Treverbyn Parish Council

Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

Treverbyn Parish Council recognises its responsibility to support the health and wellbeing of its employees while maintaining the effective delivery of Council services.

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, fair and consistent arrangements for reporting, recording, monitoring and managing sickness absence.

The Council recognises that employees may be unable to attend work due to genuine illness or injury and will manage such absences sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with relevant employment legislation and contractual obligations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the Council's two directly employed members of staff:

- The full-time Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.
- The part-time Administrator.

Both employees are employed under the same general sickness absence and occupational sick pay provisions, with differences in contracted working hours, salary grade and remuneration.

The provisions of this policy apply equally to both employees, taking account of their individual contractual working arrangements and length of continuous service.

The policy does not apply to self-employed contractors or employees of external contractors.

This policy is non-contractual and does not replace, amend or reduce any existing contractual entitlement.

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3. Reporting Sickness Absence

Employees who are unable to attend work because of illness or injury must notify the Council as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than the end of the working day on which the absence first occurs.

The following reporting arrangements apply:

Parish Clerk

The Parish Clerk must notify the Chair of the Council or, if unavailable, the Vice-Chair of the Council.

Administrator

The Administrator must notify the Parish Clerk or, if unavailable, the Chair of the Council.

Employees should provide the reason for their absence, the anticipated duration where known, and details of any urgent work matters requiring attention.

Where sickness absence continues, employees are required to provide daily updates by telephone in accordance with their contracts of employment.

Where an employee is unable to make contact personally because of illness or incapacity, notification may be provided by a family member or another appropriate person.

Failure to comply with contractual sickness reporting requirements without reasonable justification may affect entitlement to contractual sick pay and may be considered under the Council's relevant employment procedures.

4. Self-Certification and Medical Certification

Employees are required to provide appropriate certification for periods of sickness absence.

For absences lasting seven consecutive calendar days or fewer, employees may self-certify their absence.

Both employees' contracts require a completed self-certification form to be submitted before the end of their first working day following their return to work.

Where sickness absence continues for more than seven consecutive calendar days, employees must provide a Statement of Fitness for Work (fit note) issued by an authorised healthcare professional.

Both employment contracts refer to medical certification for absences lasting seven days or more. This requirement will be administered consistently with applicable statutory certification rules.

Where an absence continues, further fit notes must be provided as appropriate to cover the continuing period of sickness.

Where a fit note indicates that an employee may be fit for work subject to adjustments, the Council will consider whether suitable arrangements can reasonably be accommodated.

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5. Sick Pay

Both the Parish Clerk and Administrator are entitled to occupational sick pay in accordance with their contracts of employment, subject to their individual length of continuous service and compliance with the Council's sickness absence reporting and certification requirements.

The same occupational sick pay entitlement structure applies to both employees, regardless of whether they work full-time or part-time.

The contractual occupational sick pay entitlements are as follows:

Length of continuous service	Full pay	Half pay
During first year	1 month	2 months (after 4 months' continuous service)
During second year	2 months	2 months
During third year	3 months	3 months
During fourth and fifth years	4 months	4 months
After five years	6 months	6 months

For the purposes of calculating occupational sick pay entitlement, continuous service will be calculated from the employee's original date of continuous employment with Treverbyn Parish Council.

Changes to contracted working hours, salary grade or the issue of a revised contract will not, in themselves, interrupt continuous service.

Sick pay will be calculated by reference to each employee's applicable contractual salary and normal working arrangements.

The Council will administer occupational sick pay and Statutory Sick Pay in accordance with the applicable contractual terms and statutory requirements.

This policy does not create additional sick pay entitlement or reduce existing contractual rights.

6. Recording Sickness Absence

The Council will maintain accurate and confidential records of employee sickness absence.

Records will include, where appropriate:

- The dates and duration of sickness absence.
- The reason for absence, where disclosed.
- Self-certification forms and fit notes.
- Relevant communications during absence.
- Return-to-work discussions.

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- Any agreed support measures or reasonable adjustments.

The Parish Clerk will normally maintain sickness absence records relating to the Administrator.

Sickness absence records relating to the Parish Clerk will be overseen by the Chair of the Council or another appropriately authorised councillor.

Records will be maintained securely and handled in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

7. Return-to-Work Arrangements

Following a period of sickness absence, an appropriate return-to-work discussion may be undertaken.

The purpose of the discussion is to:

- Confirm that the employee is able to resume their duties.
- Establish whether any ongoing health concerns affect their work.
- Identify any support or reasonable adjustments required.
- Confirm that the necessary absence records and certification have been completed.

For the Administrator, the discussion will normally be undertaken by the Parish Clerk.

For the Parish Clerk, the discussion will normally be undertaken by the Chair of the Council or another designated councillor.

For short periods of routine sickness absence, the discussion may be informal.

