Staff Handbook

This Handbook is designed to give an overview of what is expected of you whilst working for Middlesbrough Council and to give a brief outline of some of the policies and procedures that affect your employment. It provides information on the benefits available to you as an employee and details the support you can access. The policies and procedures are available on the intranet or through your line manager.

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Message from the Chief Executive

We have creative and ambitious plans to deliver the Mayor’s vision that are aimed at enhancing Middlesbrough’s reputation and improving the lives of those who choose to live here. The quality of our staff and ensuring that we have modern working practices and communication are at the heart of all plans. Great leadership that provides a work environment that helps staff flourish and be the best they can be is therefore critical to our success.

Our culture is one of empowerment, where staff have the ability to make decisions with accountability and responsibility for delivery placed in their hands. Our approach will be underpinned by a set of Values that provide the blueprint for how we behave. They are:

- Passion;
- Creativity;
- Collaboration;
- Focus; and
- Integrity.

By taking personal responsibility for our actions, seeking better ways to achieve the outcomes that deliver the Mayor’s vision, and by having a customer focused ethos, we will continue to drive to deliver the best services we can.

Our People Strategy is a key enabler in achieving our goals. It clearly sets out and defines how our staff will be equipped to help us deliver. By focusing on the five critical areas outlined in this strategy, we will ensure we have a skilled, highly motivated and diverse workforce with a robust talent pipeline.
Section 1 - OUR VISION AND VALUES

Mayor’s Vision

‘Fairer, Safer, Stronger’

We are all responsible for supporting the delivery of the Mayor’s Vision ‘Middlesbrough 2025’ – to make Middlesbrough a fairer, safer and stronger place to live and work. It is important that you take time to read this document carefully and consider how your role contributes to the delivery of the vision.

The vision will be delivered through 3 key priorities of Social Regeneration, Physical Regeneration and delivering our Business Imperatives

Underpinning these are our organisational values which are: Passion; Creativity; Collaboration; Focus, and Integrity.

Our plans for Middlesbrough and its people are creative and ambitious and we all have an important part to play in delivering these plans to achieve the Mayor’s Vision. Our Values which are a critical element of our strategy to create a brighter future for Middlesbrough. Our Values will be at the heart of everything we do and will be the foundation for how we operate, behave and make decisions.

Our Values:
Equality and Inclusion
As a community leader, the Council encourages and supports equality and inclusion in all our policies, practices and decision-making processes. As an employer we will:

- ensure we have due regard for the Equality Act 2010;
- provide fair access to employment, promotion, recruitment, selection and training opportunities; and
- prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation and deal with it effectively if it does occur.

We have an Equality and Inclusion Group that meets regularly. From this separate working groups will focus on different aspects of equality and inclusion to continuously improve our workplace.

Our Dignity and Respect at Work Policy means you must treat colleagues with dignity and respect at work and equally you should expect to be treated with the same dignity and respect yourself. As an employer, we will not tolerate any bullying or harassment and have provided Contact Officers, who can give you impartial information and guidance in confidence. You can arrange to speak in confidence to a Contact Officer on 01642 727424.

Behaviours and Standards
We expect you to have the highest ethical standards whilst working for us and carrying out your role. This includes complying with any legislation, following all our policies and procedures and acting professionally in all your dealings with your colleagues, customers and anyone else you come in contact with as part of your role. Some important policies include;

- **Code of Conduct** - This sets out the expected standards of behaviour for all our employees, in and out of the workplace, and how to deal with any potential conflict of interest that may cause damage to the Council’s reputation.

- **Social Media** - We recognise that Social Media is part of everyday life, however, whilst working for us we expect you to behave responsibly and professionally. You must take care not to post remarks about the Council or your colleagues and customers, which could be considered derogatory or as bullying/harassment or bring the Council into disrepute by posting inappropriate/offensive material.

- **Data Protection** – Middlesbrough Council is committed to electronic service delivery wherever possible. In view of this, the confidentiality, security and accurate processing of data is, therefore of the upmost importance to the Council.

The purpose of our policies and standards are set out to ensure the security, reliability and integrity of data and associated hardware within Middlesbrough Councils control. The object of Information Security is to ensure service continuity and prevent loss and damage by minimising
the impact of security incidents. Additionally, the purpose of these Policies is to protect the Authorities information assets from all threats.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that:

- Information is protected against unauthorised access
- Confidentiality of information is assured
- Integrity of information is maintained
- Regulatory and legislative requirements are met
- Information security training is completed on an annual basis
- All breaches of information security, actual or suspected, are reported to and investigated by Information Compliance and or Head of Service as appropriate.

