KEWSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL

"Here to protect the Rural Character and Environment of the Village and to promote Kewstoke as a pleasant place to live"

Ref KPC017

Sickness and Absence Policy

If an employee is unable to come to work for any reason, they must contact the Parish Clerk on the first day of absence giving the reason for absence and its possible duration.

The employee must maintain weekly contact with the Parish Clerk and keep him/her informed of their progress and the date they expect to return to work.

All periods of absence through sickness must be covered by a sickness self-certification form.

The completed form should indicate actual days of sickness, including weekends and/or public holidays.

The Parish Clerk will check with the employee to ascertain if there is any information that is required about the current workload.

If the employee does not contact the Parish Clerk must attempt to contact the employee at home. An employee may not always feel able to discuss their medical problems with the Parish Clerk and it may more appropriate for this to be undertaken by the Chairman of the Staffing committee.

For sickness absence of up to 7 working days, employees should complete a self-certification form and hand/send it to the Parish Clerk.

Thereafter a "Statement of Fitness for Work" is required to cover every subsequent day. If the absence is likely to be protracted, i.e. more than four weeks continuously, there is a shared

responsibility for the Parish Clerk or Chairman of the staffing Committee and the employee to maintain contact at agreed intervals.

Sick pay will be paid for qualifying employees in accordance with Government statutory guidelines.

To qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) you must:

- be classed as an **employee** and have done some work for your employer
- earn an average of at least £120 per week
- have been ill, self-isolating or 'shielding' for at least 4 days in a row (including non-working days)

To qualify for sick pay, employees must have completed 3 months' service with the Parish Council and have complied with the above requirements regarding notification of absence and provision of certificates.

The Parish Council does not operate an occupational Sick pay Scheme.

Employees will forfeit entitlement to Council sick pay if:

1.they fail to comply with notification and certification requirements;

2.they make or produce any misleading or untrue documents concerning their fitness for work;

3.their incapacity has been caused by participation in sports or other activities unrelated to their work with the Council.

Absence due to Disability/Maternity

Absences relating to the disability of an employee or to pregnancy will be kept

separate from sickness absence records.

Disability employees and the Parish Council are referred to relevant legislation and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Maternity/paternity/adoption leave is as set out in the relevant legislation.

Long -term and Persistent Absences

The Parish Council will treat as long-term absence any period of absence through illness that extends over a prolonged period. Long-term absence may also consist of a series of unconnected short-term illnesses. If the Parish Council considers that a period of absence is long-term, the employee will be notified and:

1.will be asked to keep regular contact with the Council at mutually agreed intervals;

2.will be informed if there is any possible threat to their employment.

The Parish Council will regard a series of unconnected short-term illnesses as persistent absence.

Where there are incidences of long-term or persistent absence, it may be appropriate to treat these as an issue of capability or conduct. The Parish Council will then:

1 investigate the absence through a 'Return to Work' interview and seek to obtain medical reports (in accordance with 2.4 and 2.5 below);

2.set time limits on the assessment of the employee and inform them of such;

3.with the employee, consider modifications to the job and/or phasing the return to work providing such support as may be appropriate;

4.consider whether the illness amounts to a disability. If this is proven to be the case, the Council will refer to its Equal Opportunities Policy and will make such reasonable adjustments as are appropriate.

Where the Parish Council requires medical reports relating to an absence, it will either:

1. request the employee undergoes an independent medical examination with an Occupational Health Service or:

2. obtain a report from the employee's doctor, subject to the employee's agreement.

Should the employee refuse, they should be made aware that the Council can only reach decisions about an employee's future by considering the information available.

The Parish Council will hold all medical reports and related information obtained above as private and confidential.

Where the absence is found to be a matter of misconduct, the employee will be subject to the Parish Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

Return to Work Interviews

After any absences due to sickness, the employee shall attend a 'Return to Work' interview with the Parish Clerk to:

1. be sure of their fitness to work;

2. agree if modifications are needed to facilitate their return to work;

3. make sure that the required certificates relating to the whole period of absence have been completed/obtained;

4. discuss any problems that may exist.

This can be a face to face meeting or by Phone.

Monitoring

The Parish Council will monitor and record levels of absence and reasons for absence. This practice will help the Council to identify unsatisfactory work practices and to distinguish between different types of absence.

All information gathered through absence monitoring under this Policy will be held and treated as confidential.

Adopted on 01/06/2020