Where absence has been prolonged or recurrent, a more detailed meeting may be appropriate.

8. Annual Sickness Absence Review

The Council will review employee sickness absence records annually to ensure that absence is being managed fairly, consistently and proportionately.

The review will consider:

- The number and duration of sickness absences.
- Any recurring patterns of absence.
- Whether there are underlying health or workplace concerns.
- Whether additional support or reasonable adjustments are appropriate.
- Whether further discussion or monitoring is necessary.

The annual review will normally be undertaken by the Parish Clerk in respect of the Administrator.

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The Chair of the Council, supported by the HR Committee where appropriate, will oversee the annual review of the Parish Clerk's sickness absence.

The Council recognises that sickness absence should not be assessed solely on the number of days taken.

Individual circumstances, including disability-related absence, will be considered appropriately.

An annual review will not automatically result in formal action.

9. Frequent or Repeated Sickness Absence

Where an employee experiences frequent or repeated periods of sickness absence, the Council may arrange an informal meeting to discuss the circumstances.

The purpose of the meeting will be to establish whether there are underlying health concerns, workplace factors or other circumstances contributing to the absence.

The Council may consider appropriate support, reasonable adjustments or an agreed period of attendance monitoring.

Where attendance remains a concern, the Council may consider further action under its relevant employment procedures.

Both employees' contracts provide that unacceptable absenteeism may be considered through the Council's disciplinary procedure.

However, the Council will distinguish between unauthorised absence or misconduct and genuine sickness absence arising from ill health or incapacity.

Where genuine ill health affects an employee's ability to fulfil their duties, the matter will normally be considered through an appropriate capability process rather than treated automatically as misconduct.

Any formal action will be undertaken fairly, with appropriate consideration of medical evidence, contractual provisions and employment legislation.

10. Long-Term Sickness Absence

Where an employee is absent for an extended period due to illness or injury, the Council will maintain reasonable and sensitive contact.

The frequency and method of contact will take account of the employee's circumstances and applicable contractual reporting requirements.

The Council may consider:

- The likely duration of the absence.
- Relevant medical advice.
- Occupational health advice, where appropriate.
- Reasonable adjustments to duties or working arrangements.

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- A phased return to work.
- The operational requirements of the Council.

Both employment contracts provide for the Council to request an independent medical examination where appropriate.

Any such request will be managed in accordance with applicable legal requirements, including appropriate consent and confidentiality safeguards.

Where continued absence raises concerns about an employee's ability to fulfil their duties, the Council will follow a fair and appropriate capability process before considering any formal employment decision.

11. Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

The Council recognises its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Where an employee has a disability within the meaning of the Act, the Council will consider reasonable adjustments to support the employee in their role.

Such adjustments may include changes to working hours, duties, equipment or working arrangements, depending on the individual circumstances.

Disability-related absence will be considered appropriately when reviewing attendance and determining whether any further action is justified.

12. Annual Leave During Sickness Absence

Employees will continue to accrue statutory annual leave during periods of sickness absence.

Where an employee is unable to take annual leave because of sickness absence, any entitlement to carry forward unused leave will be considered in accordance with statutory requirements and the employee's contract of employment.

The Council's annual leave year runs from 1 January to 31 December.

Both employment contracts include provisions concerning the carry-forward of annual leave where long-term sickness prevents leave from being taken.

Any request to take annual leave during sickness absence will be considered in accordance with the applicable employment terms and statutory requirements.

13. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information relating to an employee's health and sickness absence will be treated as confidential.

Medical information will only be shared with those who have a legitimate need to know for employment, health and safety or operational purposes.

Sickness absence records will be stored securely and access restricted to authorised individuals.

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The Council will process health information in accordance with UK data protection legislation and its applicable data protection policies.

14. Responsibilities

The Parish Council

The Council is responsible for ensuring that sickness absence is managed fairly, consistently and in accordance with relevant contractual and statutory obligations.

The Parish Clerk

The Parish Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day administration of sickness absence arrangements relating to the Administrator, including appropriate recording, communication and return-to-work arrangements.

The Chair of the Council and HR Committee

The Chair of the Council, supported by the HR Committee where appropriate, will oversee sickness absence arrangements relating to the Parish Clerk.

Any formal employment decisions must be taken by the Council or by the committee or person with appropriate delegated authority.

Employees

Employees are responsible for complying with their contractual sickness absence reporting requirements, providing appropriate certification, maintaining required contact during absence and cooperating with reasonable return-to-work arrangements.

15. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes to employment legislation, contractual arrangements or Council working practices make a review necessary.

The policy will be applied fairly and consistently, taking account of the Council's size, staffing arrangements and operational requirements.

Adopted by the Human Resources Committee of Treverbyn Parish Council on:

Adopted by the Full Council on:

Full Council Minute Reference:

Next Review: May 2027

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