For further information regarding the policies and guidelines refer to the Information Governance section of the Intranet and the LMS platform for training.

- **Safeguarding** - We all have a duty to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults regardless of the role you carry out for the Council. If you have any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, you must raise this immediately with your manager. If you feel you cannot do this, you should raise your concerns through the Whistleblowing Policy.

If you are arrested, charged with an offence or cautioned by the Police, you must discuss this with your manager immediately to enable the Council to assess if this will interfere with your ability to carry out your job.

- **Gifts and Hospitality** - We all have a legal obligation to ensure that we do not give or accept any gifts or hospitality that could appear inappropriate and undermine public confidence in the Council. However, in certain circumstances, it’s okay to accept a low value ‘gift’ such as a branded pen or stationery. If you are offered a gift or hospitality, you must check with your manager in the first instance before you accept it. Depending upon the value of the gift/hospitality, you may be required to declare it or politely decline it.

- **Whistleblowing** - We are all expected to carry out our roles to the highest standards. Therefore, when an issue of wrongdoing, malpractice or financial irregularity arises, it is important that you can raise your concerns without fear of victimisation for doing so. As a general rule, we would want you to raise your concerns with your line manager. However, if this is not possible, for whatever reason, the issue can be raised with any of the Council’s Whistleblowing Officers listed in the policy. If you do raise concerns, you can expect the issue to be taken seriously, your confidentiality respected as far as possible, and not to be treated any differently because you have raised an issue.
Building and maintaining positive and successful relationships, based on trust and respect, with all our employees is crucial for us to be able to achieve our goals. Here are some of the ways we aim to achieve this.

**Employee Engagement – ‘Work Together – Get Involved!’**

A happy, motivated and productive workforce is vital to our success. Our Employee Engagement strategy ‘Work Together – Get Involved!’ helps us to provide recognition and support to all.

We value the views of all and use staff surveys and a suggestion scheme to help us collect these. There is an Employee Engagement Group and Champions that work with these ideas to develop new promotions and events for staff; these have included past events such as ‘Picnic in the park’ and a ‘Funtathlon’ sports event.

The Chief Executive runs regular briefing sessions for staff which is an excellent way to hear the exciting work that’s going on first hand and how they can help shape this.

**Staff Surveys**

Staff Surveys are carried out every year to get feedback from staff to help us make Middlesbrough Council a great place to work.

The three Outcome Areas that get the highest response rates can make a donation to a charity of their choice.

The feedback from the survey is used to create action plans to improve our working environment and is fed back to staff using “You said – we did”.

**Staff Suggestion Scheme**

Look out for the suggestion boxes available in all buildings. Suggestions are collected on a regular basis and used to help make improvements.

**The Big Question**

From time to time we like to get a quick view on a particular topic. The ‘Big Question’ is a way to share your views to help make Middlesbrough Council a great place to work. Previous topics have included measuring the impact of the introduction of Agile Working and assessing if staff know what is expected of them in their role.

Look out for the next one and let us know your views, you can also make a suggestion for a future Big Question.
**Trade Unions**

We are committed to the principles of collective bargaining (a process of negotiation aimed at reaching agreements on a range of employment issues) and work closely with Trade Unions to achieve the best possible outcomes for all. We encourage our employees to join a Trade Union, take part in its activities and be represented by them at any formal meetings in relation to your employment.

We work with a variety of Trade Unions and the three recognised Trade Unions for negotiating terms and conditions for the majority of the Council workforce are:

- **GMB** 01642 201870 gmb.org.uk
- **Unison** 01642 219847 unison.org.uk
- **Unite** 01642 729694 unite@theunion.org.uk
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Section 3 - RECRUITING TALENT

Working for Middlesbrough Council is different from some other jobs. Everything we do has an impact upon the people of the town. We always look to appoint people whose knowledge, skills and experience will help us make a difference to the lives of people who live and work in Middlesbrough by delivering and supporting the Mayor’s Vision of a ‘Fairer, Safer, Stronger’ town.’

Job Opportunities at Middlesbrough Council

We know to attract, recruit and keep the best people into the Council, we need to give you the opportunity to develop your career with us. We want to make the most of your talents and abilities.

