

# **THE COAL AUTHORITY**

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The purpose of this Grievance Procedure is to enable staff to air any concerns that they may have about practices, policies or treatment from other individuals at work, and to produce a speedy resolution where genuine problems exist.

Although it may not be possible to solve all problems to everyone's complete satisfaction, this policy forms an undertaking by the Authority that it will deal objectively and constructively with all employee grievances, and that anyone who decided to use the procedure may do so with the confidence that their problem will be dealt with fairly.

This grievance procedure is not a substitute for good day to day communication in the Authority where employees are encouraged to discuss and resolve daily working issues in a supportive atmosphere. Many problems can be solved on an informal basis if all employees are prepared to keep the channels of communication between themselves open and working well. This procedure is designed to deal with those issues, which need to be approached on a more formal basis so that every route to a satisfactory solution can be explored, and any decisions reached are binding.

Employees are reminded that this procedure is independent of any appeals procedure which exists within the Authority's formal disciplinary procedure. This procedure does not affect any statutory rights.

You are reminded that a trade union representative or colleague of your choice may accompany you at any stage in this procedure. Your companion may address the meeting and confer with you during it, but may not answer questions on your behalf. Every effort will be made to convene meetings at a time which is convenient for you and your companion to attend. If this means that the meeting cannot be held within a reasonable period, (usually within five working days of the original date set) you can be asked to make arrangements to be accompanied by another companion who is available to attend.

All records of meetings and decisions will be made available to representatives if requested.

### **Informal Procedure**

In the first instance, if any matter concerning policy, procedure or your dealings with other individuals, causes you concern, you should approach your immediate manager, who should normally arrange a meeting with you within two working days of your request to see them.

In certain circumstances, where you believe that your immediate manager is a part of the problem raised in your grievance, you should approach the next

level of management or the Human Resources Department who will escalate the matter to that level on your behalf.

The first meeting will be an exploratory discussion and you may decide that your problem can be addressed at this point. Alternatively, you may wish to make your grievance formal.

A written record of all formal grievance meetings will be made and you will receive a copy of this including any note of any decision reached, within five working days of the date the meeting was held.

### **Formal Procedure**

If the matter cannot be resolved to your satisfaction at the informal stage, you should raise the matter in writing with the Human Resources Department. This request must be made within five working days of the written record of the initial meeting and any decision reached being communicated to you.

A meeting will be arranged within five working days of receipt of your written request and every effort will be made to resolve the issue at this point.

### **Appeal**

If as a result of the investigation you are still dissatisfied, you may appeal to the Chief Executive in writing within five working days. The Chief Executive will consider the matter put to him/her and in doing so may seek advice from third parties. The Chief Executive will be expected to reply within a further seven working days, if reasonably practicable. This will be the final stage of the procedure.

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