Identify wherever possible any early warning signs that might prevent absence e.g. stress, safety incidents.
- Ensure that temporary / reasonable adjustments to working arrangements implemented as a supportive measure are properly documented and reviewed on a regular basis with
- Promote wellbeing and managing workloads.
- Not knowingly abuse or misuse the Managing Attendance procedures or sick pay schemes.

Employees are expected to:

- Take all reasonable steps to keep themselves in a good standard of general health and attend work unless unfit to do so.
- Raise concerns with the Chair and Vice Chair if they believe their job is making them ill or they believe there are health and safety concerns which may affect them, their co-workers or others.
- Report sickness absences promptly in accordance with the Managing Attendance procedure.
- Ensure the appropriate certifications are completed
- Maintain any agreed contact with the Chair and Vice Chair during periods of sickness absence.
- Communicate as effectively as possible in the circumstances with the Chair and Vice Chair about their sickness absence.
- Ensure that medical advice and treatment, where appropriate, is accessed as quickly as possible in order to facilitate a return to work.
- Not knowingly abuse the Managing Attendance procedures or sick pay schemes.

Reporting Arrangements

See Brixton Parish Council Sickness Absence Policy

Return to Work Interview

See Brixton Parish Council Sickness Absence Policy

Managing Short Term, Frequent and Persistent Absence

Absence levels are monitored on an ongoing basis. A 'trigger' level is the point at which sickness absence may become a cause for concern and may trigger management action starting with an Attendance Review meeting. The Bradford Factor will be one factor used to calculate a trigger level.

Consideration of whether to call an Attendance Review meeting should be given under the following circumstances:

- Where an employee's Bradford Factor is higher than the Council's trigger point which is reviewed annually.
- Where an employee's instances of absences exceeds the level the Councils consider unreasonable or unacceptable

Managers may take action before trigger levels are reached, for instance where a number of absences occur within a short period of time or where an unusual pattern of absences is noticed

The use of triggers is be recorded and monitored by the Chair and Vice Chair to ensure consistency and fairness.

Attendance Review Meeting

When any of the above triggers are reached, a meeting will be held with the employee to:

- Consider the employee's absence record
- Explore the reasons for absence
- Identify areas of concern and agree targets for improvement in attendance and specify what further action may be taken if improvement targets are not met
- Consider what support can be given and what actions the employee can take and commit to
- Consider whether the employee is a disabled person within the meaning in the Equality Act and whether any reasonable adjustments can be considered to mitigate against a provision, criterion or practice that puts them at a substantial disadvantage (see below)
- Consider whether to make a referral to obtain further advice
- Review / update the risk assessment (where appropriate) and address any health and safety factors
- Consider any other information or proposed actions which may be relevant.

Following the Attendance Review Meeting

The Chair and Vice Chair can:

- Decide that no further action is required at this stage
- Set a target for improvement in attendance within an agreed timescale that will normally not exceed three months, taking into consideration any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made and the timescales of the implementation of these reasonable adjustments.
- Agree and arrange reasonable adjustments, such as changes to the workload, work practices or work patterns. These arrangements may be temporary or permanent
- Require the employee to submit a medical certificate for every instance of future absence for a specified period.

The Chair will write to the employee within five working days of the Attendance Review meeting confirming the points discussed, actions agreed and the timescale for a follow up meeting. A copy of this letter should be placed on the employee's personal file.

The Chair and Vice Chair will carry out the follow-up meeting as agreed or earlier if there is evidence that attendance is deteriorating or not improving. In the event of insufficient improvement in attendance during the review period, the matter may be referred to the formal stages.

Reasonable adjustments

Where the employee is a disabled person within the meaning in the Equality Act, the Council will consider any reasonable adjustments that can be made to mitigate against a provision, criterion or practice that puts them at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to those not disabled.

Formal Stages

This would be referred to DALC for advice

The formal stages consist of Stage 1 Attendance Meetings and Stage 2 Capability Hearing.

Dismissal on Capability Grounds

Where it is considered that there is no prospect of a return to work within a reasonable timeframe, the Council should give consideration to dismissing the employee with notice on the grounds of ill health capability. In such an instance, the employee will be notified of the possibility of dismissal and given a time frame within which such a decision will be taken.

At this stage all advice would be taken from DALC and NALC before proceeding

Suspension from Sickness Scheme

The National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (The Green Book) provides that if an employee abuses the sickness scheme or is absent on account of sickness due, or attributable to, deliberate conduct prejudicial to recovery or the employee's own misconduct or neglect they may be suspended from the sickness scheme.

Examples could include absences linked to weekends, cases where attendance improves until out of the procedure and then immediately gets worse or in the case of long term absence, the employee returns long enough to re-qualify for sick pay and then goes absent again.

In exceptional circumstances such suspension may be implemented and this would normally take place at an Attendance Review Meeting of the short term procedure or after a formal meeting

Where suspension is implemented, the period that it applies to will be clearly specified and it will be kept under review.

Appeals

Employees have the right to appeal against a decision to dismiss on the grounds of capability. Appeals will be conducted in accordance with the Councils' Disciplinary Policy and this will be explained at the meeting and in the written confirmation.

Terminal Illness

Where an employee is diagnosed as terminally ill, immediate discussion must take place between with Chair and Vice Chair to determine the next steps to achieve the best course of action to support the employee.

General Notes

Where sickness or illness is referred to this shall include any injury or medical condition causing absence or inability to carry out normal duties.

Where examples, including lists, are given these are intended to illustrate typical circumstances and are not exhaustive or exclusive.