When you feel ready for the next step in your career, you can access our vacancies via your Staff Portal, just choose ‘Search for a Job’. This will automatically log you in with your credentials and take you to the search page, click Search at the bottom of the page, this will show you all vacancies, both internal and external.

When a vacancy does occur, it will usually be advertised initially to internal applicants. Our open Recruitment and Selection policy allows us to select the best person for a job based on merit and the applicant’s ability to demonstrate they have the knowledge, skills, experience and competencies to carry out the role.

Recruitment Checks

Upon appointment to any new post, we carry out recruitment checks to ensure you are suitable for the post. Typically this includes;

- Two references from your previous employments (or educational establishment)
- A ‘Right to Work’ check to confirm you are eligible to work in the UK
- Pre-employment health check
- A Disclosing and Barring (DBS) check where you will be working with children or vulnerable adults.
- Qualification Check where essential to the post

Secondments

Occasionally, temporary career opportunities arise where a job needs to be carried out on a temporary basis. This could be for a job which has limited external funding, to cover maternity leave or long term sickness. With your manager’s agreement, it may be possible to apply for these temporary vacancies on a secondment basis for up to a period of one year. At the end of the secondment period, you would return to your original job (also known as your substantive post).

Fixed Term Contracts

If you are employed on a fixed term contract, you will receive the same terms and conditions as your permanent colleagues. You may apply for any vacancies as and when they occur but, if by the end of your contract you have not been successful in obtaining other employment within the Council, we will unfortunately have to give notice to terminate your contract of employment.
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Apprenticeships

In line with the Mayor’s vision, we are committed to providing as many apprenticeships as possible with appropriate quality training and nationally recognised qualifications. If you are an apprentice, you will be given the opportunity to learn new skills by working side by side with experienced staff and will be given appropriate time away from work to study for a formal qualification. If you wish to take your career with the Council further, you may apply for any vacancies whilst you are training with us.

Our Apprenticeship schemes are managed by the Middlesbrough Community Learning Service who are based at the CLC Building, Acklam Grange School.
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Section 4 – PAY AND EXPENSES

We know pay and recognition are an important part of all our jobs. The section below sets out the details of our rewards package and policies.

**Pay**

To ensure a consistent and fair way of rewarding our employees, all jobs on Local Government Terms & Conditions within the Council have been subject to Job Evaluation. This scheme helps us to apply a Grade to a job by measuring the skills, knowledge and responsibilities associated with that job.

You can find your grade and corresponding salary on your contract of employment.

If your grade contains several points (increments), you would normally start on the minimum salary for your grade and receive a staged increase on 1 April each year up to the maximum of the grade (unless you start between October and March when your first increment will be 6 months from your start date).

**Pay day is usually the 25th of each month.** If this falls on a weekend, you will be paid on the Friday before the 25th.

**Enhancements**

We will enhance your pay for working outside normal working hours or on Bank Holidays, the following rates will apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Night Work</th>
<th>10pm to 7am</th>
<th>Time and a third</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday Work</strong> Grades A to C</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Double time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday Work</strong> Grades D and above</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Time and a half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Holidays</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Double time plus time off in lieu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Working Overtime**

If you are asked by your manager to work additional hours, you will be paid the hourly rate for your job plus the above enhancement where appropriate. If you are paid more than Spinal Column Point 28 (SCP28), any additional hours and enhancements will be paid at SCP28, not at current grade.

**Travel & Subsistence**

With the agreement of your manager, you may claim mileage when you use your car for Council business (this doesn’t include travelling to or from work). It is important that you read and comply with the Travel & Subsistence Policy.

- Single rate of mileage is paid at 60p per mile
- Parking permits available for staff based in the town centre who meet the criteria
- Subsistence payments if you are asked to travel outside of the Middlesbrough area

All claims for both Mileage and Subsistence must be made through the Staff Portal.
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Acting Up & Honorarium Payments

Occasionally, we need to put short term arrangements in place to ensure we continue to deliver our services. This can be due to absence or high/urgent demand being placed upon the service. If you agree with your manager to work over and above your normal grade, you will be paid either an Acting Up allowance or Honorarium payment which is based upon the job evaluated grades for the work you are carrying out.

Teesside Pension Fund

As part of your employment, you will be automatically enrolled into the Teesside Pension Fund, which is the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for local authority employees in the Teesside region. As well as providing a tax free lump sum and pension upon retirement, you may also receive a tax free lump sum and pension if you become too ill to work.

You will be automatically enrolled into the fund and contributions range from 5.5% to 12.5% depending upon your earnings, although you get tax relief on this. In addition, we will also make ‘Employer’ contributions to your ‘pension pot’ during your employment with us.

Sick Pay

If you cannot attend work because of illness, you will receive the following levels of sick pay based on your service;

- Less than 4 months service = 1 months full pay
- More than 4 months but less than 1 year = 1 month full pay + 2 months half pay
- Between 1 and 2 years = 2 months full pay and 2 months half pay
- Between 2 and 3 years = 4 months of full pay and 4 months half pay
- Between 4 and 5 years = 5 months full pay and 5 months half pay
- After 5 years = 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay.
Section 5 – REWARDING YOU

Team Awards

Every year we have an awards event, which is an important part of our commitment to recognising and celebrating the hard work and achievements of all our staff. Submissions come from teams right across the Council and showcase the commitment and enthusiasm of staff for their work. Categories include:

- Adapting to Change
- Business Improvement
- Customer Excellence
- Delivering the Right Results
- Financial Performance
- Outstanding Communication
- Partnership working
- People
- Special Volunteering Team
- Team of the Year
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Section 6 - BECOMING A PARENT

If you are becoming a parent for the first time or growing your family, we have a range of benefits and policies to help you

✓ Maternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave
   If you become pregnant, or adopt a child, you may be entitled to up to one year’s leave as well as a combination of statutory and occupational maternity/adoption pay (up to 39 weeks). In addition, shared parental leave is available to eligible partners.

✓ Paternity Leave and Pay
   If your partner is pregnant or adopting a child for whom they are the main carer, you are entitled to two consecutive weeks paid leave (one week at full pay; second week at current statutory paternity pay rates) to support your partner around the time of birth/ adoption.

✓ Ante Natal Appointments
   Paid time off is available for an employee to attend her ante natal appointments. Partners have a statutory right to attend two ante-natal appointments with their partner, however this is unpaid.

✓ Maternity Support Leave
   Up to 5 days paid leave to support an expectant mother at or around the time of birth if you are her only support.

✓ Adopters/Foster Parents Leave
   Up to 10 days’ paid leave to allow an employee to attend training or meetings around the child’s placement. Examples include:
   
   - Attendance at pre and post training as a foster carer;
   - Attendance at Panel/Court;
   - Child Review Meetings;
   - Annual Foster Carer Review Meeting

   Time off should be requested in writing to your manager and accompanied by a copy of your appointment letter etc. if appropriate.

✓ Parental Leave
   This is a statutory right for up to 4 weeks unpaid leave per child per year. See the Parental Leave policy on the intranet for further details.

Section 7 - YOUR HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Your Health, Safety and Wellbeing are important to us. We aim to provide a safe place for you to work whilst helping you to look after your health and wellbeing.

Managing Health, Attendance and Wellbeing

To ensure fairness and consistency in the way we deal with sickness absence, we have policies and procedures in place that apply to all employees. In addition, to support you with your health and
wellbeing, we have in place a number of support mechanisms that you can access at any time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we expect from you</th>
<th>What you can expect from us</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow reporting procedures</td>
<td>Return to work meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide Fit Notes if required</td>
<td>Access to support services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep your manager informed</td>
<td>Regular contact from your manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in support</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We use a range of services to support you including:

- **Occupational Health** - If you have been unable to attend work due to sickness for four weeks or more, or we have concerns around your health, you may be referred to our Occupational Health provider to help us assess how we can best support you in the workplace.
- **Trigger Points** - Seven days in a rolling year OR Two occasions of sickness in three months OR any other patterns of sickness (e.g. every Monday, school holidays etc)
- **Fast Track Physiotherapy and MRI Scan**
- **Counselling Service** – this is a confidential, self-referral service.
- **Contact Officers** – trained officers can offer confidential advice if you feel you are being bullied at work

**Wellbeing Initiatives**

There are a wide range of regular activities that are designed to support your health and wellbeing. These range from Back Care Programmes, Mindfulness sessions, Stressbuster sessions and lunchtime activities such as Tai Chi, Pilates and a Walking Group.

**Mental Wellness**

Middlesbrough Council is a ‘Mindful Employer’. We are positive about mental health and want you to know if you have any problems, you can speak openly and in confidence without fear of being judged or ignored. If you have a mental health issue that you need help with, always talk to your manager about this.

We have a range of support that can help, including self-referral to a confidential face to face counselling service.
Alcohol and Drugs

Whilst you are at work you must be able to carry out your role safely and to the standards expected. If we have reason to believe that you are under the influence of alcohol or any other substance, or have any illegal substances at work, this will be investigated under our Disciplinary Policy. If you are encountering problem with alcohol or drugs, we will do our best to offer you sympathetic support to help you overcome the problem and continue working with us.

Managing Safety

We all have a responsibility for our safety under the Health and Safety Act 1974. Whilst at work, you need to ensure that you work safely and don’t do anything reckless that could do injury to yourself or others. It is important to take the time to read our Health and Safety Policy and familiarise yourself with any risk assessments linked to your work. If an incident does occur (accident, near miss, assault, both verbal and physical), you must ensure that you report this to your manager immediately.

- **First Aiders** - We have a network of fully trained, designated first aiders who will be able to help if you have an accident or injury at work. Ask your manager for details.

- **Eye Tests** - If you use a PC during your working day, you may ask for a Display Screen Eye Test. We can arrange a free eye test with our Optician and will pay up to £29 if you are advised to wear glasses to use your display screen.

- **Smoking** - You are not permitted to smoke (including e-cigarettes) in, or in the immediate vicinity of any our premises. In addition, you must not smoke in any Council vehicle or whilst you are on duty. Smoking cessation sessions are available to individuals who are seeking to break the habit.

- **Mobile Phones** - It is illegal to use a mobile phone whilst driving. This includes standing still whilst the car engine is running. Under no circumstances must you use a mobile phone (either your own or one we have issued you) whilst driving on Council business.
The performance of our workforce is crucial for us to achieve success. We need our employees to understand their contribution and role in delivering our aims and vision. To achieve this, we developed the Middlesbrough Manager and Employee frameworks, which set out the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance.

**Your Appraisal**

Each year, you will have an annual appraisal with your manager. Depending upon your role with us, you will be evaluated against the Middlesbrough Manager or Employee Framework. At your appraisal, you can expect your manager to discuss with you:

- Your performance over the year
- New objectives for the coming year
- Your training and development needs
- Your aspirations

During the year, you can expect to have regular one to one meetings with your manager, where you can discuss how you are progressing, any concerns you may have and identify further training and development opportunities.

**Middlesbrough Learns**

We believe that giving you the chance to learn new skills and grow your knowledge will help us achieve our goals and priorities. At ‘Middlesbrough Learns’ the Council’s online Learning Management System you will find information and support including a Learning Directory on what training courses are available to you. In preparation for your appraisal, it is always a good idea to consider your learning and development needs and the Learning Directory can help you with this.

Here you will also be able to access induction information, eLearning materials as well as book on to appropriate classroom training, just click the icon on your desktop.

**Probation Periods**

All new employees are on probation for a minimum of six months. Within the first two weeks of joining us, your manager will meet with you to discuss and agree *SMART probation objectives. Your manager will continue to meet with you after one, three and five months of service to discuss how you are doing against these objectives and if any improvements are required. If your probationary period is successful, your manager will confirm you in post. If there is a problem, your manager will do their best to support you but ultimately it may be necessary to terminate your contract of employment.

*SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resourced, Time Bound*
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Section 9 - SUPPORTING YOU

Where possible, we want to support as many of our employees as possible with greater choice and flexibility in how, where and when they carry out their post. This, of course, needs to be balanced with the needs of our customers but our range of policies may help you achieve an improved work/life balance and allow you to deal with unexpected emergencies when they occur.

It is equally important to have fair policies to support our employees when things are not going well and which provide transparent frameworks to ensure complaints are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner.

Holidays

We encourage all our employees to take their full annual leave entitlement each leave year (April to March) to make sure they have time away from work to relax. Each leave year, as a full time employee, you will be entitled to:

✓ 193 hours if you have less than 5 years’ service
✓ 230 hours if you have more than 5 years’ service
✓ Paid time off for all Bank/Public Holidays

We also formally recognise long service for the following three qualifying periods:

✓ **15 Years Continuous Service** - awarded 1 days extra leave, moving their annual entitlement to 32 days
✓ **25 Years Continuous Service** - awarded another 1 days extra leave, moving their annual entitlement to 33 days
✓ **40 Years Continuous Service** - awarded another 1 days extra leave, moving their annual entitlement to 34 days

Part time employees will receive a pro rata amount based on their hours.

Term-time only employees do not receive an annual leave entitlement as this is built into your salary calculation.

If you are a new employee your actual entitlement will be pro-rata’d from the day you start within the month or up to the date of leaving

We also run a scheme for staff to buy up to 74 hours additional annual leave.

**Working Flexibly**

To help you achieve a work/life balance that can work for both you and your service area, we have a variety of flexible working options, which can be used in isolation or in combination. For further details see our Work Life Balance Policy on the intranet.

✓ Flexi-time scheme
✓ Part Time Working
✓ Compressed Hours e.g. 9 day fortnight
Dealing with Emergencies

It is inevitable that we will have personal emergencies outside of work to deal with at some point during our working life, some thankfully less serious than others. If you need to be away from work to deal with an emergency, your manager may be able to grant paid leave under the following policies:

- **Discretionary Leave**
  Up to five days (per 12 months rolling period) may be granted to deal with unanticipated problems in the home or within the family. It is anticipated 1 day initially will be sufficient to put alternative arrangements in place.

- **Special Carer Leave**
  Up to five days may be granted for employees who have formal caring responsibilities. Caring responsibilities are in relation to care given to an adult or child who has a chronic illness or condition, physical disability, mental illness or learning disability. This can be taking in hourly increments, half day blocks or full day blocks and it is designed to support carer’s directly in their caring role.

- **Exceptional Carer Leave**
  There are times in life when you may need to deal with very difficult situations including the terminal illness of a close relative. To support you through this we offer up to 12 consecutive weeks paid time off, on a full time or part time basis, to allow an employee to care for, and spend time with, a parent/partner/child who is in the final stages of a terminal illness.

- **Bereavement Leave**
  Up to 10 days may be granted for the death of a close relative or dependant, i.e. spouse, partner, parent, child.

There may also be other times in your life when you need our support;

- **Career Break**
  If you want to go travelling, or need to spend time with a family member, you can apply for an unpaid career break. A career break allows you to have up to one year’s absence from work providing you do not take up paid work during this time. To apply, you must have worked for with us for at least two years.

- **Moving House**
  Anyone who has ever moved house will agree it can be one of the most stressful times in your life. To assist you, the Council will allow one day’s paid leave within every three years.
Grievance Procedure

We know from time to time that employees may have problems or concerns about their work, working environment or working relationships.

In the first instance, we encourage you to discuss the issue informally with your line manager but acknowledge that situations may arise where the issue needs to be addressed on a formal basis under the Grievance Procedure.

To take out a formal grievance, you must put this in writing to your manager, who will arrange to meet with you. If the issue isn’t resolved or you are unhappy with the outcome you can take your grievance to the next stages. You have the right to be accompanied at meetings by your Trade Union representative or a work colleague.

Disciplinary Procedure

When expected standards are not met or a complaint is made against an employee, our Disciplinary Policy & Procedures explains what will happen.

In the case of a minor incident, your manager may take an informal approach and issue you with advice and guidance.

In more serious circumstances, or where an individual does not change their behaviour despite previous guidance, we may need to take action.

Our Disciplinary Policy ensures:

- Employees are fully informed of allegations against them and the process which will be followed
- An investigation will take place by an impartial officer
- If there is a case to answer, a formal hearing will be convened
- The hearing will provide an opportunity for employees to have their say and bring any witnesses
- A right to appeal against warnings or dismissal
- The right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague at all formal meetings
- If you are suspended from work, this will be without prejudice and on full pay

There are a number of potential outcomes from a Disciplinary Hearing, these are:

- No Further Action
- Advice and Guidance
- Formal Warning
- Final Written Warning
- Dismissal (or other sanction)
Change is an inevitable part of our lives. We all have to adapt to new policies, new technologies and new ways of working. Sadly, even our health can force changes. This can be both worrying and challenging, especially if we think it will affect our job or financial security.

When there is a need to make changes, we will consult with you and your Trade Union, ensure you are supported and that a fair and transparent process is followed.

**Reviews, Consultation and Redundancy**

When we are considering organisational reviews or changes to working arrangements, we have a legal duty to consult meaningfully with our employees and Trade Unions. In addition, we have a duty to mitigate, as far as possible, the effects of the proposed changes on our employees.

Examples of when we would be required to consult with you include:

- loss of posts resulting in a redundancy situation;
- reduction to contractual hours;
- reduction in salary and/or allowances; and
- changes to working hours/patterns e.g. rotas etc.

The Reviews, Consultation & Redundancy Policy ensures:

- that we consult with you and your Trade Unions for a minimum of 45 consecutive days
- you have the opportunity of one to one meetings with your manager
- you have the opportunity to put your point of view and alternative proposals forward and that they be reasonably considered
- an appeals procedure if you are selected for redundancy

**Compulsory Redundancy**

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, redundancy situations do arise. If you are served with a redundancy notice, we will do our best to support you by placing you on the redeployment register and allowing you time off to search for a new job.

**Redundancy Pay**

The amount of redundancy pay you will receive is based upon your age and length of service (up to a maximum of thirty week’s pay). If you are aged 55 or over, and a member of the Teesside Pension Fund, your pension will come into payment.

**Transferring your Employment to another Employer (TUPE)**

The way in which we deliver our services is changing - not everything we do is delivered ‘in house.’ This means that we occasionally have to transfer the staff who are connected to delivering a particular service over to a new employer. Your terms and conditions of employment are protected by law at the point of transfer under the Transfer of Undertaking and Protection of Employment (TUPE) regulations. When this happens, we will fully consult with you and your Trade Unions.
Redeployment

If you are identified as being ‘at risk’ of losing your job through either redundancy or your health, you may be placed on the redeployment register. This means that you would get prior consideration for any suitable vacancies.

You would need to apply for any vacancy you think suitable via the Staff Portal by searching jobs and support can be provided if you need assistance.

Your time on the redeployment list is linked to your length of service.

- If you are placed on the list as a result of redundancy, you will be placed on the list in line with your notice period (up to twelve weeks).
- In the case of health reasons, you will be on the list for four weeks if you have less than five years’ service, eight weeks if you have five years or more.
Staff Handbook

Section 11 - LEAVING YOUR JOB

We wish everyone a long and successful career with the Council. However, whether you have been successful in getting another job with us, want to leave to go to another employer, or are considering retiring, you should refer to the policies below.

Resigning from your current post

If you want to resign from your current post, you should put this in writing to your manager stating the date you wish to leave. The notice period you must give us is dependent upon the grade of your post:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Notice Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade A to Grade I</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade J to Grade S</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JNC for Chief Officer</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You must ensure that you use any remaining holidays before your leaving date.

You will receive your final salary on the 25th of the month. Any outstanding overtime or expenses will be paid in the following month if not entered in the Staff Portal before the Payroll deadline.

If you are a member of the Teesside Pension Fund, your pension may be ‘deferred’ until your normal retirement age. You can also transfer benefits to another Pension Fund. Further details are available from Teesside Pension Fund on 01642 727777.

If we terminate your contract

There are certain circumstances when it is necessary for us to end your contract of employment with us. When it is necessary for us to do this, we will give you the following notice:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service</th>
<th>Notice Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 4 weeks but less than 2 years</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 years but less than 12 years</td>
<td>1 week for each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 12 years</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In certain cases, we may give you pay in lieu of notice rather than ask you to work the notice period.

Voluntary Redundancy

You can request to leave the Council through voluntary redundancy at any time. However, the Council can only agree to your request if it would result in a saving to the Council (by the deletion of a post or by saving another employee from compulsory redundancy). In addition, the costs incurred must meet the Council’s payback criteria. As a leaving date is mutually agreed, you will not receive pay in lieu of notice. If you are over 55 and a member of the Teesside Pension Fund your pension will come into payment automatically.
Retirement

If you are a member of the Teesside Pension Fund, it is possible to retire from the age of 55 onwards. However, some of the retirement options available do require our consent.

✓ **Age Retirement**
   Normal retirement age under the Teesside Pension Fund’s rules is 65. If you are aged 55 or over, you can resign and ask the Teesside Pension Fund to bring your pension into payment, however this will be on a reduced basis.

✓ **Early Retirement**
   If you are aged 55 or over and a member of the Teesside Pension Fund, you can request Early Retirement. Your pension could come into payment on an unreduced basis however, similar to Voluntary Redundancy, there must be a saving to the Council and you will not receive pay in lieu of notice.

✓ **Flexible Retirement**
   Flexible retirement is where you reduce either the hours you work or move to a post from which you receive less pay and receive payment of your pension, as well as your salary. This must result in at least a 40% reduction in your salary. You must be aged 55 or over and in the Teesside Pension Fund to apply.

Please note that we do not generally re-engage former employees who leave the Council with the benefit of a severance, early retirement or redundancy payment.